Operationalisation of Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia

From Theory to Practice

Edited by
Yuji Uesugi · Anna Deekeling ·
Sophie Shiori Umeyama ·
Lawrence McDonald-Colbert

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Editors
Yuji Uesugi
Waseda University
Tokyo, Japan

Anna Deekeling
Waseda University
Tokyo, Japan

Sophie Shiori Umeyama
Waseda University
Tokyo, Japan

Lawrence McDonald-Colbert
Waseda University
Tokyo, Japan

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Praise for *Operationalisation of Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia*

"Peacebuilding is a crucial instrument of international conflict resolution. Due to its significance, Professor Yuji Uesugi edited and published a book on *Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia* in 2020. The book explored a novel idea called the mid-space bridge-builders. The idea received considerable attention since the publication of the book. The current book takes the mid-space bridge-builders idea one step further by introducing specific case studies. The case studies make a significant contribution to the theory and practice of international peacebuilding. The book will be of value to peacebuilding practitioners, researchers, and students."

—S. I. Keethaponcalan, *Salisbury University, Maryland, USA*

"This important collection adds further weight and nuance to the growing body of scholarship that has recently emerged on the development of hybrid political orders and on hybrid peace frameworks in complex, contextual political conflicts. It also consolidates work on Asian contributions to peacebuilding. The chapters offer innovative theorising on hybridity, as well as an interesting range of cases and examples. In the context of Asian contributions to peacebuilding, focussing on China and Japan, and in the contexts of Cambodia and Mindanao, the book outlines how political differences are externally and internally mediated and incorporated into hybrid frameworks for peacebuilding. These are deeply affected by bottom-up demands for reform. The book suggests

that regional and contextual lessons in these examples indicate that "mid-space actors" tend to accumulate the pluralist capacities necessary to facilitate more legitimate forms of peacebuilding."

—Oliver Richmond, *Research Professor of IR, Peace and Conflict Studies, The University of Manchester, UK*

"This book makes two important contributions to the literature on hybridity and peacebuilding. First, it brings Asian perspectives to bear on theoretical debates at the cutting-edge of peacebuilding theory. Second, it examines case studies of peacebuilding conducted by Asian actors that have largely been overlooked by Western analyses. Based on these contributions, Uesugi and his contributors open pathways for further analyses of "Eastphalian hybrid peacebuilding" as an alternative to dominant Western perspectives."

—Joanne Wallis, *Professor of International Security, University of Adelaide, Australia*

Contents

Notes on Contributors

Will Brehm is a Lecturer of Education and International Development at the UCL Institute of Education, University College London, and a member of the Centre for Education and International Development. His research interests include the intersection of comparative and international education with international relations and the political economy of development, focussed primarily in Southeast Asia. Follow him on Twitter @wbrehm.

Cedric de Coning is a Research Professor with the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and a Senior Advisor for the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). His research covers African, Global South and United Nations peace and security issues. He has a special interest in the application of Complexity Theory in International Relations and Peace and Conflict Studies, where he has introduced Adaptive Peacebuilding and Adaptive Peace Operations.

Anna Deekeling graduated with her Master's of Arts from the Graduate School of Social Science, Waseda University in 2020. Her thesis is entitled "Dialogue building in post-conflict societies—Japan as a hybrid peacebuilding actor? Can hybrid peacebuilding theory be conceptualised as a practical tool to promote dialogue within a post-conflict society, and how can Japanese peacebuilding experiences contribute to this approach?"

Jovanie Camacho Espesor is a Professor at the Department of Political Science of the Mindanao State University, General Santos City, Philippines. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. His area of research interest intersects the disciplinary boundaries of Political Science, Anthropology, Critical Security and Development Studies. He publishes scholarly articles on peacebuilding, development and security issues in the southern Philippines and Aceh, Indonesia.

Anton Ingstedt is a consultant with experience of working for international organisations in the fields of Youth, Peace and Security, youth empowerment and antiracism. His main academic interest falls on the gendered dimensions to conflict prevention, for which he explored in his Master's Degree dissertation how the targeting of gender norms and stereotypes can enhance disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration efforts, at the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies in Geneva.

Fujian Li is a Research Fellow of the Institute of Asian Studies at China Foreign Affairs University. He obtained his Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations from the University of Western, Australia. He has been a Visiting Fellow with the Future Directions International since 2012 and an Adjunct Research Fellow with the Centre for Oceanian Studies at Sun Yat-sen University since 2013. His research interests are centred on China's regional relations and Sino-Australian relation.

Ferth Vandensteen Manaysay currently works as an Academic Research Associate at the School of Government, Ateneo de Manila University. He holds a Master's Degree in International Relations from the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University. His research interests on Southeast Asia (Indonesia and Philippines) include civil society and social movements, environmental politics, disaster management, and peace and security studies.

Lawrence McDonald-Colbert graduated with his Master's of Arts from the Graduate School of Political Science, Waseda University in 2020. His research focuses on conflict resolution, international state-building and capacity development in post-conflict societies. He has particular interests in the hybrid state and the intersection of Complexity Theory with international peacekeeping.

Dahlia Simangan is an Assistant Professor at the Network for Education and Research on Peace and Sustainability and the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Hiroshima University in Japan. Her research interests include peacebuilding and international relations in the Anthropocene. She authored International Peacebuilding and Local Involvement: A Liberal Renaissance? (Routledge, 2019).

Yuji Uesugi is a Professor of Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding at the Faculty of International Research and Education, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan. His fields of expertise and research interests include hybrid peacebuilding in Asia, UN peace operations, security sector reform and regional security in the Asia-Pacific. He has edited *Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

Sophie Shiori Umeyama graduated with her Master's of Arts from the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University in 2020. She researches and is interested in identity and memory in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the "comfort women" issue between South Korea and Japan.

KwokChung Wong is a Ph.D. Student at the Graduate School of International Culture and Communication Studies, Waseda University. His research interests include Chinese policies and peacebuilding. He has contributed co-authored chapters, China's Participation in Regional Conflict Resolution in Preventive Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific (World Scientific, 2020), and The ASEAN Regional Forum's Action-Oriented Preventive Diplomacy Mechanisms in the Rohingya Crisis in Case Studies on Preventive Diplomacy in Asia-Pacific (World Scientific, 2020).

Abbreviations

AfPak	Afghanistan and Pakistan
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
BBL	Bangsamoro Basic Law
BDA	Bangsamoro Development Agency
BIFF	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters
BLMI	Bangsamoro Leadership and Management Institute
BOL	Bangsamoro Organic Law
BPCA	Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BSG	Bangsamoro Study Group
BTA	Bangsamoro Transition Authority
BTC	Bangsamoro Transition Commission
CAB	Comprehensive Peace Agreement on Bangsamoro
CBCS	Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CFSI	Community and Family Services International
CIIS	China Institute of International Studies
CMEC	China Myanmar Economic Corridor
COP	Consolidation for Peace
CPEC	China Pakistan Economic Corridor
CPRN	Conflict Prevention and Response Network
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EU	European Union

FAB	Framework Agreement on Bangsamoro
FPA	Final Peace Agreement
GPH	Government of the Philippines
IAG	Institute for Autonomy and Governance
ICG	International Contact Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFFC	Independent Fact-Finding Committee
IID	Initiative for International Dialogue
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMNSJ	Independent Monk Network for Social Justice
IMT	International Monitoring Team
IPRA	Indigenous People's Rights Act
IUJ	International University of Japan
J-BIRD	Japan-Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPF	Japan Platform
KIO	Kachin Independence Organisation
KR	Khmer Rouge
LMT	Local Monitoring Team
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MOA-AD	Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MPC	Mindanao Peoples Caucus
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDPCC	National Directorate for Prevention of Community Conflict
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODANGO	Official Development Assistance Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
OPAC	Okinawa Peace Assistance Centre
PDIA	Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation
PPP	Public–Private Partnership
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
RESPECT	Recovery, Employment and Stability Program for Ex-combatants and Communities in Timor-Leste
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SDF	Self-Defence Forces
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOE	State-Owned Enterprise

TNF	The Nippon Foundation
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNFC	United Nationalities Federal Council
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNMISET	United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor
UNPKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operation
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWSA	United Wa State Army
WB	World Bank
WWII	Second World War

Introduction: Operationalisation of Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia

Yuji Uesugi

Overview of the Book

This study expands on the recent discussion presented in *Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia* (Uesugi 2020) which examined complex processes of negotiated and/or mediated hybridisation shaped through interactions among myriad of stakeholders including local, national, regional and international actors. While the focus of this study is related closely to the key arguments presented in the aforementioned study, it constitutes a stand-alone academic work seeking to revitalise the reappraised discussion on hybridity and peacebuilding led by Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016) from a distinctive angle of Asia.

The study does this in three ways. The first approach explores, both conceptually and empirically, the roles of both inside and outside peacebuilders in the process of hybridisation, which can be formed through an interplay between actors operating in the 'mid-space' or space between contending parties, between national and sub-national levels,

Y. Uesugi (✉)
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: uesugi@waseda.jp

1

and between insiders and outsiders (Uesugi 2020). The second approach adopts theoretical insights gained from the existing studies on 'complexity' and 'identity' as well as critical perspectives gained from the feminist approach to the notion of 'hybridity' as a step towards transforming it from a descriptive lens to a more analytical one so that it can better inform the practice of peacebuilding. The third approach enriches our understanding of the role of 'mid-space gatekeepers', who hold a key to contesting, adopting and adapting norms brought from outside, by drawing upon identity theories emphasising the significance of the process of 'othering' (Berreby 2008). By focusing on contextually unique mid-space actors in Asia, such as Buddhist monks and hybridised civil society organisations, it unpacks our presumed understanding about potential peacebuilders. The combined insights of the three approaches indicate that to operationalise hybrid peacebuilding theory, the analysis should not be limited to actors or agencies of peacebuilding but it should include their 'intersectionality' as underlying assumptions of complexity and identity stress the importance of relational aspects in a hybrid encounter. It is difficult to appreciate the process of hybridisation without grasping relationships which are fluid like a cascade.

To complement the abovementioned theoretical discussion, this study presents four empirical case studies from Asia; the first two offer insider's perspectives—Cambodia and Mindanao, the southern Philippines—and the other two provide outsider's perspectives from China and Japan. These Asian peacebuilders operate in 'statecentricity', in which national security is prioritised over realising human-centred governance (Howe 2018). It is no doubt that the rise of China as a global power is beginning to shape the rules in many areas and fields. Foreign direct investments, trade, development assistance, and peacekeeping are among few that China's influence is no longer negligible. Peacebuilding is no exception. Growing interests in the literature on the rise of China indicate that its anticipated impact on the existing norms and practices of peacebuilding could shake the foundation of the Western dominance (Lanteigne and Hirono 2012; Lee 2020).

In the context of Asia, feminist's demand for safeguarding the needs and interests of most marginalised in a peace process, and for reconceptualising the masculine structures of domination are more likely to be neglected in the discourse of hybrid peacebuilding. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) often act as spearheads for implementing feminist's perspectives. Under the supremacy of 'statecentricity', the four

cases in Asia—Cambodia and Mindanao as insiders and China and Japan as outsides—have revealed different styles of NGO's engagement in peacebuilding. While focusing explicitly on Asia, many of the arguments presented in this book are relevant to a general discussion surrounding the field of peacebuilding, and thus they can advance our understanding of hybrid peacebuilding both in theory and practice in Asia and beyond.

Roles of Outsiders in Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia

This study aims to offer a better understanding of the process of hybridisation in Asian peacebuilding by looking into activities taking place sometimes strategically but often spontaneously without any coordination nor orchestration among stakeholders. This objective is pursued by focusing on undertakings in the 'mid-space'. Lately, a perspective that subscribes to the notion of 'local turn' (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; de Coning 2013; Randazzo 2016; Lee 2020) or 'local ownership' (Donais 2012; Lee and Özerdem 2015; Lee 2019) is dominant in both theory and practice of peacebuilding. Building upon this trend, this study explores how outsiders can engage effectively in the process of hybridisation; how they can tap into local actors and resources effectively without jeopardising local ownership or causing critical rejection by local stakeholders, both of which would damage 'locally grounded legitimacy' (Clements and Uesugi 2020) of peacebuilding intervention and thus its sustainability.

According to Bargués-Pedreny and Randazzo (2018: 1543), "hybridity requires acknowledging that peacebuilders can do little to shape the course of events." If local ownership/empowerment is a key to successfully bringing sustainable peace, it is ethically as well as practically not recommendable for outside interveners to operate with a fixed set of worldviews projected through a liberal peace paradigm. For outsiders, the question is how to address the dilemmas of hybridity or "how to maintain local political frameworks necessary for autonomy, while both reforming and working with existing power structures and identity" (Richmond 2015: 54). Thus, the major puzzle examined in this study is related to this dilemma revolving around the quest for local ownership (ibid.: 61): Which forms of ownership, at which level and which local interests should be seen as representative of an 'authentic' and sustainably peaceful polity? Authentic for whom? What ensues when discrepancies

in this understanding occur? If the principle of local ownership is to be respected, the answer would be as follows: authenticity or local legitimacy should be negotiated and defined by local actors themselves rather than by external actors. This premise deprives the international peacebuilding planners of their power to control the process of hybridisation, which could lead to the emergence of negative forms of peace or illiberal peace (Simangan 2018). Temptation on the part of outside interveners to maintain their influence upon the process and outcome of hybridisation is criticised as a neo-colonial mindset (Richmond 2015: 64). If altruistic external interveners have to let go of their responsibility in helping to establish what Wallensteen (2015) calls 'quality peace' or post-war conditions that make peace sustainable, however, do they enjoy both local and international legitimacy? Are they supposed to be responsible for what is created on the ground in the aftermath of their intervention (Howe et al. 2020)?

These questions bring us back to the dilemma of hybridity. One way for outsiders to circumvent the dilemma is to pursue what Richmond (2015: 60) calls 'positive hybrid forms of peace' that does not include a compromise on the potential emancipatory and empathetic nature of peace. This implies that there is a role and responsibility on the side of external actors to support the genesis of positive forms of hybrid peace. This study argues that 'locally grounded legitimacy' is a key to rescue hybrid peacebuilding from the dilemma. The pursuit of empowering solutions embedded in plurality and relationality is a way forward to achieve 'quality peace'. The real question is: how can altruistic external interveners be connected to the national elite and grassroots stakeholders so that emerging hybrid peace would be based on the 'locally grounded legitimacy'?

To answer this, functions of mid-space actors are highlighted and investigated in this study. In Asian peacebuilding, outside peacebuilders are often powerless in the face of protected sovereignty as Asian states have sufficient power to exclude or circumvent the external intrusion and usurpation of their national sovereignty (Keethaponcalan 2020). Under such circumstances, outside intervention aiming to bring about changes at the level of grassroots communities seems not feasible. This is why it is essential for outside peacebuilders to establish trust and develop relationships with local mid-space gatekeepers who have access to both the top/national level and the bottom/grassroots level (Uesugi 2020).

Engagements and interactions in the mid-space are empirically explored in the subsequent case study chapters, in which peacebuilding efforts by China and Japan that do not fit into the Western prototype of liberal peacebuilding are observed. The presence of non-Western donors such as China, Japan, India, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore has posed an additional complication to Asian peacebuilding ventures in the Philippines, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Afghanistan. Having been the victims of Western colonisation and occupation by themselves, they do not necessarily operate in the same way as Western donors nor are they constrained morally by 'universal' norms and 'international' standards defined by the West. This may have unprecedented practical implications for peacebuilding in Asia where non-Western donors such as China are beginning to exert their influence on the practice of peacebuilding and development in the region (Takagi et al. 2019). In this study, therefore, peacebuilding efforts of two major non-Western actors, China and Japan, in several Asian contexts such as Myanmar, Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and Mindanao are reviewed to outline distinctive features of their peacebuilding styles, which so far have not given a high priority to liberal values on recalcitrant local communities (Ghimire 2019: 3), thus effectively avoiding the pitfalls of liberal peacebuilding.

From a Descriptive Lens to an Analytical Tool

In addition to examining the basic assumptions of hybrid peacebuilding theory, this study embarks on a difficult endeavour to operationalise such theory, advancing the practical utility of 'hybridity' beyond its descriptive power. Existing discussion on hybrid peacebuilding describes the process of hybridisation and possible outcomes of such a process to be a mixture of 'international' and 'local' values. This binary framing of reality has been criticised as will be illustrated in Chapter 2. The variations of international norms and the diversity in historical contexts, cultures, and political landscapes in each setting have suggested that such a binary worldview cripple us to overlook the important dynamism and complexity on the ground. In Chapter 3, complex theory is introduced as an alternative to the binary presumption, offering a more holistic view of the world where a myriad of actors operating in the mid-space are trying to influence the process and shape or reshape the outcome of hybridisation. The process of hybridisation is complex, and its outcome is dependent on unpredictable

interactions of multiple actors and factors, and thus, a simplistic and static epistemology is problematic. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of different unexpected paths, networks, and nodes that may exist or emerge in the intermediary mid-space.

The introduction of such complexities, however, seems to undermine the goal of operationalising hybrid peacebuilding theory, as it means to transform the theory into a more practitioner friendly and analytically robust tool. Randazzo (2016: 1360) identifies a possible dilemma of operationalising hybrid peacebuilding by saying that when hybridity is used as a tool to uncover unscripted and hidden practices of the everyday, it operates to make the invisible and blurry visible. This, she goes on and argues, runs contrary to the complexity perspective about the process that acknowledges the untraceable links that produce blurred hybrid identities (ibid.). How can such a dilemma be circumvented? Knowing this dilemma, how hybrid peacebuilding theory can better inform the practice of peacebuilding? Is there a way to comprehend dynamic and complex realities in a conceptually manageable manner? What needs to be done to increase the explanatory power of hybrid peacebuilding theory so that external interveners can prepare and equip themselves for more effective assistance?

Finding answers to these difficult but important questions is attempted in Chapter 4 where a typology of mid-space actors is discussed as a step towards operationalising hybrid peacebuilding theory. To solve these puzzles, this study borrows key insights from relevant discourses of relationality, complexity, identity and feminism, and discusses their implications for the operationalisation of hybrid peacebuilding. The typology presented in Chapter 4 helps reflective practitioners to analyse and engage with mid-space actors more effectively. Questions remain unanswered, however, as to how external interveners can design a proper intervention and anticipate their possible impact on the process in the midst of complex exchanges and constantly-changing surroundings. On this point, this study illustrates the utility of relational and systemic approaches, and proposes an alternative to binary, linear and static views of the process of hybridisation. The alternative framework aims to enhance the awareness of external peacebuilders about the local terrain of the relational landscape in which they intervene, and to serve as a set of analytical guidelines to prepare external peacebuilders for supporting efforts of insider-partial mediators to bridge gaps in conflict-affected societies.

Key Arguments

The abovementioned theoretical undertakings are complemented by empirical analyses that demonstrate the efficacy of an upgraded hybrid lens. As a prelude to the empirical chapters in this volume, the following highlights the underlying hinges between the following four auxiliary concepts for operationalising the thematic of hybridity and the premises of four case studies of Asian peacebuilding: (1) relationality, (2) complexity, (3) identity, and (4) feminism. Why they are considered pivotal for operationalising hybrid peacebuilding is elaborated below.

Relationality

Lederach (2005) advocated the need of a *Copernican* shift from 'know-how' to 'know-who' in the pursuit of peacebuilding. Building upon his actor-oriented approach, Uesugi (2020) argued that mid-space gatekeepers play key roles in bridging cleavages that exist in society. Uesugi and Kagawa (2020) introduced the concept of 'transformative relationships' as a key indicator for assessing the traits of mid-space gatekeepers who could serve effectively as bridge-builders. This book reiterates this perspective and advances an argument that the nature and magnitude of multidimensional relationships that mid-space actors can cultivate in a given setting is one of the most significant factors explaining the process and outcome of hybrid peacebuilding. As the process of hybridisation is characterised as a journey of constant negotiation and mediation among different stakeholders, an outcome—yet not a terminal—of such a process would be shaped through unregulated and spontaneous interactions among them.

To increase our ability to grasp the dynamic and interactive nature of hybridisation, this study takes two qualitatively different but closely intertwined approaches. The first approach examines power relations among different actors within a complex system. This approach is based on the assumption that any peacebuilding intervention will instigate multiple chain reactions which are unpredictable, and thus denying a simple linear causal attribution to hybrid peacebuilding. At the same time, it assumes that a sound visualisation of power relations among key gatekeepers in the mid-space helps external peacebuilders to navigate in such uncharted waters in the hinterland. The second approach focuses on the identity of

mid-space actors involved in a peace process. It is based on the assumption that while chain reactions triggered by a series of peacebuilding undertakings in complex systems are hard to predict and control, gatekeepers employ their 'transformative relationships' to bridge existing and emerging gaps in a conflict-affected society so that peacebuilding efforts can bring about 'quality peace'.

Chapter 5 demonstrates that 'transformative relationships' of mid-space actors are shaped by their 'identity' vis-à-vis others involved, and the environment in which they operate. Thus the success and failure of bridge-building by particular mid-space actors can be explained partially by their relational identity, i.e., how they see others and how others see them in a given context. Since it is difficult to forecast what sort of chain reactions a certain intervention on a particular relationship can cause, international peacebuilding planners cannot pre-design the course of intervention to induce positive changes in gatekeepers' identity and their perceived identity in a given setting. At the same time, if they presuppose and prepare for the practical necessity of adapting and adjusting constantly to dynamic situations, they may have a better chance of supporting local mid-space actors to nurture their 'transformative relationships' and use them to bridge cleavages in a society. To operate under this premise, outsiders have to be ready to abandon the fixed cookie-cutter blueprint approach merely focusing on a mechanical cause-and-effect analysis applying typical logical frameworks for project formulation. This is one of prescriptive insights that this study presents.

Complexity

Building upon the perspective of relationality, this study reflects on the momentum that exists in the literature, and applies complexity theory to peacebuilding. Brusset et al. (2016: 2) argue that "Complexity may bring new ideas, methods, and tools to peacebuilding practice". According to them, complexity allows us to comprehend how complex systems function and incorporate new realities into our methods, so that we can exert influence more effectively and carefully on such complex systems (ibid.: 3). By applying complexity theory to the security sector reform, a particular field of peacebuilding, Ansorg and Gordon (2019: 2) examined the multitude of different actors within and beyond the state, and identified complex patterns of co-operation and contestation within reform initiatives. They concluded that the multiplicity of norms and actors complicated efforts to

build peace (ibid.). Drawing from the discourse on complexity, they illustrated how proliferation of and contestation between actors, and between their normative positions, may question assumptions of 'success' and 'failure' of international intervention (ibid.: 5).

In Chapter 3, it is argued that the theory of complexity offers a perspective helpful for grasping the dynamic process of hybridisation, one of which is the significance of intersectionality or the nodes of relationships. Uesugi (2020) introduced the notion of a 'dialogue platform' to highlight such intersectionality and examined the roles and functions of mid-space intermediaries who operate as a node, or bridge, which run across different cleavages. This study offers additional insights in the process of hybridisation by employing an innovative approach proposed by de Coning (2018: 317) called 'adaptive peacebuilding' in an effort to operationalise hybrid peacebuilding theory. The insight gained from 'adaptive peacebuilding' is that interplays between international peacebuilders and local stakeholders are iterative processes of mutual learning and adaptation. This premise implies that outsiders have to commit themselves to a long-term engagement in peacebuilding endeavours and be ready to abandon results-based budgeting in which budget formulation is guided by predefined short-term and measurable objectives set by outside interveners to be accountable to their donors, which has prevented international peacebuilders from investing in time-consuming but critical relationship-building with mid-space actors in the hinterland. This is another prescriptive insight presented in this study.

Identity

What increases the complexity of hybrid peacebuilding is the inclusion of a wide variety of actors who work together to achieve positive peace, suitable and beneficial to all those affected by it. This predisposes hybrid peacebuilding to lay explicit focus on the concept of identity which is intrenched in mid-space gatekeepers partial to the peace process. This study assumes that the path of a peace process is determined, at least in part, by identity factors. This is because in dealing with the complex social reality, people employ 'cognitive fames' to examine, categorise and make sense of the situations and their experiences. Frames define our perceptions, understandings and views of reality, by so doing, they help us systematise our experience and provide normative prescriptions for

possible actions (Korostelina and Uesugi 2019). It is important to underline that a frame defines not only our ways of interpretation of specific situations but also it decides what particular issues, incidents or conditions receive our attention. Hence, being a social boundary maker, mid-space gatekeepers have the power to set the frames that act as a device to draw borders around what is and is not important (Gardner 2003).

Identity frames include ideas about who they are, what characteristics they share with their group(s) and how they should relate to others (Ibid.). When people view themselves as a part of a larger group, position, institution, or set of values, they behave in ways that protect the markers of this specific identity (ibid.). Gatekeepers who are the guardians of the sense of self (beliefs, values and group affiliations) provide such markers of shared identity or 'identity frames' to their constituencies. Because gatekeepers possess power to impose the shared identity frames on their followers, it makes sense for outside interveners to work with them. In theory, outsiders can expect that gatekeepers exercise their influence to reframe their perceived reality on the ground, and marshal collective support from the grassroots community members for the planned intervention. Because 'identity' is what ties gatekeepers to their followers, it is important for outside interveners to appreciate how gatekeepers' identity affects their preferences, priorities, behaviours and decisions, as their identity and group affiliation influence on how they view and respond to a given situation (ibid.).

A challenge in practice, however, is that gatekeepers are in an inherently difficult position to change their identity as their primary task is to defend their social boundaries. It is true that identity is changeable and under certain circumstances gatekeepers have shifted their dominant identity to serve as bridge-builders. When gatekeepers' identities are threatened or challenged through intervention, they respond normally in ways that reinforce their allegiance to their group affiliations. Although Richmond (2008: 457) argues that hybrid peacebuilding is valued as a realm of complex interconnectedness where multiple actors and networks exist, interact and overlay, "without necessarily resulting in the domination of one core identity or idea", the case study of Cambodian Buddhist monks presented in Chapter 5 demonstrates that under certain conditions it has been proven otherwise. The Cambodian 'peace' monks, whose attributes as gatekeepers stem from their clerical status shared among the affiliated lay followers, revealed that their transformative relationships worked in a horizontal direction but failed in vertical bridge-building.

While serving as the very source of local and international legitimacy, their primary identity as monks rooted in religious faith and their secondary identity as peace activists limited their flexibility in serving as a vertical bridge-builder whose tasks sometimes compelled them to over-step established Buddhist doctrines and to confront with the authoritarian regime.

As pointed out in Chapter 4 and examined in Chapter 5, identity can serve as both a connector and a divider. Especially in conflict situations, the 'us versus them' frame or the in-group/out-group mindset becomes cognitively prevailing. Under such a psychological condition, while identity serves as a connector that consolidates the shared foundation of an in-group, it has the tendency to act as a divider, deepening the gap between 'us and them'. In theory, gatekeepers have the potential to become a bridge-builder, but in reality it is very difficult for them to uphold the spirit of inclusivity as their primary role as boundary keepers forces them to draw a line between them and their adversaries. The identity of gatekeepers can work against what hybrid peacebuilding advocates for: blurring identity boundaries and fostering interconnectedness and plurality (Randazzo 2016: 1356). Nevertheless, gatekeepers can become bridge-builders in a conducive environment in which they maintain firm grips on their followers by framing their expectations and addressing and their needs.

Given the fluid and complex nature of identity that influences the processes and outcomes of hybridisation, identity frames can turn into either tools or obstacles for gatekeepers depending on the circumstance. It is therefore argued in this study that identity is a key factor that affects the condition for gatekeepers to reach beyond their in-group and conduct bridge-building across social boundaries. Gatekeepers may commit themselves to either bridge-building or spoiling, depending on the context in which their overriding identity is perceived and defined. Outside intervenors should not be surprised at the act of spoiling committed by gatekeepers nor should they be disguised by a superficial and static identity of gatekeepers as it is variable. Upon facing spoiling repercussions on the peace process, outside interveners might have to reconsider and adjust their approach, rather than trying to dissuade gatekeepers from spoiling. As Chapter 4 suggests the act of spoiling can be regarded as an opportunity for outside interveners to meet the requirements for being granted a locally grounded legitimacy. This assumption guides outside peacebuilders to a more inclusive and adaptive practice of peacebuilding,

urging them to extend their reach to a wide range of mid-space actors. Upon intervention, peacebuilders have to be aware of their epistemological prejudice (including cultural, linguistic and professional ones) as well as their predisposed habit of labelling stakeholders and being selective about whom they work with. Their stakeholder mapping and analysis must reflect the dynamic and complex nature of the reality, paying special attention to the power of identity. This is the third prescriptive insight presented in this study.

Feminist's Perspective

When focusing on relational and actor-based approaches to peacebuilding, hybrid peacebuilding theory offers a useful lens and a practical tool. However, hybrid peacebuilding approaches tend to focus on influential players both at local and international levels in negotiating, mediating, defining and refining the emerging hybrid order and peace, and they tend to neglect other actors who have very limited influence upon the peace process. By criticising conventional approaches, feminists underline the importance of including marginalised and minority groups as well as moving away from lingering colonial attitudes in the peace process. As highlighted in Chapter 2, feminists argue strongly for the establishment of a positive peace and the eradication of those illiberal structural factors which could endure into the post-conflict orders and hierarchies.

In Chapter 5, a special attention is paid to Cambodian 'peace' monks who constitute a minority group in the Buddhist clerical community (in terms of not following the mainstream, state-centric Buddhist's teaching), and their effectiveness as bridge-builders is assessed by the function that their paramount identity played. On the issue of representation for marginalised groups of people, pitfalls or dangers of hybrid peacebuilding are identified in the structure of multi-track peacebuilding. A sub-national minority who lives along with a national-level minority is often not included in the peace process as traditional approaches to peacemaking have focused on incumbent-insurgency confrontation at the national level (Wilson 2020). Indigenous Peoples in Mindanao are a case in point, which is covered in Chapter 6. Being non-Muslim sub-national minority residents in Mindanao caught in the midst of war of national liberation fought by a national-level minority of Muslims called Moros against the government of the Philippines, Indigenous Peoples were often marginalised in the 'Bangsamoro' peace process. Likewise, women,

youth and poor are often not included in traditional peace processes. By unpacking the concept of civil society and analysing empirically the roles and functions played by civil society organisations in Mindanao, Chapter 6 sheds light on the conventionally silenced group of people, and discusses that civil society organisations served as a vehicle promoting Indigenous People's participation and women empowerment. It demonstrates that perspectives of Indigenous People were included in the peace process by utilising civil society organisations as a platform and employing relevant international trends and norms to legitimise their views.

Eastphalian Hybrid Peacebuilding

This study is a response to emerging interests in peacebuilding actors in Asia and the impact their practice has on the existing liberal order, which is built upon the Western values and practices. In other words, it contributes to a debate about whether 'Eastphalian' orders (Kim 2009) are emerging as alternative narratives on hybrid peacebuilding by examining approaches taken by two dominant regional powers in Asia, China and Japan, in Chapters 7 and 8 respectively. Following the footsteps established by the companion volume, *Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia* (Uesugi 2020), knowledge gaps in the discourse on hybrid peacebuilding are bridged in this study by providing case studies of Asian-led peacebuilding.

A key added-value of this study, therefore, is to share empirical analyses of the peacebuilding practice in Asia so far overlooked by the Western scholarship on peacebuilding, in which Asian contexts are treated as subjects of peacebuilding intervention such as Cambodia, Myanmar, Mindanao, Nepal, Timor-Leste, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Aceh (Indonesia) to name but a few (Uesugi 2014). In contrast, this study sheds light on Asian peacebuilders and examines their efforts on the ground, exploring their potential as a 'hybrid peacebuilding facilitator' (Uesugi 2018). In English language literature, Japanese approaches to peacebuilding have been covered mainly by Japanese (Tatsumi 2016; Tatsumi and Kennedy 2017) and scholars from Asia such as Lam (2009) from Singapore. Attention paid to Chinese approaches to peacebuilding is a relatively recent phenomena as many of the academic work on China focuses on China's peacekeeping (Lanteigne and Hirono 2012) or the Belt and Road Initiative, a notable exception is the report of the Saferworld entitled *China and conflict-affected states* (Campbell et al. 2012). Thus, this book contributes to filling the gap in the existing literature.

Another added value of this study is that, through empirical studies of the Chinese and Japanese peacebuilding efforts, it offers a way to improve current models of peacebuilding. The findings of these case studies suggest that their approaches, while sharing many similarities, have distinctive features between them and between them and liberal peacebuilding approaches. Both China and Japan prefer to operate under the Westphalian principles of respecting sovereignty and avoiding forceful military intervention. At the same time, however, they both have attempted innovative undertakings that deserve more than a pacing notice in the literature and practice of hybrid peacebuilding, which will be elaborated in Chapters 7 and 8.

Structure of the Book

This book has five components. This introductory chapter and the subsequent literature review chapter serve as a backgrounder to this study. The second part encompasses two conceptual chapters laying the theoretical foundations of this study by introducing concepts such as complexity, adaptive peacebuilding, mid-space actors and gatekeepers. The following two chapters constitute the third component that offers both theoretical discussion and empirical analysis focusing Cambodia and Mindanao, providing insider's perspective on hybrid peacebuilding. The next section, which includes two empirical chapters focusing on peacebuilding efforts of China and Japan as outsiders, outlines the main features of these approaches from an angle of hybrid peacebuilding. Finally, the concluding chapter synthesises the key findings and arguments. Before closing this introductory chapter, a set of previews of the subsequent chapters are provided as follows.

Chapter 2: *A Brief Sketch of Hybrid Peacebuilding* by Uesugi, Deekeling and Ingstedt connects hybrid calls and relevant criticisms to the development of peacebuilding debates at large. It briefly presents ontological aspects of peacebuilding, as they may be found both in academia and practice. It also explains core arguments in favour of adopting hybrid peacebuilding, and shows how the concept of hybridity has been criticised in the discourse of peacebuilding both within its own circles and by others. Showcasing the various sides of peacebuilding, and hybridity specifically, this literature review chapter sets the stage for a new set of discussions in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3: Hybridity, Adaptive Peacebuilding and Complexity by de Coning and McDonald-Colbert makes the case for the inclusion of a complexity ontology and an adaptive methodology into the hybrid peacebuilding debate. International peacebuilders can assist and facilitate the voluntary emergence of self-sustainable and resilient social institutions through the peace process, but if they interfere too much, they would undermine the self-organising processes necessary to sustain resilient social institutions. Based on this premise, this chapter introduces 'adaptive peacebuilding' to address the dilemma of hybrid peacebuilding, by so doing it contributes to operationalising hybrid peacebuilding theory. It provides a conceptual guidelines with an adaptive methodology where peacebuilders engage actively in a process to sustain peace and resolve conflicts by employing an iterative process of learning and adaptation. It argues that a complexity informed approach to hybrid peacebuilding can safeguard, stimulate, facilitate and create the space for societies to develop resilient capacities for self-organisation.

Chapter 4: Bridging Gaps: From a Descriptive to a Practical Mid-Space Actor Typology? by Deekeling and Simangan puts forward an argument that the concept of hybridity sheds light on the complexity of conflict settings. Hybridity as a lens helps to analyse the participation of all actors involved and entangled in a social network of normative and political power, while avoiding theoretical binaries that oversimplify the process of post-conflict peacebuilding. The chapter stresses that what lacks is a practical application of hybridity in peacebuilding that engages actively with bottom/local or grassroots, top/national and international actors through mediation in the mid-space to create sustainable peace. Given this practical shortcoming of hybridity, a conceptual review of mid-space actors as gatekeepers and their capacities to enable dialogue among opposing parties are presented. It offers an analytical frame for investigating the encounters between insider-partial mediators and outside peacebuilders in and around the mid-space, which is applied to the subsequent empirical chapters.

Chapter 5: The Power of Identity in Hybrid Peacebuilding: Buddhist Monks in Post-Conflict Cambodia by Umeyama and Brehm connects the concept of identity to mid-space actors involved in hybrid peacebuilding. The power of identity draws attention to the process of framing and othering as important factors contributing to successful bridge-building across diverse actors during hybrid peacebuilding. This chapter focuses on the role of identity of Buddhist monks in Cambodia, and examines how

and why they both succeeded and failed in their roles as bridge-builders. It is argued that identity frames and networks of mid-space actors predispose them to excel in particular fields and fail in others. Through the case study of Cambodian 'peace' monks, it demonstrates that the concept of identity serves as an useful indicator for explaining why and how a mid-space actor may transform from being a bridge-builder into a spoiler during the peacebuilding process.

Chapter 6: Frictional Binaries: Hybridity, Civil Society, and Liberal-Local Peacebuilding in Mindanao by Manaysay and Espesor argues that the concept of hybrid peacebuilding has highlighted the need to empower local civil society groups. Using examples from Mindanao, this chapter contends that the debates on liberal-local hybridity can most meaningfully gain from asking questions not only about the processes of internationalisation and localisation, but also about the ways in which hybrid mechanisms are able to produce more or less stable outcomes. By turning into the agency of civil society actors, it suggests that the concept of hybridity, which is often represented using dichotomised categories such as 'liberal-international' and 'illiberal-local', tends to oversimplify the conceptual intricacies and dynamic processes between top-down and bottom-up approaches. The analysis in the chapter illustrates the manner civil society actors are able to negotiate their complexities within the frictional binaries of liberal ideas, institutions and resources vis-à-vis local practices, power relations and norms.

Chapter 7: Rise of China's Developmental Peace: Prospects for Asian Hybrid Peacebuilding by Wong and Li claims that without a clear peacebuilding policy at home, China does not take a systematic and unified approach to peacebuilding, although its 'developmental peace' has many traits that resemble the pursuit of hybrid and adaptive peacebuilding undertaken to compensate for the shortcomings of liberal peacebuilding. This chapter demonstrates how China has approached to conflict-affected societies in Asia, especially their mid-space actors, and how the Belt and Road Initiative has been employed to generate a synergy with 'developmental peace' by providing economic incentives to gatekeepers such as armed ethnic groups in Myanmar and the Taliban in Afghanistan. While the chapter identifies the shortcomings of China's approach, it maintains that China's 'developmental peace' can be regarded as a form of hybrid peacebuilding with 'Chinese characteristics' and be an alternative to liberal peacebuilding.

Chapter 8: *Japan's Peacebuilding and Mid-Space Actors: A Bridge between the West and the Rest* by Uesugi and Deekeling examines Japan's peacebuilding assistance in conflict-affected societies in Asia, and assesses Japan's potential to emerge as a hybrid peacebuilding facilitator. By reviewing Japan's flagship projects in Timor-Leste, Myanmar and Mindanao, the chapter shows that Japan holds the ability to establish trust-relationships with top/national leaders of the aid-recipient countries through apolitical, non-intrusive and long-term approaches that Japanese actors display. It demonstrates that how Japanese actors have developed relationships with mid-space actors in conflict-affected societies where and when access of other donors were denied. While the chapter identifies several shortcomings of the Japanese approach such as the limited inclusion of stakeholders and unequal distribution of peace dividend, it concludes that Japan can emerge as a hybrid peacebuilding facilitator if these shortcomings are addressed.

Chapter 9: *Conclusion* by Uesugi, Deekeling, Umeyama and McDonald-Colbert summarises the findings of the previous chapters and presents the harnessing arguments among them. The goal is to evaluate whether or not the existing gap between hybrid peacebuilding theory and its operationalisation has been successfully closed. It reiterates the key points of the study by using a complexity-informed framework and revisiting the mid-space actor typology that is proposed as a link between the analytical framework and the practical application. It concludes that mid-space actors could provide a viable focal point in encouraging the establishment of self-resilient social institutions from within without dictating the content of such emergencies.

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A Brief Sketch of Hybrid Peacebuilding

Yuji Uesugi, Anna Deekeling, and Anton Ingstedt

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the existing literature on peace-building and identify the gaps in different peacebuilding theories. The central emphasis is placed on hybrid peacebuilding theory, which serves as an overarching theoretical underpinning of this study. With an aim of operationalising hybrid peacebuilding theory this chapter assesses various critique and offers ways to overcome these gaps.

While much has been written on the various ontological dimensions of peacebuilding, this study seeks to highlight elements of one specific strand of theory and practice: the notion of hybridity. Conventional

Y. Uesugi (✉) · A. Deekeling
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: uesugi@waseda.jp

A. Deekeling
e-mail: annadeekeling@fuji.waseda.jp

A. Ingstedt
Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland
e-mail: anton@ingstedt.se

approaches to peacebuilding have focused on the liberal practice of state-building, under which liberal institutions are constructed (de Leon and Tager 2016). In stark contrast, hybrid peacebuilding approaches focus on the dynamic mechanisms of interactions and relationships (Uesugi 2020). Mac Ginty and Sanghera (2012: 3) describe hybridity as "composite forms of practice, norms and thinking that emerge from the introduction of different groups, worldviews and activity". They call for a two-fold understanding of post-conflict settings: one as a historical construction and the other as a living creature that is constantly shaped by dynamic interactions by different factors and actors.

Before outlining the key features of hybrid peacebuilding theory, conventional understandings of peacebuilding theory and practice are briefly discussed, which is followed by a digest of key approaches relevant to hybrid peacebuilding such as 'local turn', 'hybridity' and 'feminist perspectives'. Subsequently, a brief outline of hybrid peacebuilding theory and practice is offered by introducing existing critiques and indicating ways to refute these criticisms.

Theory and Practice of Peacebuilding

Before diving into the discussion on hybrid peacebuilding, it is crucial to understand the general debates surrounding peacebuilding in order to fully grasp the characteristics and traits of hybrid approaches. Some attempted to summarise the essentials of peacebuilding including Chetail and Jütersonke (2015) who have conducted a comprehensive review of the existing literature on peacebuilding, and Keethaponcalan (2020) who has made a concise review of the literature focusing on the situation in Asia. Rigual (2018), on the other hand, has offered re-thinking of the ontologies of peacebuilding. The following does not aim to recapitulate these previous accounts and instead seeks to provide excerpts of some commonly discussed dimensions of peacebuilding to serve as a backgrounder for the later discussion on hybrid peacebuilding in this study.

The United Nations (UN) (2009: 1) describes peacebuilding as activity to set space for opportunities of creating "basic security, deliver peace dividends, shore up and build confidence in the political process, and strengthen core national capacity to lead peacebuilding efforts thereby beginning to lay the foundations for sustainable development". The proclaimed focus lies in strengthening national ownership during or in the

immediate aftermath of a conflict. Another useful definition is provided by Interpeace (2015: 2), which defines peacebuilding as "local and national capacities for peace (values and attitudes; social processes and relationships; political and social institutions) necessary to incrementally and effectively overcome the dynamics of conflict that lead to polarisation, violence and destruction".

Rigual (2018) presented a summary of trends in peacebuilding by categorising its theory and practice into various discourses, of which four are particularly prominent: (1) economic, (2) liberal, (3) critical, and (4) feminist peacebuilding. Among them, critical peacebuilding continues to attract the largest audience in academia and the main strand of discussion on hybrid peacebuilding falls into this classification. While this study follows the steps of critical peacebuilding, it also seeks to harness the other peacebuilding approaches, acknowledging their unique contribution to the academic field of peacebuilding (Wallis et al. 2018; Keethaponcalan 2020).

Economic peacebuilding prescribes the promotion of fiscal, labour and market reforms as a means to realise international peace. The assumption is that conflicts arise in economically stressed situations, meaning that outsiders should promote development through providing loans, donations and investments to address economic grievances. This approach is known as the Washington Consensus that advocates structural adjustment programmes (Marangos 2009). Both Chinese peacebuilding endeavours, introduced in Chapter 7, and Japanese peacebuilding endeavours, introduced in Chapter 8, have adopted this approach, focusing on providing development and investment to countries experiencing poverty or economic stagnation as these approaches operate on the premise that economic disparities and grievances cause conflict (Abb 2018).

Contrastingly, liberal peacebuilding assumes that political grievances and democratic immaturity constitute the greatest cause of conflict. This approach was widely adopted in early peacebuilding attempts made by the UN in Kosovo and Timor-Leste, among other post-conflict settings (Paris 1997). As liberal peacebuilding heavily depends on the creation and expansion of liberal institutions to bring sustainable peace, its main tool for peacebuilding revolved around various democratisation measures. Democratisation through the construction of state institutions and political decentralisation are considered key to both reacting to and preventing eruptions of violence. This approach, however, evidenced shortcomings in both appropriate planning and execution. It was criticised for

imprinting Western liberal norms in conflict-affected societies in a quasi-imperialist manner, which left behind rather unstable political structures and economic development (Nadarajah and Rampton 2015).

Because liberal peacebuilding achieved few sustained outcomes, a critical view on the utility of liberal peacebuilding emerged, leading to the rise of critical peacebuilding (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2009). Critical peacebuilding has mainstreamed the 'local turn', based on the assumption that "inclusion and participation can overcome the colonial/imperialistic shape of liberal peacebuilding and strengthen peacebuilding initiatives" (Rigual 2018: 159).

Likewise, feminist peacebuilding argues for the inclusion of various actors in peace processes, especially those previously hidden or silenced such as women or other marginalised groups (Hudson 2000). With an aim to shed light on structural causes of conflict, it engages critically with militarisation as well as masculinist conceptions and institutionalisations of states and societies to understand why violent rather than pacific behaviour is chosen as a means to deal with the situation (Rigual 2018: 159). Feminist activists have advocated for structural transformation, demilitarisation, gender equality, social justice, inclusive participation, and the reshaping of capitalism to be included in peacebuilding endeavours, through consultative and bottom-up designs, and through gender-sensitive budgeting (ibid. 2018; Coomaraswamy 2015).

From Local Turn to Hybrid Peacebuilding

Local Turn

With the mainstreaming of critical peacebuilding in academia a fundamental shift in what is addressed through peacebuilding had occurred. The trend is moving away from technocratic programmatic activities with a clear blueprint for goals and outcomes, and steers toward political undertakings in conflict-affected societies that have a direct impact on the everyday experience of actors on the ground (de Coning 2018). The framework of peacebuilding endeavours must in this light reflect the understanding of reality held by actors in the setting, which are rooted in the specific historic context of power relations, norms and expectations (ibid.). A narrow definition of peace and a skewed understanding of how peace can be built, which are based on Western images of 'justice' and 'legitimacy', would not work in a different social context, considering

that people may have varied expectations about peace and their interpretation of what constitutes the world may be quite different from those of Western donors (Richmond and Frank 2009).

Such a critical view against the conventional Western-centric approaches to peacebuilding has led to the emergence of the 'local turn', which seeks to avoid the pitfalls of an imposed peace. Critical scholars such as Donais (2008, 2018) and Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) explored ways to place the 'local' at the centre of peacebuilding endeavours. Although locals have been marginalised in liberal peacebuilding, critical scholars shed light on locals who live in and experience the very context, and they themselves are the constituting elements (Richmond 2014).

Hybridity

Building on the local turn, Mac Ginty and Sanghera (2012) stressed the relevance of the local context in relation to the contribution that international actors can make in the field of peacebuilding. Hybridity as a social process of emergence can be witnessed in both fragile social settings and seemingly consolidated settings. Each social, cultural, and political structure is a result of prior hybridisation and thus a pure point of departure does not exist (Belloni 2012: 23). This assumption was revisited by Kent et al. (2018: 1), who pointed out that hybridity has been employed as a conceptual tool in a wide range of academic disciplines including the biological sciences, social sciences and even literature and literary criticism. In social science, hybridity is defined as the outcome of interactions amongst hegemonic practices, and as the attempt to decolonise peoples, territories and knowledge (Richmond 2014). Hybridity became prominent in the discourses of identity, culture, economic and power relations, and political systems (Kent et al. 2018).

Hybridity emerges from local resistance and frictions between 'inside' and 'outside' normative frameworks (Björkdahl and Höglund 2013). Neither local nor international actors are free from context, yet their experiences can benefit each other and create an opportunity for the emergence of new and more resilient social structures that can strengthen conflict-affected communities. This is why local resistance should not be seen as an obstacle, but rather as a potential as locals carry a more refined view of the context, which can better inform and improve the practice of peacebuilding assistance by outside interveners. Besides, in both theory

and practice, it is usually difficult to distinguish where the 'local' stops and the 'international' begins (Richmond 2014).

Hybridity is perceived as an opportunity for engagement between local and international knowledge, thereby utilising international capacities to appreciate the specific context found in the everydayness of individuals who live in the epicentre. Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013: 764) took a step to overcome the dichotomy of local versus international and analysed the concept of hybridity from a pluralist point of view and defined peace as hybrid, multiple and often agonistic.

The process of mixing, interpreting and adapting is where the core argument of hybridity lies. Communication among actors and institutions in a conflict-affected society is highly dynamic and diverse, and therefore, constant reconsideration and reassessment of the given circumstances and interactions amongst various factors and actors are necessary (Mac Ginty and Sanghera 2012). Consequently, it becomes vital to include as many stakeholders as possible to ensure an inclusive and comprehensive peacebuilding approach that benefits all spheres of society (ibid.).

Thus, hybrid peacebuilding seeks to address the lack of attention to the local context, and the failure of liberal peacebuilding in a situation where the aid-recipient state is strong enough to deny intrusive outside intervention for statebuilding. The proponents of hybrid peacebuilding are against the conventional approaches to peacebuilding through which liberal state institutions have been merely imposed upon without paying sufficient attention to the local context. Keethaponcalan (2020), for example, pointed out the mismatch between Western-liberal norms and the Asian context. Since the social structures of the West and those of Asia are not identical, each has been shaped through a unique mix of tradition, culture, religion, family structure and social behaviour. Caution must be exercised to avoid colonialist, racist and sexist legacies that may still linger in foreign politics when considering the role of international peacebuilding (Wallis 2012; Ismail 2008). Thus, hybrid approaches can help outsiders to recognise the strategies of locals who resist both overt and subtle forms of colonisation and domination (Richmond 2014).

The danger of divorcing liberal ideas from hybrid peacebuilding is that certain values can be left behind as they may be unnoticed or unconceived by local actors due to different cognitive frameworks and worldviews they hold. It would be beneficial to move away from labelling 'democratic peace' and 'liberal peacebuilding' as Western concepts, and adopt contextually diverse concepts of governance, democracy, market economy,

human rights and sovereignty that are decolonised from the restraints of Western domination. Keethaponcalan (2020) argues that democracy, human rights, and good governance should not be disregarded simply as Western values as they are considered 'universal'. By introducing the hybrid lens, anthropological variations of these values are allowed to co-exist, which effectively make them truly 'universal'. By eliminating Western-centric 'colonial arrogance' and allowing non-Western expectations to shape these values, hybrid peacebuilding can lead a formation of universal values, thereby transforming the approach of Western intervention to fruitful emancipatory peacebuilding interplay. Hybridisation, therefore, constitutes a way to incorporate the values that liberal peacebuilding proposes with locally grounded legitimacy (Clements and Uesugi 2020). While aiming to empower local actors to define and shape the values, hybrid peacebuilding creates room for improving the real-life implementation of structures and concepts that do not easily align with Western-liberal equivalents.

Feminist Perspectives

Feminist perspectives underscore the importance of including the voices of those who are traditionally marginalised in society (Hudson 2000). This approach resonates with core values of hybrid peacebuilding as it, too, gives primacy to mainstreaming equal participation in peacebuilding while guaranteeing the specific needs of women and girls are included in peace dialogues and subsequent political processes. In practice, feminist perspectives are often implemented through gender mainstreaming programmes, and its argument for equal participation of 'women' resembles hybrid peacebuilding's calls for inclusion of 'locals'.

While both feminist and hybrid peacebuilding approaches underline the significance of diversifying the actors incorporated in the peace process, one additional perspective that the feminist approach brings is its distinctive conceptualisation of violence. It seeks to improve the concepts developed by Galtung (1969, 1990) on the categorisations of violence and the prerequisites for positive peace. It argues that war and other forms of fighting are intertwined, as they constitute a network of expressions of violence. Cockburn (2004: 43) proposes that "gender links violence at different points on a scale reaching from the personal to the international". This thinking is highlighted by the fact that women experience violence in different ways than men both during times of war and peace

(Rigual 2018). For example, men often make up the majority of homicide victims, while women tend to be the main victims of intimate partner homicide (Geneva Declaration 2015). Feminist perspectives that advocate for including a plethora of voices can expand the analytical horizons of hybrid peacebuilding. The consciousness for varying experiences can be extended to not only women but also other marginalised and indigenous groups as discussed in the case studies of insider perspectives of hybrid peacebuilding in Chapters 5 and 6 of this volume.

Thus, feminist perspectives can widen the scope of hybrid peacebuilding. They can make hybrid peacebuilding more empathetic to societal harm and responsive to the need for inclusion of neglected perspectives. Feminist peacebuilding insists on developing a critical understanding of how societal norms affect violent behaviour, especially by re-shaping militarised norms and stereotypes in society. For example, masculinity norms affect the roots of violence, such norms serve as a hotbed for forceful actions (Stiehm 2000). Revealing how norms and stereotypes contribute to violence makes it possible to examine critically how a particular form of deeply embedded violence has been constructed in a given society. While feminist scholarship is at the forefront of shedding light on structural violence, hybrid peacebuilding theory has incorporated feminist's perspectives into the major discourse of the supremacy of the ethnographic approach to peacebuilding (Millar 2014a).

Hybrid peacebuilding underlines the significance of mid-space actors who can bridge existing cleavages in a society. Likewise, from the standpoint of feminist peacebuilding, it becomes crucial to identify means of finding and interacting with these mid-space actors who act as intermediaries to bring perspectives of underrepresented groups of people at the grassroots to the peace process. This task encompasses a preferably full understanding of the time (past, present and future) and space that can be enhanced by considering a wide range of perspectives, which is the essence of hybrid peacebuilding.

CRITIQUE OF HYBRID PEACEBUILDING

Pitfalls of Binaries

Hybrid peacebuilding has gained academic prominence by criticising liberal peacebuilding and attempting to reconfigure the dichotomic

conceptualisation between 'liberal' and 'illiberal' or 'Western' and 'non-Western' as such binaries tend to oversimplify the given context and overlook its complexity (Peterson 2012). Ironically, hybrid peacebuilding theory has been criticised for falling into this very pitfall. The emphasis on the mixture of two components—traditional/modern, liberal/illiberal, local/international to name but a few—is the most distinctive feature of hybrid peacebuilding that separates it from liberal peacebuilding (ibid.). Although these binary frameworks aid researchers to shape their cognition of conflict situations, the reality is more than just a mere sum of two contesting concepts. Many advocates of hybrid peacebuilding theory attach importance to the multifaceted, fluid and dynamic nature of peacebuilding settings. This method, however, caused a misperception among heretics that proponents of hybrid peacebuilding theory were trapped in a pitfall of dichotomies.

As hybrid peacebuilding often receives criticisms on its flood of binary conceptions, feminist approaches could also fall into the trap of binary conceptions of gender, which has been constructed within the framework of Western norms and values. The concept of gender should avoid being seen as promoting a binary (Mohanty 1988). An idiosyncratic nature of the concept of gender should be embraced and a historical and cultural diversity of the concept be accepted. Conventional gender discourses have succeeded in mainstreaming the Western perspective of gender in the practice of the UN, but they have not succeeded in establishing the plurality and fluidity of gender. What postcolonial feminist criticism implies is that hybrid peacebuilding should expand its analytical horizons and incorporate perspectives of underrepresented groups in political, economic, social, religious, cultural, and gender hierarchies. To reflect on the perspectives of postcolonial feminism, the concept of identity is explored as an analytical lens to supplement the hybridity lens in Chapter 5.

Kent et al. (2018) provided a broad discussion on the problem of overemphasising binaries of certain concepts that need to be stirred just right to achieve the perfect blend of a normative framework that would savour everyone's taste buds sufficiently. Jackson and Albrecht (2018: 41) point out the underlying assumption that there is a direct causal link between programming and results on the ground that can be planned and predicted. To avoid this pitfall, de Coning (2013, 2016, 2018) suggests looking at conflict-affected societies as complex systems that have the ability to self-organise and emerge to a manifold of outcomes, which

would constitute an institution-building approach that would make social engineering obsolete. This point is revisited in Chapter 3.

Challenges of Operationalisation

A desire to operationalise hybrid peacebuilding theory exists among reflective practitioners of peacebuilding. Attempts to transform the analytical lens to practical tools may entail the risk of merely imposing outsider's view on what is the optimal 'blend' of international and local norms (Millar 2014b). If one insists on operationalising the theory, he or she may end up with falling into the trap of the notorious cookie-cutter approach of liberal peacebuilding. Thus, reflective practitioners advocate for the utility of hybridity to create locally grounded, legitimate structures of values and institutions (Clements et al. 2007). Filling this gap in critical peacebuilding literature is the main focus of this study, which is revisited in Chapter 4.

Wallis et al. (2018) identified the risk of 'romanticising the local' and downplaying significant power differentials at the local level that are based on gender, age, ethnic or other similar divisions. Paffenholz (2015) echoes such concerns saying that hybridity is presented as a hegemonic and power-free space, and the power of local elites within hybrid structures is overlooked. This means that underlying power structures affect peacebuilding endeavours between the elite and the grassroot actors, as well as they impact on local settings and actors in key social positions who can control access to information, resources and perception about the needs of stakeholders involved in conflict. On the other hand, Millar (2014b) warns not to overestimate the influence that outside intervention might bring to the dynamic of hybridisation. Richmond (2014: 52) extends this point by saying that hybridity needs to be seen in the context of institutional and power-political struggles, adding different spheres of dynamics, as hybridity "represents the contingent and complex nature of the politics of peacemaking and the dynamics of power, agency and identity it involves".

The term 'hybridity' itself has also become the target of criticism. Millar (2014b), for example, maintained that excessive conceptualisation of what 'hybridity' encompasses could compromise the needed space for social emergence on the ground, and turn to an outcome-focused, rather than a process-oriented framework. It is important to look at not only the outcomes of hybrid emergence, but also at its process. Hybridity

should not be seen as a result of a linear process that can generate a predictable outcome, but should be regarded as a by-product of interactions among different spheres of a society that hold the capacity to create a mutual understanding of peace and peacebuilding (ibid.). This notion then actively engages with basic structures that are found on the ground rather than downgrading what already exists and establishing an entirely new scaffold. To question the assumption of a linier progression, this study introduces the complexity approach, which focuses on intersectionality and dynamic relationships of stakeholders in conflict as discussed in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

To set the scene for the following chapters, this chapter provided a brief review of some of the relevant literatures surrounding hybrid peacebuilding, and discussed its merits for a sustained, locally grounded and inclusive establishment of peace. Four discourses of peacebuilding—economic, liberal, critical and feminist—were presented to illuminate the main feature of hybrid peacebuilding and to serve as the foundation for the subsequent discussions in which a spectrum of theoretical and empirical studies is offered.

The above literature review stresses that hybrid peacebuilding does not see peacebuilding processes in binary terms. Instead, it assumes that these processes are complex, multifaceted, dynamic and interactive. While binary frameworks are fixed in static dichotomies, the hybridity lens provides open perspectives, which are flexible and adaptive. Operationalising hybrid peacebuilding means to consider and adapt such features of hybridity. This increases the potential of hybrid peacebuilding for moving beyond merely bringing economic development, political stability and functioning institutions. Based on such premises, the following chapters investigate how tools for peacebuilding can be applied in practice to produce an inclusive process in which experiences and needs of those who have been marginalised and neglected are reflected.

As illustrated in the above literature review, feminist perspectives can shed light on the role of mid-space actors who serve as insider-partial mediators representing the interests of silenced people in conflict-affected communities. To operationalise hybrid peacebuilding theory successfully, rigorous efforts must be made by outsiders to embrace the adaptive interplay of encounters with mid-space actors. The range of case studies

provided in this volume shows that hybrid peacebuilding may stem from the critical peacebuilding literature, but holds the potential to combine and learn from various perspectives of peacebuilding as the virtue of hybridity is to harness multiple elements. Hybridity is aiming to promote inclusion of different voices, views and realities rooted in all spheres of society. Thus, the operationalisation of hybrid peacebuilding should aim for the same: to promote inclusive thinking that can elicit fruitful contributions from various perspectives.

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Hybridity, Adaptive Peacebuilding and Complexity

Cedric de Coning and Lawrence McDonald-Colbert

Introduction

This chapter introduces Complexity and Adaptive Peacebuilding and considers how it contributes to the contemporary hybridity debate. Following a brief introduction to Complexity theory, this chapter explores the utility of a complex systems perspective to expand our understanding of hybrid peacebuilding. Adaptive peacebuilding is then introduced as an approach that can help hybrid peacebuilding cope with the uncertainty dilemma that is a characteristic of complex social systems, as well as manage the relational dimension of hybrid peacebuilding through a collaborative approach. This chapter thus seeks to explore what hybridity theorists may gain from a complex systems approach to peacebuilding

C. de Coning
Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), Oslo, Norway
e-mail: cdc@nupi.no

L. McDonald-Colbert (✉)
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

and begin to build bridges between complexity, adaptive peacebuilding and hybrid peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding is about influencing the behaviour of social systems that have been affected by violent conflict. Insights from complexity science about how best to influence the behaviour of complex systems, how such systems respond to pressure, and how to avoid unintended consequences (Aoi et al. 2007), should thus be valuable for those involved in understanding and undertaking peacebuilding (Ramalingam and Jones 2008). In the context of this chapter, 'peacebuilding' refers to all actions undertaken by both the international and local actors that work towards resolving a particular conflict and sustaining the peace in a given social system. Peacebuilding is thus not understood only as something done by international or local organisations that have peacebuilding as their mandate, objective or profession, but as something done by all actors that work towards peace.

Concepts like peacebuilding convey the assumption that actors, such as a United Nations (UN) agency or peacebuilding NGO, possess the knowledge and capability to 'build' peace in the same way an engineer builds a bridge. Social systems are, however, unlike a bridge or a machine where its parts have a specified and pre-designed role in the functioning of the whole, operating under a single pre-determined method to achieve that purpose (Morin 2005). When a machine becomes stressed it breaks down and requires repair. Some people working in international conflict resolution approach peacebuilding with a similar mindset; as if it is a tool designed to fix societies affected by conflict (Ghani and Lockhart 2008). However, the insights gained from studies in social complexity, and especially from the processes of emergence and self-organisation, inform us that complex social systems must fix themselves if they are to be self-sustainable (Luhmann 1990).

This does not mean that there is no role for international or external actors. To the contrary, local systems are often trapped in a path dependent conflict cycle that are resilient against change, and they may need external assistance to open-up other possibilities. This is the role that hybrid peacebuilding attempts to fulfil. However, external fixes will not stick if they have not been internalised, and it is thus the internal adaptation process that is the critical element for self-sustainability (de Coning 2016). External intervention may at times be necessary, but it is not sufficient on its own. It is the internal system's own adaptations, and its own

integration of new attitudes, knowledge and behaviour into its own social institutions, that result in self-sustainable peace.

Hybridity theory has been developed as a bridge that can facilitate the merger between the internal and the external worlds in the peacebuilding context. Over time, peacebuilding as an enterprise has trudged towards standardisation and uniformity, becoming mired in a formulaic and inflexible methodology (Mac Ginty 2008). This 'flat-packed' peacebuilding has seen a surge of scholarly criticism in recent years, and one of the by-products of this debate has been the emergence of hybridity as a concern for peacebuilding theorists. Hybridity is designed as the antithesis to the rigidity and standardisation of 'flat-packed' peacebuilding. Embedded within the methodology of hybridity theory is an acceptance of the inherent complexity of peacebuilding operations. Hybridity, as an ontological position, can be defined as an observance of the dynamic interchange between all relevant actors in the field (Richmond and Mitchell 2012). This dynamic interchange expresses causal and relational mechanisms that are out of the purview of the principally top-down 'flat-packed' methods and highlights the complex multi-directional realities of the peacebuilding arena. As put by Uesugi, "hybridity is a *mandala* which enlightens us about the 'relational' dimension of peacebuilding" (2020: 3).

COMPLEXITY

Complexity refers to a specific type of complex system, such as a society, that has the ability to adapt, and that demonstrates emergent properties, including self-organising behaviour. Such systems emerge, and are maintained, as a result of the dynamic and non-linear interactions of its elements, based on the information available to them locally, as a result of their interaction with their environment, as well as from the modulated feedback they receive from the other elements in the system (de Coning 2016: 168; Cilliers 1998: 3).

Social systems are empirically complex (Byrne 1998). This means they demonstrate adaptability and display emergent properties, including self-organising behaviour (Kaufmann 2013). As social systems are highly dynamic, non-linear, and emergent, it is not possible to find general laws or rules that will help us predict with certainty how a particular society or community will behave (Cilliers 2002). It is not possible to undertake a project and satisfactorily predict the outcome. Nor is it possible

to use a project design that performed well elsewhere, for instance the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, expecting that it will have the same effect in another context. This uncertainty is an intrinsic quality of complex systems, not a result of imperfect knowledge or inadequate analysis, planning, or implementation. This recognition has significant implications for the way peacebuilding is thought about and undertaken.

Complex organisations, in this sense, should not be conceived of as functionally uniform input-output machines whose processes can be easily observed, identified and manipulated, but rather should be conceived of as *fields*, in the Bourdieusian sense (Bourdieu 1977), in which the interactions of actors and the onset of events is facilitated. Due to the expansive diversity of fields through which complexity has developed, a truly synthesised theory or methodology of complexity does not exist (Chu et al. 2003; Preiser et al. 2018). However, complexity has been constructed into somewhat of an interdisciplinary umbrella term, allowing for a sketching of the general features of complex systems, including a consolidation of conventional concepts, themes and terminology (Alhadeff-Jones 2013; Preiser et al. 2018).

Complexity and Hybrid Peacebuilding

Preiser et al. (2018: n.p.) have distilled complexity into a few characteristics that provide a "conceptual typology" based on "an ontological reading… to discern general patterns and underlying causal explanations". Four are particularly relevant for hybrid peacebuilding: relationality; dynamism; radical openness and contextuality, and adaptivity. These concepts will be used as a "heuristic framework" (ibid.) that will allow us to discuss complexity theory's relation to hybridity. Relationality entails that the elements in a complex system are flexible and dynamic. For hybrid peacebuilding, this means that research should not focus on actors, but rather on their connections and interactions, and how this changes the peacebuilding environment. Further, these relations are non-linear and dynamic and thus produce emergent properties, meaning that no matter how precisely a conflict is understood at the micro-level, a concurrent macro-level analysis is always necessary. This is exacerbated by complex systems having permeable and indefinite boundaries, so that the system itself interacts both endo- and exogenously. This radical openness entails contextuality in complex systems, where system behaviour is dependent

on its relational interactions in both the local and environmental context. Hybrid peacebuilding must acknowledge therefore that the local context is never isolated from exogenous effects. As elements in a complex system interact with both other elements and their wider environment, they effectively 'learn', changing their behaviour to produce optimal outcomes. While this adaptivity may be a source of difficulty when it comes to peacebuilding interventions, it also provides a site of creativity that can help to iteratively improve interventions as they progress. Hybrid peacebuilding should therefore seek to include local populations at all opportunities. The proceeding discussion shall systematically approach complexity and its efficacy for hybridity research by addressing each principle of the "conceptual typology" (ibid.) in turn and discussing its relation to hybrid peacebuilding, further defining key concepts as they are introduced.

Relationality

Relations, here, refers to the interactions between constituent components of the system. The process of giving, receiving, exchanging, influencing or otherwise making contact with other elements is the driving force behind what makes a system complex. Relations between elements therefore take precedence over the elements themselves. Taking insights from relational theory, the ontology of complexity thus conceives of the essential elements in a complex system not as the 'things' themselves, but rather as the processes (Rosen 1991). As such, complex systems "are defined more by the interactions among their constituent components than by the components themselves" (Preiser et al 2018: n.p.). A corollary of this therefore is that an analysis of systemic change or evolution is crucial to an analysis of complex systems. By analysing the relations between components in a complex system, what is being analysed is how this system adapts and fluctuates over time.

Hybridity goes to great lengths to explain the multifaceted aspects of peacebuilding and emphasises the importance of including a wide and heterogeneous array of actors into the process (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). Complexity helps to emphasise the notion that these actors do not exist independently from one another, by putting the spotlight onto the interaction between these actors (over and above the nature of the actors themselves). In fact, it is the relations between them that define their role in the system. In a complex system, elements are coconstitutive (by way of their adaptivity to feedback), and thereby rely on

the dynamics of the system for the formation of their identity. As hybridity acknowledges the extensive variation and interconnection of actors in the peacebuilding field, complexity emphasises this variation and interconnection as an essential part of the system. Hybridity can help to delineate who actors are and how they behave in the peacebuilding context. Complexity helps to understand how these actors fit into a wider network and how this network systemically functions. Where hybridity highlights which actors are imperative to peace processes, complexity demonstrates the position of these actors within the wider process and how this impacts their identities, as well as the structure and operation of the process as a whole.

However, whereas Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016) cast doubt over the entire enterprise of instrumentalising hybridity, the contention of this chapter is that complexity can help to 'bridge the gap' between hybridity-as-theory and hybridity-as-practice. Relationality is one of the preeminent ways in which this can be achieved. For Uesugi (2020: 9), peacebuilding is "a continuous process of negotiation, mediation, arrangement, adaptation, adjustment, coordination, cooperation and contestation amongst divergent stakeholders in a society over their conflicting interests, values and needs". In line with a complexity ontology, this *process* is the superlative concern in peacebuilding. This moves away from the atomistic, a-temporal and actor-focused approach of contemporary peacebuilding theory, whereby pre-eminence is put on the *who* rather than the *how* of peacebuilding. It is imperative, therefore, to over-rely on who the actors in a system are (institutions, groups, individuals etc.), but how they connect and interact, and how these interactions shape the evolution of the system. This can allow us to codify (to a degree) to what extent, and according to what mechanism, information flows between them.

In Chapter 4 of this volume, Deekeling and Simangan discuss the operationalisation of hybridity through a 'mid-space actor typology'. This typology consists of a classification of various roles and functions that can be played by intermediary actors, referred to generally as 'gatekeepers', in the peace process. These 'gatekeepers' safeguard the communities they are a part of and oversee the avenues of communication between them. These gatekeepers could either serve as bridge-builders or spoilers to the peace process, depending on the context. For Deekeling and Simangan, the preeminent role of the peacebuilding community is thus the identification and management of these 'gatekeepers' so that they stay on-track with the aims of the peacebuilding efforts, and serve to bolster, extend and

fortify the peace process instead of hamper or detach it. This may be done via capacity building or the coordination of interaction and knowledge transfer between communities.

As hybridity has served to highlight the variety of actors in the field, Deekeling and Simangan seek to operationalise this variety, utilising those actor's unique traits, abilities and connections to enhance the peacebuilding programme. This endeavour fits well with the lessons gleaned from complexity. The complexity literature emphasises the importance of peacebuilding's relational aspects. With regards to hybridity, this entails that we identify how actors interact with one another, in what manner these interactions take place, and what commodities are transferred through these interactions. The mid-space actor typology goes some way toward codifying these relationships; it allows us to begin to clarify what kind of relationships are active in the peace process and the manner in which they are interconnected. It is important to emphasise how *definitionally* relational the 'mid-space actor typology' is. The typology is a utilisation of the relationships between actors in the system—not a description of the actors themselves. Via their position in the 'mid-space' gatekeepers shape and manage the relations between elements. As acknowledged by Deekeling and Simangan, it is important not to over-rely on an actor-focused typology. Whereas these actors are defined relationally, and the typology itself operates on relational grounds, the application of this typology can lead to an overbearance on the importance of specific actors in that peace process. While this brings dangers that could hamper system resilience (i.e. through entrenched and over-connected actors turning 'spoiler' and having a needlessly significant impact on system functionality) the main issue with regards to the implementation of a complex peacebuilding theory is an ontological one.

A crucial corollary of the relationality of complex systems is systemic change and evolution. Any analysis of a complex system must have at its heart an appreciation of that system's development over time. Focus or reliance on specific actors leads us toward a rigid and static analysis of the system. Not only may their functions and roles differ, but the very nature of the actors themselves may evolve. Because the elements in a complex system are constituted relationally, their existence is contextual, flexible and dynamic. With complex systems, we must focus on "the process of becoming, rather than static states of being" (Preiser et al. 2018: n.p.). Traditional approaches to peacebuilding focus on how key actors influence the direction of the system (i.e. more or less peaceful). A complexity

lens complements this kind of analysis by emphasising the importance of changes over time; both at the individual and systemic level, which will be discussed in the following section.

Dynamism

A defining attribute of a complex system is its inherent dynamism and perpetual volatility. This dynamism stems from the self-organising capacities of complex systems, which in turn stem from the generative capacity of relational interaction amongst their elements (Heylighen 2001). Self-organisation, in this context, refers to the ability of a complex system, like a society, to organise, maintain and sustain itself without an external or internal managing agent (Mitchell 2009: 13). In this sense, self-organisation refers to "the spontaneous creation of a globally coherent pattern out of the local interactions between initially independent components" (Heylighen 2001: 275). Self-organisation facilitates and modulates the flow and processing of feedback information, for instance through developing shared understandings, participatory decision-making and monitoring mechanisms. Whereas complicated systems—for example an advanced aircraft or super-computer—can be comprehensively described and understood through an observation and analysis of their components and how they work together to produce a specific effect, a system that is complex cannot be understood via an analysis of its constituent elements (Cilliers 1998). In contrast to linear complicated systems, a complex system output is more than just the sum of inputs (Willy et al. 2003). Non-linearity in relational mechanisms in complex systems means that small, localised disturbances can evolve into critical states that impact the entire system (Bak 1999). As such, the system will have properties, and exhibit behaviours or mechanisms that cannot be analysed or traced through an analysis of its elements (Willy et al. 2003). If an alien were to observe humans they may observe men, women and children, and some of their relationships, but they will not be able to easily identify the invisible emergent and self-organising cultural processes that organise them into families, clans and societies. These properties, behaviours and mechanisms are known in the complexity literature as emergence.

Total-system outputs stem from the non-linear interaction processes of adaptive and dynamic elements, and so they are the result of complex causalities; small causes can have large effects, and large effects can have small causes, all originating from disparate sites (Cilliers 1998). As such,

interventions in a system often produce unforeseen consequences and create new problems (Preiser et al. 2018). Complex interactions thus occur where an organisation or system can change or adapt seemingly spontaneously or automatically (Stacey 1992). Whereas a complicated system can be understood holistically and engaged with or manipulated so as to produce some predictable outcome, a complex system is definitively different (Poli 2013). Designing, building and launching a rocket into space is highly complicated, but once it is mastered, the same process can be repeated with a reasonable chance of success. In fact, the most frequently used rocket to send people and goods into space is the Soviet Soyuz rocket, which has a core design that has been in use since 1967 (European Space Agency 2019). In contrast, non-linearity plays a critical role in the emergence and self-regulation of complex adaptive systems (Cilliers 1998: 3). Even if a particular process helped to generate a peaceful outcome in one society, such as the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in Timor-Leste, it cannot be repeated in another context with any reasonable expectation that it will have the same outcome. In fact, it cannot even be repeated in Timor-Leste with any expectation that it will have the same outcome. Irreproducibility, then, is a function of dynamic process in complex systems and their emergent properties.

Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016: 224) describe "the concept of hybridity [as amounting] to a rejection of conflict scientism, or the notion that conflicts can be 'understood' if only we have enough data and the correct formula". Instead, hybridity aims to incorporate the complexity of local realities, allow space for the inclusion of variable perspectives, and recognise the legitimacy of disparate sites of agency. Hybridity accepts that a conflict, and thus any intervention in it, cannot be totally planned and organised from outside. Conflicts, from a Complexity ontology, are thus unknowable in the sense that such knowledge can lead to predicting how a conflict will behave in future. Any methodological tool of engagement must therefore be careful not to over-state its analytical capabilities. The schema of Deekeling and Simangan's typology, though implicit rather than explicit, is the categorisation and organisation of the conflict 'field' through the designation of the relevant parties and their interlinkages and relations. Because gatekeepers are inherently relational, they implicitly depend on the existence of a particular (though potentially flexible) networked system structure. Hypothetically, the typology would allow for

a 'mapping' exercise, where participating gatekeepers are plotted in reference to one another by some observational cartographer. However, the dynamic nature of complex systems necessitates that even the most intimate and precise composition of elements of a conflict cannot lead to a holistic understanding of it at a grand scale. There must be a multi-level analysis, then. The typology can greatly benefit the micro-level analysis of system elements and their relations. But this examination must be made alongside, and indeed separate from, a macro-level analysis of the system at a grand scale. To complement the micro-analysis of the typology, we should attempt to understand the dynamics of the conflict at a more global scale. We can emphasise the typology, and of mid-space bridge-builders, as a method for or point of engagement with the system, but we must further assure to operate with an appreciation of the wider state of the system.

Radical Openness and Contextuality

Radical openness is the notion that complex systems are definitively borderless, and any boundaries drawn only serve as a pragmatic choice for studying the system at hand (Chu et al. 2003). As societies are radically open complex systems it is always problematic to draw precise boundaries between distinctions such as local/international or internal/external (Cilliers 2001). Complexity informs us that in complex systems, including social systems, change processes are emergent from within a given system and evolutionary in nature. This system adapts to its environment and its own emergent behaviour through a continuous process of inductive adaptation, regulated by its own self-organising processes. Local or internal in this context thus refers to those processes that are emergent from this internal experience, whilst external refers to the environment with which the elements in the system in question are interacting with (Bargués-Pedreny 2015: 122). In the peacebuilding context, a local system describes a society or community that is affected by conflict. External or international actors refer to outsiders that are engaging with the local system. It is understood that all complex systems are open systems and are thus influenced by their environment, and that in this context it is not possible to isolate a local conflict system, without taking into account the various regional and global influences that have shaped and that continue to influence that society. Manaysay and Espesor in Chapter 6 of this volume discuss how, via external actors, international

norms and practices interact with local-level civil society in Mindanao, the Philippines, blurring their boundaries. Still, there is analytical value, from a complex systems perspective, to draw a distinction, to the degree possible, between what can be perceived as Mindanao society and what can be perceived as external actors, even when it is understood that these are very open and fluid categories. As acknowledged by Manaysay and Espesor, when the essential ingredient is self-organised, locally emergent social institutions, then there is value in trying to identify and support those local institutional processes.

Boundaries in a complex system are thus "permeable and allow for communication… between a system and its surroundings" (Preiser et al. 2018: n.p.). The stark permeability of boundaries in complex systems is denoted by radical openness, as interaction and commodity-sharing between elements can happen both endo- and exogenously. Subsequently, boundary definition can be particularly difficult when it comes to complex systems—it is not always possible to know which elements are 'in' the system—or 'out'. This is further complicated by Cillier's description of system boundary definition as being largely a function of the perspective of the observer (Cilliers 2001). Each system is a Bourdieusian 'field' that structures or brackets the interactions of a variety of elements—yet these systems are themselves part of a larger 'field'.

A corollary of the openness of a system is system contextuality. Contextuality in this case refers to the impact of the situational or environmental context on the actions of the elements. Elements within a complex system are impacted by occurrences outside the system as much as those within (ibid.). As such, there are two modes of interaction that serve to delineate the "patterns of organization" (Preiser et al. 2018: n.p.) that structure communication mechanisms between elements in a complex system. These are dynamic interactions within the system (between the elements and each other), and without (between the elements and the outside environment). This double-layering of interactional contexts, coupled with the ability of the elements to adapt their strategies, entails a large amount of contextuality. This is illustrated in Chapter 5 of this volume, where Umeyama and Brehm discuss the fluctuating identities of Cambodian monks as they interact with both their local context, and the wider international peace process.

Boege et al. (2009: 15) discuss how a course of "positive mutual accommodation" characterises the peacebuilding process, whereby "there

are no clear-cut boundaries between the realm of the exogenous 'modern' and the endogenous 'customary' instead processes of assimilation, articulation, transformation, and/or adoption are at the interface of the global/exogenous and local/indigenous". Hybridity theory thereby references the embeddedness of systems within one another; where a "messy local socio-political context" (ibid.) blurs system boundaries. Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016: 220) further acknowledge that "hybridity is a condition that occurs, in large part, contextually". As the state of the wider environment ebbs and flows, and influences on the system to fluctuate, the nature of the hybrid context is in constant flux. Hybridity then, is "a constant process of negotiation as multiple sources of power in a society compete, coalesce, seep into each other and engage in mimicry, domination or accommodation" (ibid.). We cannot, therefore, create a simple orrery of our conflicting society; there must be both implicit and explicit reference to the wider cosmos.

Adaptivity

The contextuality of interactions in complex systems is exacerbated by complex system elements being definitionally adaptive. The elements that make up the system, people and institutions in society, adapt based on the feedback they receive from their interactions relationally with each other and with their wider environment. They act with intent, and others around them, or their environment reacts. In Complexity this reaction is referred to as feedback. Based on their interpretation of the feedback received, the element changes their behaviour the next time they act in order to improve their gain or to avoid losses. This change of behaviour based on feedback is called adaptation. The elements effectively 'learn' from their continuous interactions with each other and their system which actions have the optimal effect. As a society we use adaptation to collectively learn what kind of behaviour we should and should not accept to sustain our peace. Systemic evolution is therefore a large part of what characterises a complex system, and adaptation and feedback help to explain how complex system evolve. This evolution develops locally, in piecemeal portions of the system, and progresses bit-by-bit from adaptive interaction at the elemental level and may eventually result in large-scale systemic fluctuations. Of course, as large-scale changes in system properties fluctuate, this affects the contextual environment in which small-scale

elements operate and interact, creating a somewhat cyclical process of change.

Over time, these cyclical processes of adaptive interaction shape into "patterns of organization" (Preiser et al. 2018: n.p.) in sections of a system, which loosely govern the structure of interaction between elements. Patterns of organisation are thus formed and maintained through the self-organisational activities of system elements. These patterns further inter-link with other system areas, generating the adaptive capacities of a complex system (Morin 1999; Levin 2005; Fox-Keller 2008). While not necessarily entailing path dependency, these patterns do suggest some form of road-mapping and structuring of the system's potential trajectories. This therefore hints at the potential for studying the system and its mechanisms of change and evolution. Adaptivity fuels self-organisation, which in complex systems like a society thus both explains how it maintains its order, hierarchies, and organisation, as well as how it, at the same time, is continuously evolving.

Hybridity theorists acknowledge the power of local actors and environments to subvert and reassemble the structures of liberal peacebuilding (Richmond and Franks 2007; Mac Ginty 2008), developing these structures into "alternative versions of peace" (Mac Ginty 2008: 159). These acts of subversion are instances of adaptation. Hybrid peacebuilding aims to incorporate the "frictions" (Lowenhaupt Tsing 2004) between the machinations of the liberal peace and local imaginaries of governance into the larger hybrid peacebuilding project. The result is a sort of "institutional bricolage" (Cleaver et al. 2013: 168), whereby local epistemologies of peace and governance import and redefine exogenous liberal peace structures. This may initially appear to present a challenge for the would-be peacebuilding practitioner. This "cacophony of thinking" (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013) fogs the ability of peacebuilders to implement a structured approach to peace. The "sheer heterogeneity of the sources of localised thinking and expression means that there is no neat framework of ideas" that peacebuilders can linearly or simply realise (ibid.). However, this variety of perspectives and approaches can serve as a point of resilience and inventiveness, as the inherent capacity for self-development and self-organisation in complex systems allow for the cultivation and operationalisation of learning and adaptive processes that may generate a different process than what initially envisaged by the peacebuilder, but that may still lead to the same overall outcomes. The added advantage of this process is that the outcome will now be the result

of an indigenous process. This increases the likelihood that the process will be perceived as home grown, have social institutions that feel an ownership towards it, understand the history and processes that generated it, and therefore necessary to sustain it.

Complexity helps to explain why top-down, imposed or borrowed peacebuilding models of social transformation is doomed to fail. Even a complex social system like a society that has been weakened by violent conflict typically has enough resilience to resist externally imposed solutions. Peacebuilders who stimulate and facilitate adaptive processes of a society and encourage the society, subtly with negative and positive feedback, to develop or strengthen the institutions it needs to sustain peace, is likely to be more effective. Boege et al. (2009: 14) emphasise the need to "[take] into account the strengths of the societies in question, acknowledging their resilience, encouraging indigenous creative responses to the problems, and strengthening their own capacities for endurance". Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013: 780) concur, celebrating that while the "cacophony of thinking" is "messy… it has the capacity to be vibrant and relevant to the communities from which it emerges".

We have explained how relations between elements are the imperative concern for hybrid peacebuilding from a Complexity ontology. What adaptivity entails is that these relations change and evolve over time as system elements practice iterative learning through feedback processes both with other elements and their local environment. To accommodate this fluidity in identity and function on the part of system elements, the typology itself must therefore be fluid and flexible. But more than simply allowing for adaptivity and accommodating it within the wider functioning of the system, the typology should be structured or utilised so as to actively encourage adaptivity. Owing to the positionality of the elements, and their capacity for engagement and learning—and therefore, importantly, creativity—adaptivity in the hybrid context can lead to innovative problem-solving. The typology instrumentalised by Deekeling and Simangan in Chapter 4 utilises 'transformative relationships' as a tool for identifying, shaping and relational progression. Adaptivity is accepted, and indeed encouraged, in the interaction between system agents. The aim however is to ensure that the right kind of relations are taking place between elements. This suggests a new role for would-be peacebuilders, as more of a process facilitator than a direct intervener in the peacebuilding process; stimulating self-organisation in positive directions and influencing the interactions themselves so that they may

produce positive outcomes—where positive is understood as in support of self-sustainable peace. The next section will address one such process facilitation approach, Adaptive Peacebuilding.

Adaptive Peacebuilding

Adaptive Peacebuilding is an approach to peacebuilding aimed at influencing complex social systems where hybrid peacebuilders, together with the communities and people affected by the conflict, actively engage in a structured process to sustain peace and resolve conflicts by employing an iterative process of learning and adaptation (de Coning 2018).

In Adaptive Peacebuilding, the core activity of hybrid peacebuilding is process facilitation. The aim of peacebuilding is to stimulate the processes in a society that will lead to strengthening the resilience of those social institutions that manage internal and external stressors and shocks, and in so doing prevent violent conflict and sustain peace. If a society is fragile, it means that the formal and informal social institutions that govern its politics, security, justice and economy lack resilience. Resilience refers here to the capacity of social institutions "to absorb and adapt in order to sustain an acceptable level of function, structure and identity under stress" (Dahlberg 2015: 545).

Adaptive capacity is defined as the capacity to thrive in an environment characterised by change (Joseph 2018: 14). In the conflict resolution context, it refers to the ability of a society to adjust to disruptive change, to take advantage of opportunities, and to respond to consequences (Engle 2011: 648). As established earlier, local self-organisation is a prerequisite for sustainable peace and the societies and communities that are intended to benefit from a hybrid peacebuilding intervention thus need to be fully involved and engaged in the initiative.

The specific arrangements will differ from context to context, but the principle should be that no decisions are taken about a particular peace process without sufficient participation of the affected community or society. Sufficiency here implies that the community should be engaged in such a way that the diversity and variety of their interests, needs, and concerns inform every step of the adaptation cycle. Adaptive Peacebuilding can therefore not be free or distinct from the dynamics of politics or power. The process is not technical or abstract. It is a process that engages with all aspects and elements of societal change that is needed for self-sustainable peace to emerge, such as reconciliation or

transitional justice, and it lends itself to a relational approach that seeks to account for how power is distributed through and within relationships (Day and Hunt 2020). Whilst actors and their interrelations can influence complex social systems by facilitating and stimulating the processes that enable resilience and inclusiveness to emerge, the prominent role of self-organisation in complex system dynamics suggest that it is important the affected societies and communities have the space and agency to drive their own process (Burns 2007). This is why local adaptation processes are ultimately the critical element for inclusive political settlements to become self-sustainable.

Adaptive Peacebuilding thus requires a commitment to engage in a structured learning process together with the society or community that has been affected by conflict. This commitment comes at a cost, in terms of investing in the capabilities necessary to enable and facilitate such a collective learning process, in taking the time to engage with communities and other stakeholders, in giving them the space for self-organisation to emerge and consolidate, and in making the effort to develop new innovative systems for learning together with communities as the process unfolds.

The Adaptive Process: Variation, Selection and Iteration

Complex systems cope with challenges posed by changes in their environment by co-evolving together with their environment in a never-ending process of adaptation (Barber 2011). This iterative adaptive process utilises experimentation and feedback to generate knowledge about its environment. This is essentially the way natural selection works in the evolution of complex systems. The two key factors are variation and selection. There needs to be variation, i.e. multiple parallel interventions, and there needs to be a selection process that replicates and adapts effective interventions and discontinues those that do not have the desired effect. The analysis-planning-implementation-evaluation project cycle is already well established in the development and peacebuilding context. However, these communities of practice are not good at generating sufficient variation. They are also notoriously bad at selection based on effect, and they are especially poor at identifying and abandoning underperforming initiatives (Rosén and Haldrup 2013). To remedy these shortcomings Adaptive Peacebuilding utilise a structured iterative adaptation methodology to help generate institutional learning.

This adaptive methodology builds on the work of Andrews et al. (2017), who have pioneered the problem-driven iterative adaptation (PDIA) approach as an alternative to the linear causal logic of the logframe in development planning and evaluation. This adaptive approach consists of iterative cycles of learning, starting with analysis and assessment. Based on the analysis, multiple possible options for influencing a social system are generated. When the selected options are developed into actual campaigns or programmes, their design must be explicit about the theory of change each will employ so that their effects can be assessed. A theory of change should be clear about how it intends to contribute to change in the behaviour of the social system it intends to influence, i.e. how a series of activities are anticipated to generate a particular outcome (Valters et al. 2016).

A selected number of these intervention options are then implemented and closely monitored, with a view to identifying and processing the feedback generated by the system in response to each intervention. The feedback is then analysed, after which those responsible for the intervention, together with the affected communities and key stakeholders, decide which initiatives to discontinue, which to continue, and, in addition, what adaptations to introduce for those that will be continued. The ineffectual ones, or those that have generated negative effects, need to be abandoned or adapted. Those that appear to have the desired effects should be continued and can be expanded or scaled-up, but in a variety of ways, so that there is a continuous process of experimentation with a range of options, coupled with a continuous process of selection and refinement. It is thus important that this process is repeated in regular relatively short cycles. The traditional annual or multi-year planning cycles are too slow for coping with highly dynamic social change processes, and most peacebuilding initiatives will have to employ adaptive planning and assessment cycles that repeat 3 or 4 times a year.

Some form of inductive adaptation is already taking place in most peacebuilding initiatives, but what Adaptive Peacebuilding offers is a clear approach or methodological process that can help to enhance and institutionalise the rigor and effects of the adaptations that are already taking place, or stimulate the uptake of adaptive thinking in others where this type of approach to planning and assessment is new.

Adaptive Peacebuilding are scalable at all levels; the same basic method can be applied to individual programmes, to projects, to regional or national-level campaigns, or multi-year strategic frameworks or compacts.

From a complexity perspective, the feedback generated by various interventions at different levels should be shared and modulated as widely as possible throughout the system, so that as broad a spectrum of initiatives as possible can self-adjust and co-evolve based on the information generated in the process.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we explored the potential connectivity between Hybrid Peacebuilding, Complexity and Adaptive Peacebuilding. We have heuristically employed four foundational characteristics of complex systems to build bridges between the lessons learned from Complexity theory, and the ideas proffered in the hybridity debate. Complexity emphasises the inherency of relationality in complex systems. From an analytical perspective, the relations between the elements are more important than the elements themselves. The "process of becoming, rather than static states of being" (Preiser et al. 2018: n.p.) must be the preeminent focus in a complex peacebuilding ontology. As far as the instrumentalisation of hybridity is concerned, this aspect of complex systems urges the would-be peacebuilder to take care not to entrench any rigidity in the method of engagement. Their characteristic dynamism means that it is impossible to holistically understand the workings of complex systems through an analysis of their constituent elements, no matter how comprehensive it may be. As such, we should not allow hybridity's focus on the importance of the local, or any typology's concentration on the interactions between individual actors, to obscure the necessity of also investing in system-wide analysis. Any micro-level study must be accompanied by a contemporaneous macro-level one, as non-linearity in the interactions of system elements generate whole-system outputs that may be unpredictable and immeasurable at the atomistic level.

The importance of context for complex systems should encourage peacebuilders to appreciate the effects of the wider systemic environment for system functionality and take pains not to instantiate false and unfitting system boundaries. This "process of becoming" (ibid.) implies the necessary centrality of systemic dynamism. So, any methodology or typology must remain open and flexible to allow for the systemic evolution that comes part-and-parcel with the constant interaction of definitionally adaptive complex system elements. However, this adaptivity can serve as a point of strength for complex systems. Their capacity for iterant learning

means that complex system elements are imbued with a nature of inge-
nuity and creativity in responding to feedback processes. Translated into
the hybrid context, this entails the ability of actors to make use of local
knowledge, or a combination of local-global knowledge, to problem-solve
and imaginatively enhance system progression.

However, 'system progression' is a purposefully outcome-neutral term;
it can lead either to a measure of societal bonding, or to further bifur-
cation and an increase in conflict tension. So, what this entails for
peacebuilders is the possibility of an existential re-working. As imma-
nently adaptive and inherently relational systems are unable to be coerced,
peacebuilders may have to consider themselves more as process facilita-
tors who encourage those interactions that should contribute to peace.
Through iterative adaptation, whilst discouraging those that may promote
violent or coercive means, peacebuilders are to contribute to nurturing
and guiding the system progression, whilst at the same time learning from
and being guided by the system, in the direction of peace and stability.

This is where Adaptive Peacebuilding comes in. It offers a specific
process that peacebuilders can employ to cope with Complexity. It offers
a specific methodology for collaboration among peacebuilders, including
local and international peacebuilders. And it offers a specific approach
aimed at nudging societal change processes towards sustaining peace,
without interfering so much that it ends up causing harm by inadver-
tently disrupting the very feedback loops critical for self-organisation to
emerge and to be sustained.

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Bridging Gaps: From a Descriptive to a Practical Mid-Space Actor Typology?

Anna Deekeling and Dahlia Simangan

INTRODUCTION

Critiques of top-down approaches to peacebuilding propose that mid-space actors are more effective agents in fostering connections and dialogue between bottom/local or grassroots and presumably disengaged top/national and international actors. A recent work that advocates such a proposition is a volume edited by Yuji Uesugi entitled *Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia*, which aims to "fill the gap…between local stakeholders and outside intervenors" and elevate the notion of hybridity in peacebuilding from an analytical lens to a useful tool for post-conflict reconciliation processes (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 42). The book employs an actor-based typology to conceptualise "mid-space

A. Deekeling (✉)
Graduate School of Social Science, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: annadeekeling@fuji.waseda.jp

D. Simangan
Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, Japan
e-mail: simangan@hiroshimau.ac.jp

local bridge-builders" that might become active advocates for dialogue-building and peace negotiations (Uesugi 2020: 2–3). Mid-space local bridge-builders or gatekeepers can "move across different cleavages in society to facilitate dialogue among competing stakeholders" (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 38). They are enabled by their unique social position to safeguard communities and channels of communication between them and other actors. Hence, they can become 'bridge-builders' who facilitate dialogue and peacebuilding or 'spoilers' who block passages of communication, undermining the peacebuilding process. While the book presents a conceptual basis for understanding the bridge- and dialogue-building roles of mid-space actors according to their specific settings, the architecture of the mid-space or the network of social and power relations within it is left under-examined. It also raises many questions about how this architecture shapes the opportunities and perspectives of mid-space actors, which can ultimately determine their motivations and actions. Although the concept of mid-space actors adds a constructive approach to substantiating the functions of hybridity as a lens, this chapter argues that it falls short of advancing hybridity from an analytical lens toward a peacebuilding tool.

The objective of this chapter is three-fold. First, it aims to critique the typology of mid-space local bridge-builders by combining various theoretical approaches pertinent to hybrid peacebuilding, specifically attempts to locate mid-space actors and their capacity to engage positively in conflict resolution. To overcome the barrier between theoretical and practical approaches, a combination of hybrid peacebuilding theory (including the knowledge outside intervenors have obtained from applying hybridity as an analytical lens) and the typology of mid-space local bridge-builders (including the meaningful engagement between outside intervention and local bridge-builders) is proposed in this chapter. Hence, this chapter explores how hybridity can be operated as a theoretical concept to analyse mid-space actors as well as being a practical tool to support them in their dialogue-building endeavours.

Secondly, the concept of bridge-builders is developed by locating mid-space actors and their corresponding positionalities in the peace process. Several positionalities are identified in this chapter in terms of tapping into resources of formal and informal power, sharing a cultural background and thus means of social understanding within their community, and exercising skills toward transformative relationships, locally grounded

legitimacy, and access to information. Relatedly, ways for outside inter-venors and mediators to engage the bridge-building skills of mid-space actors, rather than reinforcing a hubristic approach to peacebuilding, will be explored. Such engagement is likely to promote the emancipatory potential of peacebuilding through genuine dialogue and active partici-pation by local actors. Proposing this type of engagement rests on the assumption that bridge-building skills are inextricably tied to the actors involved and defined by their social relations and, hence, are not trans-ferable to or easily manufactured by outside actors. Furthermore, these skills inform the mid-space actors' capacities to perform specific roles or functions within their society. This chapter, thus, interrogates whether these capacities can be enhanced by, and engaged with, broadening the possibilities for mid-space actors to positively shape peace negotiations.

Thirdly, this chapter attempts to advance the descriptive function of hybridity towards a more pragmatic approach to peacebuilding. Such an attempt entails propositions for several practical applications of the concept of hybrid peacebuilding that might be useful for outsiders when assisting with local conflict resolution. It is argued that this pragmatic approach has the potential to enable the agency of mid-space actors by relying on their context-specific knowledge on the one hand and proposing a way to engage with mid-space actors on the other hand. This chapter presents an outlook on how outside actors could engage meaningfully with mid-space actors.

Overall, this chapter explores the engagement of outsider intervenors with bridge-builders during a peace process. To do this the following discussion reviews the key concepts and definitions relevant to the concep-tualisation and construction of a mid-space actor typology. Then, a critical analysis of this actor-based typology is presented, followed by identifying context-specific ways for outsiders to engage with mid-space actors by enabling their bridge-building capacity, without tarnishing local legitimacy and undermining access to crucial information. The chapter concludes by summarising the main arguments for advancing hybridity beyond an analytical lens and towards a practical tool for peacebuilding.

Defining the Mid-Space

This section scopes how scholars have previously defined the mid-space by examining connections and differences between these definitions. The investigation of the mid-space and the actors within it is not a novel

approach to peace and conflict studies. Paul Wehr and John Paul Lederach (1991) earlier highlighted the potential of insider-partial mediators to connect conflicting parties effectively by using insider-specific knowledge obtained through their involvement as local actors. They used the term "middle-range" (similar to mid-space), where actors are able to cross between the top and bottom levels of society by creating a network of relationships and dialogue channels (Wehr and Lederach 1991: 87–88). Actors who can use these channels (similarly to bridge-builders) are likely to expand their social web and connect various stakeholders. The mid-space thus holds the capacity to function as a transition zone, where information can be shared and relationships between different actors can be formed. On this basis Lederach (1997) later constructed a layered triangle model consisting of grassroots, middle, and elite sections in societies for understanding the interplay of actors in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconciliation processes. These ideas were advanced in the works of several academics (e.g., Newman and Richmond 2006; Mac Ginty 2010; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Svensson and Lindgren 2013) articulating how inside-out mediation can facilitate dialogue among various stakeholders positioned in the top, middle, and bottom levels of society.

The concept of the mid-space encompasses the space in which the top, elite levels have the opportunity to interact with the bottom, grassroots or local level. Building on the work of Hancock and Mitchell (2018), Uesugi and Kagawa (2020) argue that the existing gap between top-level focused peacemaking and ground-level based peacebuilding could be overcome by local bridge-builders through dialogue-building, using the mid-space as a "transit zone" (Mitchell 2018). This transit zone consists of various spheres of societies in which the top/national and bottom/local levels interplay via a "vertical gap" (signifying an intra-community communication flow) and a "horizontal gap" (denoting inter-community communication) (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 38–39). In addition, the concept of the "diagonal gap" was introduced, which emerges in the space between the local community and international community, with the latter infiltrating the former by intervening in the conflict (ibid.: 38–40). It is not uncommon for these external, international interventions to ignore the local context, often creating debilitating circumstances or frictions in which local efforts are diminished over time (Millar 2014: 501–503; Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 40–41).

The idea of the mid-space stems from the critiques regarding liberal peacebuilding. It is suggested that liberal peacebuilding places too much emphasis on a top-down approach rooted in the ideas of institutionalism (Mac Ginty and Sanghera 2012: 3–8). Furthermore, it fails to recognise local agency and power structures as well as the social, political, and historical contexts in which peacebuilding takes place. Conversely, the grassroots-based approach takes a more 'local turn' and seeks to include more culturally sensitive and locally relevant methods of conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Mitchell 2018: 1–2). Hybridity, as a concept in peacebuilding, highlights the interplay between the local and the international and acknowledges hybrid peacebuilding outcomes (i.e., a combination of liberal and illiberal practices and outcomes) (Mac Ginty 2008). As defined in Chapter 1 and elaborated in Chapters 2 and 3, hybrid peacebuilding is considered in this study as an approach between liberal peacebuilding and the local turn, combining the 'best of both worlds' in terms of peace formation. As underlined in Chapter 2 the main selling point of hybrid peacebuilding is its ability to understand conflicts in their complexity. Applying the concept of complexity necessitates an examination of the historical and cultural background of a conflict, as well as the inclusion of all actors involved, while paying special attention to their power relations and interactions (Mac Ginty and Sanghera 2012: 3–8). As illustrated in Chapter 3, hybrid peacebuilding views the interaction of actors and institutions in a conflict-affected society as highly dynamic and diverse, calling for constant reconfiguration of peacebuilding processes.

Perhaps the most important question following the definition of the mid-space is about the actors who work in this space. As the most appealing aspect of the mid-space is that it provides an environment in which communication and information are shared, the question of who facilitates these occurrences is pertinent. The authors of *Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia* argue for the existence of "mid-space actors" (Uesugi 2020: 2–3), who serve as intermediaries, being enabled by their unique social positions, resources, and transformative relationships to connect the various levels of peace formation. Consequently, they become the gatekeepers of their communities. Gatekeepers are often local leaders, or at times institutions, with high levels of local legitimacy while possessing the capacity to connect the top/national levels with the bottom/local levels, thus being able to travel among different adversaries (Uesugi and

Kagawa 2020: 45). The classifications of these mid-space actors and their respective roles are critically examined in the following section.

A MID-SPACE ACTOR TYPOLOGY

Mid-space actors are individuals, institutions, or representatives of institutions involved in peacebuilding. They can be religious leaders, clan chiefs, security officers, or official representatives of organisations. Mid-space actors can be classified according to their relational networks, as Chapter 3 demonstrates. Through their roles as gatekeepers (i.e., safeguarding communities and channels of communication between them and other actors) they can become either bridge-builders or spoilers. Gatekeepers are shaped based on their social history and background in connection to the underlying power relations that enable or block their bridge-building potential in peacebuilding processes.

Due to their unique positionalities in the mid-space, gatekeepers have the capacity to connect themselves with multiple communities and broker information and dialogue among them (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 50–51, 54–55). Their positionalities allow them access to information and to obtain the needed legitimacy to engage with actors outside of their direct sphere of influence (Svensson and Lindgren 2013: 699–700). Gatekeepers can navigate in various directions, cross spheres and levels of interactions, and establish long-term relationships or bridges between stakeholders (Wehr and Lederach 1991: 85–98). Gatekeepers hold horizontal, vertical, and diagonal capacities that theoretically allow them to close gaps and establish dialogue platforms, if they are willing to do so—an aspect that will be discussed below (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 47–49). Gatekeepers can exercise various roles in conflict mediation based on their insider-partial perspective, which can be seen from different angles. For example, Chapter 3 examines their roles from a relationship-based angle. Chapter 5, on the other hand, discusses the identity of these actors based on their co-constitutive and contextual perspectives, which are influential in shaping the perceptions and attitudes of their respective local communities (Jackson and Albrecht 2018). These perspectives are dynamic, shaped by social interactions, and thus can be considered 'hybrid' in themselves.

Attitudes, behaviours, and situations are also crucial factors that could turn a gatekeeper to either a bridge-builder or a spoiler (Kagawa 2020: 10, 14). In theory, both bridge-builders and spoilers incorporate the same

abilities that put them in the position of a gatekeeper—a unique social position that enables them not only to engage with the local and the top/national but possibly also the international sphere. They also have vertical, horizontal, and diagonal capabilities (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 42) that allow them to cross existing gaps between conflicting spheres and communities, accessing information from several sources and establishing relationships. These capabilities refer to the ability to bridge over different blockages in a conflict-affected society, between national elites and the grassroots bottom (horizontal gap), among communities (vertical gaps), or the local and international contexts (diagonal gap).

Previous studies argue that actors who serve as gatekeepers have little motivation for sabotaging conflict resolution attempts because they are interested in the immediate outcomes of peace negotiations (Svensson and Lindgren 2013: 703). Hence, the chances of gatekeepers spoiling the peace process are low. However, spoiling is not necessarily against peace or in favour of conflict. For example, a gatekeeper may deem it beneficial for the peace process to block the flow of certain information and cut off pernicious relationships (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 44–48). Also, the goals of conflict parties during a negotiation process may differ according to their perceptions of what caused the conflict, and these perceptions are informed by their specific backgrounds and histories as well as their experiences of power hierarchies. These circumstances could lead gate-keepers to 'spoil' the peace process deliberately, not because it works against their own interest, but because they perceive 'spoiling' to be in the interest of their constituency. There is also a possibility of gatekeepers being side-lined during negotiations due to a lack of political agency and resources, resulting in their disengagement from the process (Jackson and Albrecht 2018: 43–44). These types of 'spoiling' might occur unin-tentionally or simultaneously while trying to bridge existing gaps. In the case of Cambodia, for example, Buddhist monks worked to bridge their communities and the international sphere. However, their attempts to challenge national policies through public demonstrations and other forms of nonviolent peace movements were suppressed easily by govern-ment forces. While they were able to bridge the communities they were engaged with their lack of advocacy towards the elites within the Buddhist community and national politicians undermined their capacity to connect the top/national and grassroots levels (Lee 2020). The link between

conflict and the construction of identity, which could have imposed limitations on the Buddhist monks' ability to contribute to transformative relationships, will be elaborated in Chapter 5.

The historical and contextual background of a conflict, the opportunities and limitations of existing power structures, and the parties' perceptions of themselves and others, as informed by their attitudes and behaviours, determine whether gatekeepers will act as spoilers (Kagawa 2020: 78). These factors are not necessarily negative or conflict-promoting; the perception of the outcomes of a negotiation process is, after all, subjective. However, understanding the interplay of these factors could bolster the potential for gatekeepers to turn into bridge-builders, especially when they are made aware of the costs and benefits of their actions for their constituency. In this context spoiling might be only a temporary measure, hence sometimes recurring, as the dynamics of a conflict or the perception of actors towards it shifts constantly. Spoiling should be seen as a fundamental part of the peace process when socioeconomic dynamics evolve and reorganise access to resources and information (Newman and Richmond 2006: 101–110). Therefore, spoiling does not necessarily jeopardise a peace process as a whole but instead changes the positions and angles of actors involved; peace then becomes an outcome of re-organising the structures and processes of negotiations.

The ambivalent position of a gatekeeper—whether perceived as a bridge-builder or spoiler, acting beneficially and/or disruptively towards a peace process—needs to be examined in the light of their social and power-relational backgrounds. What is perceived to be a 'spoiling' behaviour might not be aimed at tarnishing conflict resolution in the long-run but may simply be a means of readjusting and repositioning the actors involved (ibid.: 109). This is evident in the case of the Bangsamoro ceasefire agreements, in which rebel leaders go back and forth between engaging and disturbing negotiations whenever they do not feel adequately heard by the government. In instances when the peace process seems to reach a stalemate they re-engage by bringing in other actors, even potentially solidifying the peace process by broadening the spectrum of participants (Kagawa 2020: 71–72). Hence, analysing the processes of peace negotiations or peacebuilding entails caution to avoid binaries such as right versus wrong or bridge-building versus spoiling. These binary conceptualisations neither capture the complexity and dynamism of post-conflict societies nor differentiate between layers of behaviour, such as short-, mid- or long-term 'spoiling'. They also fail

to consider the peace-promoting potential of spoiling and the conflict-reinforcing potential of bridge-building from the viewpoint of other parties involved. It may thus be necessary to rethink the terms 'bridge-building' and 'spoiling' and assign them as equally vital capacities for gatekeepers—without judging them as 'good' or 'bad' for peacebuilding.

Determining the factors that enable the peace-promoting potential of a gatekeeper is of pivotal importance in this analysis. It is crucial to understand what pushes gatekeepers to use their unique positionalities and reach out to other actors across the horizontal, vertical, and diagonal gaps of peacebuilding. One relevant concept in this puzzle is that of "transformative relationships" (ibid.: 75–77). According to Kagawa (ibid.: 66–68), a transformative relationship is based on shared norms, values, and experiences that allow actors to connect to each other and express and act upon their interests to resolve a conflict. A gatekeeper can contribute to the cultivation of a transformative relationship by incorporating a relationship-oriented angle in order to rebuild trust and relationships with other actors from different conflicting groups. This angle entails looking not only at the actors and their capacities but also at how and to whom they are connected, and how frequently and in which ways these relations are utilised. Hence, it is important to consider what shapes a gatekeeper's perspective towards other parties, how relationships can enable and block engagement during peace negotiations, and how power hierarchies might encourage or hinder gatekeepers in developing such transformative relationships (Jackson and Albrecht 2018: 44–46). Those who foster these transformative relationships become bridge-builders while those who do not turn into spoilers.

The possibility of gatekeepers turning into either bridge-builders or spoilers (in some cases, gatekeepers exercise both roles simultaneously, see for example Lee 2020) demands a broader consideration of the gatekeepers' perspective on a conflict and perceptions of other conflicting parties, as well as the social characteristics that allow actors to take on the role of a gatekeeper (e.g., social status, horizontal, vertical, and diagonal capabilities, and capacity to foster transformative relationships) (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 56). Given these compounding characteristics of gatekeepers, the typology of mid-space actors can be a fruitful tool for identifying and analysing key peacebuilding actors and their positionalities in post-conflict settings.

CRITIQUE OF THE TYPOLOGY

While the typology of mid-space actors is broad enough to be applicable to a vast array of case studies, there are still some conceptual issues that need to be addressed. In particular, more specific definitions concerning the type of capacities of gatekeepers, how their backgrounds enable or restrict the development of those capacities, and how outsiders can engage with gatekeepers need to be substantiated. The following discussion dives into these issues in an attempt to bolster the conceptual soundness and nuance the categories embedded in the typology.

Gatekeepers

Firstly, the circumstances under which a gatekeeper becomes either a bridge-builder or a spoiler are not completely clear. Although Kagawa (2020: 75–76) introduced the idea of transformative relationships to fill this conceptual gap, the term itself remains underexplored. As mentioned earlier, Kagawa (ibid.: 66) defines transformative relationships as relationships "based on [gatekeepers'] common ground and social networks". She suggests that the "criteria for nurturing a transformative relationship include a healthy clan relationship, ethno-cultural-religious commonality, respective social ranks of the parties, and an authorised person to mobilise internal peacekeepers" (ibid.: 72). Social position is a key in becoming a gatekeeper, in particular the ability to exert "a strong influence over ordinary people" and "power to control the access of top leaders and outside intermediaries to the grassroots constituency under their realm of influence" (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020: 38). These positions can be summed up into two criteria: local legitimacy and access to information. Legitimacy is crucial for how gatekeepers connect the top/national and bottom/local levels. It determines whether actors on the ground are willing to adapt the normative narrative of peace according to how it is presented to them by their leaders. Peace, after all, has to be grounded or conveyed through a normative understanding that is rooted in the culture of a community (Lemay-Hébert and Kappler 2016). To transfer their aspirations and coalesce support, mid-space actors need to signify a culturally relevant peace narrative and garner trust from their constituents.

Local legitimacy enables gatekeepers to access information, forge relationships, and establish a base of support when other actors intend to spoil ongoing negotiations (Mitchell 2018: 3). For example, in

Myanmar ethnic groups are highly fragmented and organised not only through representatives at the governmental level but also through self-administered areas and arrangements on the township level (Jolliffe 2015). Within this structure actors with local legitimacy connect national government agencies or representatives and the local villages. They are not bound under the constitution and engage relatively freely and thus have the ability to advocate solely for their communities' interests. The lack of legal accountability raises the possibility of spoiling based on their perceived interests or subjective judgements rather than careful consideration of the needs of affected communities (ibid.: 32). For example, some ethnic group leaders in Myanmar have even encouraged violence against the government due to their lack of trust in the credibility of the latter. From a political power perspective, guaranteeing the involvement of grassroots communities influences heavily on the local legitimacy of local leaders, hence the absence of opportunities for local involvement would block the connection to the bottom spheres (Mitchell 2018: 3).

Legitimacy, according to Clements and Uesugi (2020), needs to be *locally grounded*, based on local culture and norms, rather than being imposed by an outside entity such as international organisations. This raises the question, however, of whether it would be possible to train mid-space actors as local bridge-builders to engage actively with the bottom/local during the peacebuilding process while outside intervenors remain in a more passive position. Would this kind of resolution process be more effective? Also, to what degree can local bridge-builders be guided by outside actors without being seen as yielding to the influence of the international community, which could jeopardise the consent of their constituent and damage their reputation? What is the role of the mid-space as positioning factor for legitimacy and how is it shaped by political power? This chapter, as well as the subsequent empirical chapters, aims to clarify these questions.

Political Power

Locally grounded legitimacy can be understood as a hybrid form of legitimacy, combining traditional, charismatic, and rational legitimacy with normative and legal frameworks as it bridges a set of dichotomies such as traditional/modern, local/cosmopolitan, particularist/universalist (Uesugi 2018). It can be questioned, though, whether or not this legitimacy is able to bridge both sides. On one hand, the grassroots feel

included, their values are protected, and their voices heard. On the other hand, a common ground is established where international and local frameworks can complement and enhance each other. How international and local arrangements for monitoring ceasefire agreements in Mindanao have enhanced each other to promote legitimacy through the inclusion of diverse actors who could supervise independently the enforcement of ceasefire agreements will be discussed in Chapter 6. This chapter, nevertheless, argues for the possibility of implementing international priorities for peaceful negotiations while providing a platform for the engagement of local actors.

In connection to the ability to tap into various forms of legitimacy, there is a need to substantiate how the architecture of the mid-space (i.e., the network of social and power relations) shapes the opportunities and perspectives for actors to emerge as gatekeepers. Furthermore, the characteristics required to overcome the blockage between different spheres inside a conflicting society remain under-examined. In this sense political power can be understood as an essential yet dynamic and evolving element that defines the space wherein gatekeepers operate. Thus, power itself can be seen as product of hybridity as it is shaped through the interaction of social actors behaving based on and in response to power relations that restrict and enable their actions. As Jackson and Albrecht (2018: 40) argue, the "power of local actors to resist the imposition of liberal statebuilding processes…shows that some hybrid structures do provide a means to subvert externally imposed statebuilding but, importantly, access to these approaches is controlled and moderated by the political power of local elites". Political power might then be one of the crucial factors that determines whether mid-space actors can develop and facilitate transformative relationships, obtain local legitimacy, and maintain access to information. It can be anticipated that power relations hinder dialogue, especially in conflict-affected societies (Newman and Richmond 2006: 107–108). Hence, it is fruitful to investigate how outside entities interact with existing power networks, clearing the blockages around the mid-space.

Insider-Partial Mediators

In addition to locally grounded legitimacy, the concept of transformative relationships can be substantiated by drawing on the definition of 'insider-partial mediators' presented by Svensson and Lindgren (2013).

Insider-partial mediators are actors within a conflict-affected society who can take on mediation roles. They have the potential to "bring important indigenous resources to a peace process and […] can complement external mediators by mitigating the bargaining problem of information failure", focusing specifically on their ability to negotiate out of their specific social position (Svensson and Lindgren 2013: 715). While their study explains how and why certain actors become bridge-builders, they do not include the possibility of those actors spoiling negotiation due to "issue bias" or an inability "to be strictly neutral to the issue at stake" (Svensson and Lindgren 2013: 703). This bias can also be caused by the actors' entanglement in a conflict, prompting them to evaluate the possible outcomes of their actions based on how those outcomes affect their homes and social reputations (ibid.: 699). Insider-partial mediators are ultimately shaped by their unique social position, granting them power and "pervasive institutional presence", resulting in "significant cultural power" (Appleby 2001).

What distinguishes insider-partial mediators from other parties involved in resolving a conflict (e.g., 'outsider neutral mediators' or actors who are not directly affected by the conflict and can thus be considered 'objective' mediators) is their unmatched access to intimate information about the other parties. These characteristics make insider-partial mediators an appropriate substitute or addition to outside intervention, which is almost always present in conflict resolution processes (Svensson and Lindgren 2013: 702–703). By building on trusting relationships among some or all conflicting parties, insider-partial mediators seek to create solutions explicitly relevant to their socio-economic and political environment, creating a more localised or contextualised rather than top-down, cookie-cutter approach. Embedded in the way actors access and share information at the core of the negotiation process highlights the importance of investigating what enables them to transfer information. It is crucial to see not only how information is transferred but also how frequently, and how this information generate impact on the strength of relationships between parties. Similarly, by observing how these information flow, it might possible to locate gatekeepers within a conflict situation. This flow of information can also be considered part of the dynamic nature and complexity of conflict affected societies as discussed in Chapter 3.

The question remains, however, of how outsider-neutral mediators (specifically, the international community) can engage effectively with

insider-partial mediators. This chapter proposes a revision of the mid-space actor typology by describing gatekeepers located in the mid-space who can become insider-partial mediators through bridge-building. It is also important to explore how the international community can assist gatekeepers in their access to information and knowledge and in enhancing their legitimacy. Most pressingly, is there a possibility for the international community, as the outsider-neutral mediator, to draw on transformative relationships, fostering and enhancing the engagement between the various stakeholders while guaranteeing an emancipatory approach? These possibilities, including the balancing of power hierarchies, could be the key elements in removing blockages around the mid-space and guaranteeing the development of dialogue. Such questions open the discussion on the following questions. Are these transformative relationships transferrable, since they are viewed as inherent to local actors in their specific setting? Do transformative relationships hold the potential for equal and mutual partnerships between insider-partial and outsider-neutral mediators? Can insider-partial mediators take full responsibility, enabling the international community as the outsider intervener or mediator to act in a capacity-building rather than a conflict resolution role? Under which circumstances within these configurations would the outsiders overstep their mandate and once again simply imprint liberal values of consensus-building and democratisation while overlooking local power dynamics?

In terms of outsider intervention and conflict resolution, the work of Mitchell and Banks (1996) can be used as basis for establishing a sensible and informed approach to negotiation. Coleman (2018) has created detailed descriptions of meaningful skills outsider interveners should encompass to contribute to ongoing peacebuilding endeavours.

In cases where the international community acts in a capacity-building role, and trains gatekeepers to use effectively their existing transformative relationships, the question of legitimacy is brought into the spotlight. Outsider interveners need to consider when and how to identify gatekeepers who are able and willing to receive capacity-building training. This kind of engagement can only be guaranteed through a deep and extensive understanding of the society one is engaging with. It also raises the issue of trust among outsider-neutral and insider-partial mediators, extended through them from their communities. Outsider-neutral mediators often have to deliver their mandate within a short timeframe and sometimes resort to engaging with elite actors with the technical capacity

to act as gatekeepers but without legitimacy within their communities (von Billerbeck 2015).

There are various factors shaping the engagement of mid-space actors within a post-conflict society. How gatekeepers emerge in different forms and settings, including their social contexts, social identity, and formal and informal organisations that generate social order, will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. These factors return, once again, to the question of identifying and appropriately engaging with mid-space actors and whether a hybrid understanding of conflict and conflicting societies can help outsider-neutral mediators to approach gatekeepers. The following section will explore the potential application of the descriptive lens of mid-space actor typology in practice.

From Descriptive to Practical?

To bridge the gap between the descriptive lens and a practical approach to analytical frameworks for peacebuilding, such as the mid-space actor typology, it may be necessary to step back from an analytical perspective that tries to locate gatekeepers and their contribution to peace negotiations solely in terms of process. Instead, this chapter proposes an approach that helps the outside intervener to locate and engage with gatekeepers and contribute to their bridge-building in a meaningful manner. Such an approach needs to consider how to properly engage with gatekeepers and support their mediation role without jeopardising their local legitimacy. Peacebuilding scholars and practitioners have long recognised the importance of understanding the various factors influencing a community in a post-conflict environment in order to ensure appropriate local engagement. The 2015 review of the UN peacebuilding architecture states the following:

> Numerous and varied stakeholders—public and private, domestic, regional and international—share the responsibility for peacebuilding. The multi-dimensional nature of sustaining peace is unavoidable and poses major challenges to achieving coherence; conflict and peace impact on every single person in a society. Reaching reconciliation and sustainable peace requires broad and inclusive participation, involving state and civil society stakeholders all the way down to the grass-roots level. (UNGA 2015)

Building on this notion, Uesugi and Kagawa (2020: 48) claim that "it is possible to prevent the rise of spoilers and to convert them to constituents of the peace process, if we understand factors that influence the behaviour of a frustrated population". Given the dynamic nature of identities and societies, approaches to peacebuilding call for a constant re-configuration, re-negotiation and re-accumulation of knowledge regarding local communities. Peacebuilding further demands listening to evolving local perspectives on peace and what it takes to achieve it. Therefore, peace processes need to acknowledge the complexity of conflicts that require complex responses to the "highly dynamic, non-linear, and emergent" characteristics of societies (de Coning 2016). An adaptive typology that provides guidance on how to engage with gatekeepers while taking into account existing power structures embodies the complex nature of peacebuilding. Specifically, the capacity-building role of outside actors as mediators, as pointed out earlier, can contribute to the local resilience that is needed to cope with and adapt to change, including conflict.

There are several ways in which an outside intervener can influence the perspectives of gatekeepers on the peace process. First, outside interveners can train gatekeepers to acquire or enhance their skills to establish transformative relationships. As Kagawa (2020: 76–77) showcases in her analysis of the Bangsamoro peace process, ceasefire agreements served as initial diagonal platforms for opposed parties to engage through a formally established setting. This institutionalised form of engagement served as the base for the rebel and governmental parties to start negotiation and eventually sign a renewed peace agreement. It later informed more dependable, direct connections among the negotiating parties, proving to be a faster pathway for communication. As a result, the initial ceasefire agreements served as a learning experience for the opposing parties on how to approach, engage, and eventually establish transformative relationships between them.

Secondly, outside interveners can coordinate the transfer of knowledge among gatekeepers, connecting external and internal intermediation. Access to information conveyed through specific social positioning inside a community, as well as local legitimacy rooted in traditional sources, may be difficult to reproduce. However, the act of transmitting information and the type of information transmitted remains feasible. For example, actors with extensive knowledge of indigenous normative frameworks can, while conveying international norms to local people, merge the

insider-partial perspective and outsider-neutral perspective (Honda 2018). This merging of perspectives directs transformative relationships toward opportunities for promoting mutual understanding.

Thirdly, outside interveners can assist in building the capacity of gatekeepers. The role a mid-space actor plays during a peace process depends on a combination of skills and resources acquired through formal training or social experiences. For example, UNDP, in cooperation with the Clingendael Institute (2019), organised capacity-building programmes for mediation experts to train young leaders of insurgent groups in Mindanao. The training enabled the participants to share and discuss their needs and perspectives with each other in a meaningful way, empowering them to actively support the peacebuilding process in southern Philippines while enabling their agency to engage with their respective communities (Lidasan 2016). These types of capacity-building programmes pave the way for accessing the local knowledge of inside actors while enhancing their mediation skills and situating the importance of those skills within the broader context of conflict resolution. With roles built upon their capacities, gatekeepers also form the basis for them to bridge gaps, build dialogue platforms, and sustain dialogue.

Finally, another approach to consider might be engaging with the power-relations present in a conflict-affected society that are shaping the mid-space. One can look at which dynamics within a conflicting society block free engagement between the grassroots bottom/local, mid-space, and top/national levels. It then can be questioned how gatekeepers might overcome these blockages with the assistance of outside intervention. Outsiders can provide the environment needed to connect, and they can train and strengthen gatekeepers' capacities necessary to promote dialogue among conflicting parties, bridging vertical, horizontal, and diagonal gaps. This might happen through granting access to information that creates an understanding of the conflict established not only within local settings, which are usually inaccessible to the international actors, but also from an outside, meso, or macro perspective. A further possibility is negotiation and leadership training that draws on already existing structures of legitimacy, in contrast to attempting to build a new and unfamiliar social hierarchy. This could entail, as seen in previous consensus-building approaches in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire by the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the establishment of local committee meetings in which local representatives chosen by their community members participated to discuss their collective needs (JICA 2016).

This means gatekeepers are supported constantly in their role of developing relationships of trust with opposed parties—bridge-building or spoiling when necessary—and working towards sustained ties. At this point, some of the recommendations presented in this section remain on a theoretical level but will be discussed in the following empirical chapters and recapitulated in the concluding chapter.

Conclusion

Hybridity can be understood in different ways, being constantly shaped and re-shaped by the engagement of a myriad of actors and institutions (Mac Ginty and Sanghera 2012: 3–8). Hybrid peacebuilding seeks to understand peace and conflict as hybrid outcomes of a mixture of local and international norms situated within power structures and struggles. In hybrid peacebuilding, local communities can preserve their cultural values, norms, and practices while blending—not replacing—international (or universal) norms such as democratisation and the rule of law. It also encompasses a mixture of top-down and bottom-up approaches within the mid-space where both spheres meet and engage through a dynamic process of interactions involving all relevant actors.

How do we deal with this constantly shape-shifting concept in a way that allows us to operationalise the insights it generates? To contribute to answering this question, this chapter has unpacked the concept of the mid-space and applied a more fine-grained analysis of the peacebuilding agency of mid-space actors or gatekeepers who influence knowledge formation and norm expectation within their local communities. Through their social position, which grants them locally grounded legitimacy, access to information outside of their specific local context, and thus the ability to create transformative relationships, gatekeepers could emerge as agents of hybridity and—most importantly—hybrid peacebuilding. A typology that is attuned to the characteristics and skills of mid-space actors paves the way for a practical approach toward hybrid peacebuilding. As this chapter has demonstrated, this approach could include means of engaging and training gatekeepers from an outside perspective, empowering their peacebuilding endeavours, and enabling access to information that could shape their perception of a conflict. Through this approach, local leaders could emerge as active users of hybridity as a tool for accessing and sharing information and creating new understandings of local and international norms in an emancipatory way.

To create a deep understanding of the various ways mid-space actors can get involved in peace processes and, subsequently, enhance the peace-promoting outcomes of their involvement, there has to be a more precise, yet comprehensive and adaptive, typology. This typology has the potential to encompass all relevant assets of gatekeepers without compromising their entrenchment in a highly complex environment. Hence, this chapter reconceptualises the typology of mid-space actors on the basis of the following considerations. First, mid-space actors are enabled through their unique social position to gatekeep their community from intruders. There are two aspects that shape this social position: access to different resources of power, both formal and informal, and a deep cultural and normative understanding of their community and regional context. Secondly, through this combination they encompass certain characteristics that are inherently tied to these actors and are thus difficult or impossible to reproduce for outside actors. These characteristics include their ability to forge transformative relationships, obtain locally grounded legitimacy, and gain access to information and resources. Thirdly, depending on their perception of a conflict, mid-space gatekeepers might evolve into either bridge-builders or spoilers. Bridge-builders are actors who actively engage in connecting themselves and their community to other actors on the top/national, bottom/local, and international levels. Spoilers are seen as doing the opposite by blocking passages and connections to others. However, spoiling does not inherently mean that actors are intentionally choosing to sabotage the peace process. As pointed out earlier, their act of 'spoiling' could be based on their assumption of what is valuable to them or their community at a given time or their view that the conditions of interaction need to be adjusted. Rather than perceiving spoiling as based on inherently ill intentions, it can be seen as point of intervention and re-configuring what is on the negotiation table (Newman and Richmond 2006: 109). This alternative view of spoilers demonstrates the need to revise the way peacebuilding actors are labelled and categorised.

A typology of mid-space actors according to their characteristics, resources, and forms of engagement with outsider interveners fills the gap between hybrid theory and peacebuilding practice. This typology not only describes mid-space actors, and their characteristics and skills, but also aims to keep the ever-evolving environment of social actors in mind and urges both scholars and practitioners to consider the complexity of conflict-affected societies. Based on this premise, taking the analytical lens of hybrid peacebuilding as a baseline for understanding insider-partial

mediators as mid-space actors is proposed to provide an entry point for merging theoretical and practical approaches to hybrid peacebuilding.

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The Power of Identity in Hybrid Peacebuilding: Buddhist Monks in Post-Conflict Cambodia

Sophie Shiori Umeyama and Will Brehm

Introduction

Peacebuilding is a complex endeavour and relies on a multitude of actors and organisations coming together in an effort to build a sustainable peace that makes sense not only in international, regional, and local frameworks but also on the individual level. The actor- and relation-based approach to peacebuilding, with which this book deals, necessitates an analysis of ideas beyond conventional politics, namely that of identity politics (Öjendal et al. 2018). Assuming actors play a fundamental role in creating hybrid peacebuilding processes (Lutmar and Ockey 2018), it is important to further assess both the role of individual actors and their

S. S. Umeyama (✉)
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: sophieumeyama@fuji.waseda.jp

W. Brehm
UCL Institute of Education, University College London, London, UK
e-mail: w.brehm@ucl.ac.uk

identity biases. Local actors are often granted natural authority within their environment (Gippert 2017). A monk, for instance, is well respected by members of his community. Whilst that may seem like a source of natural potency as a mid-space actor able to build bridges both vertically and horizontally, as detailed in Chapter 4, it is pivotal to acknowledge that this simultaneously predisposes the actor to belong to and represent an exclusive identity group (Peleg 2019).

The potential exclusivity of an actor's identity group highlights potential pitfalls from his or her background. If his or her identities adhere to hard lines, leaving little room for rapprochement to other identity groups, then internal belongingness transforms into an obstacle in hybrid peacebuilding. If the given 'other' or excluded group was part of the conflict that constitutes the subject of peacebuilding, such constructs may severely hinder mid-space actor's ability of fulfilling their role.

Buddhist monks in the Cambodian peacebuilding efforts in recent decades are cases in point (Kobayashi 2005). When monks in Cambodia mobilised society to overcome decades of domestic conflict (roughly 1970 to 1998), some scholars attributed their efforts to nationalist impulses (Lee 2018). Notwithstanding such instincts, the peacebuilding activities of monks must be understood in terms of identity: they helped construct—and legitimised (Lee 2020a)—new narratives of belongingness, which subsequently mobilised support for peacebuilding efforts (see also Ledgerwood 2012). These new narratives included notions commonly found in liberal peacebuilding, such as human rights and social justice. Monks were able to intertwine indigenous practices of religion with international discourses, a phenomenon explored by some scholars in hybrid peacebuilding theory (e.g., Mac Ginty 2010). In effect, monks became mid-space actors navigating local, national, and international spaces, becoming important actors in post-conflict Cambodia. How they connected across these different spaces was partly dependent on the identity frames they held and constructed. It is this topic that is explored in more depth in this chapter.

Much of the peacebuilding success of monks depends on their cultural and social legitimacy. In the language of hybrid peacebuilding, legitimacy depends not only on the faith of religious followers, but also the constant interaction between monks as peace activists and civil society groups within and outside Cambodia (Zanker 2017). This interaction resulted in an amalgamation of international norms and standards coupled with traditional concepts and practices (Richmond 2012). As mid-spaced

actors, however, monks also confront the country's repressive authoritarian regime (Kent and Chandler 2008), which at times constrain their capacities as bridge-builders. In this regard, one of the broader issues of hybrid peacebuilding has to do with the inability of monks to bridge gaps between grassroots actors and political and religious elites. Such failures to unify desperate groups of people highlight the myriad interests at stake in any peacebuilding process. In extreme cases, such a failure runs the risk of exacerbating localised conflict and turning religious actors into spoilers, as outlined in Chapter 4.

This chapter engages with identity politics as well as identity networks before placing such concepts into the hybrid peacebuilding context. The case study of Cambodian Buddhist monks is then examined by assessing successes and failures, leading to a discussion on mid-space actors as so-called 'spoilers' of peace processes before finally offering a conclusion.

IDENTITY POLITICS

Identity constitutes a fundamental factor in creating group mentalities. Often identities are distinguished among "nations, races, ethnic groups, religious traditions, and ideologies" (Berreby 2008: 3). Those outside of one's group are 'othered,' which occurs both consciously and subconsciously. This process increases one's own belonging to a group and consolidates a margin of difference with one or more other groups. Identities help construct what could be considered 'In and Out' groups, and feelings of 'Us and Them.'

This type of cognitive inclusion and exclusion is critical in understanding the role identity plays in peacebuilding. Identity can create walls that actors must break down, overcome, or amend in efforts to achieve a positive peace with a former—or still current—so-called 'Out' group. Deep-rooted identity conflicts, such as during the Rwandan genocide (Caldwell 2014), conflict in Kashmir (Chowdhary 2015), or struggle for women's suffrage in various countries, can widen the gap between groups, sometimes resulting in horrific violence.

Power relations are intimately intertwined with identity. Korostelina (2013) for instance put forth that there exists a two-fold opposite relationship between social identity and power, both of which create a complex tangled process: national identity defines and is defined by power systems, leading to first, the embedment of power within identity concepts and second, the potential of defining power through the

lens of national identity. This insight is important as it highlights that power and power relations possess a place within national identity, thus affecting, shaping, and giving meaning to identity, which in turn may legitimise given power constructs and imbalances. An analysis of identity within the hybrid peacebuilding process thus goes beyond sole identity considerations and towards the concept of power relations.

In post conflict settings, identity conflicts can resurface during peace-building, potentially hindering or spoiling progress. Successful bridge-building between groups requires a careful understanding of identity and the power relations among social groups. Where identity can become an obstacle, it can also become a tool. Separate identities must not always clash; they can co-exist, they can intertwine, and they can encourage rapprochement with other groups (Jackson 1999). This is why nationality or ethnic background are often closely correlated to religious affiliation, gender identification, and political identity (Kulich et al. 2018).

Identity is not mutually exclusive; indeed, it is highly intersectional. The intersectionality of identity, further discussed in Chapter 3, allows different identities to co-exist and even mutually construct each other within the same space and even within the same actor (Collins 1998). This implies that identities overlap and layer; they do not necessarily cause identity clashes. This insight offers potential for fruitful co-operations amongst identities groups on a larger scale (McKeown 2013). Iden-tity intersectionality holds the promise for an enhanced peacebuilding for actors from these separate yet mutually accepting groups, as these different groups may indeed, like identities, co-exist peacefully. Thus, identity can spoil bridge-building and meaningfully support it. How this works within the context of hybrid peacebuilding will be demonstrated below, followed by practical examples of prior cases where identity acted as both an obstacle and tool.

Identity in Hybrid Peacebuilding

In hybrid peacebuilding, the relationships between different actors and institutions are of utmost importance in pursuing the goal of lasting peace (Dibley 2014). Mid-space actors must establish transformative relation-ships in order to commence bridge-building activities (Kagawa 2020), which means that ties across actors and institutions must be meaning-fully strengthened to secure the onset and continuation of peacebuilding

efforts. Inherent to this are the different groups of actors and stake-holders, which congregate in numerous sub-groups, each with their own and overlapping identity and power relations.

Hybridity lies in this diversity. Hybridity encompasses varied groups of interest and background partaking in the peacebuilding process and working on a positive peace suitable for all participants and beyond (Bargués-Pedreny 2018). The hybridity of relationships explained in Chapter 3 assumes that varied groups exist and approach the tasks from multiple points of interest. Identities are also relationally constituted and thus are defined in relation to others (Kyriakidou and Èzbilgin 2006). This is supported by the theory of 'negative identification,' which outlines that identities are constructed against the backdrop of other identities, thus creating a process of othering but also allowing fluidity of the created and maintained identities (Oswald Spring et al. 2010). Given that identities are not fixed, the way in which different actors affect each other is difficult to predict within the identity networks. The function and behaviour of each actor thus depends directly on the environment in which it is required. The intersectionality of identities increases an actor's fluidity in the peace process as more channels for interaction with diverging identity groups are available. This means that actors endowed with the task of building bridges within their community (and beyond) may fail to do so comprehensively because intersectional groups and sub-groups may not feel well represented by them. It is to this failure—what can be thought of as a 'spoiler' of peace—that we now turn in the next section.

Identity as Spoiler

Although mid-space actors hold the potential for bridging divides in hybrid peacebuilding, they also hold the potential to be spoilers. One reason this can happen is because of identity. For instance, a mid-space actor may represent identity groups despised or anathema to the nascent norms being constructed within a post-conflict society. In this instance, the mid-space actor might spoil the peace process. In general, actor-based approaches to peacebuilding have the potential to spoil the process. Such approaches intrinsically encourage the categorisation and compart-mentalisation of local actors by recognising diverging and potentially clashing identities, which brings the risk of instantiating false binaries and

enforcing a rigidity of the peace process that does not allow the accommodation of identity's natural fluidity, thereby risking the fluidity of the peacebuilding process itself.

Whilst it is necessary to analyse how identities operate within the framework of hybrid peacebuilding it is also pivotal to consider how peacebuilding can unintentionally entrench divisions between identities, which may obstruct progress. The binaries common to identity politics can be reinforced when different identity groups are asked to join the peacebuilding process, legitimising hard line identities (Uesugi 2020a). By establishing the necessity to involve diverging, separate identities, hybrid peacebuilding may indeed incentivise actors to solidify their identity along hard lines. The opportunity for inclusion in the peacebuilding process may thus directly intertwine with the fortification of actors' identities (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). It is therefore crucial to acknowledge these complex ways in which identities can both be informed by and inform the hybrid peacebuilding process. The case of Cambodia presented below demonstrates the fluidity and intersectionality of identity in efforts to build peace. The role of Buddhist monks demonstrates ways in which mid-space actors can be both bridge-builders and spoilers.

Monks as Bridge-Builders

Cambodia suffered decades of civil unrest (see Etcheson 2005). For our purposes here, the unrest began around 1970, when the royalist-backed government was ousted by a military regime friendly with Western powers fighting the communist government in neighbouring North Vietnam. Five years later, a communist regime came to power in Cambodia. Known as the Khmer Rouge (KR), this regime aimed to create an agrarian utopia and destroy modern society. Buddhism was banned and countless monks were either defrocked or killed. In 1979, after the KR was overthrown by a group of military defectors (with the support of Vietnam), a monastic community slowly returned to the country (Harris 2005). However, the civil in-fighting between different groups vying for power did not. Conflict among groups continued until 1998 when a single prime minister was finally elected. Although unrest can still be found today, many international organisations and countries perceive Cambodia to be stable. How this stability occurred is due to many factors. One such factor was the role monks played in building peace across antagonistic groups with divergent interests.

In Buddhist-majority Cambodia, monks possess an authority stemming from their ability to instantiate and mobilise a particular identity group as well as claiming representation of a higher religious authority. The social position of these monks as religious leaders thus constituted a rich potential source for influencing behaviour (Appleby 2008). The involvement of Buddhist monastic community (known as the *sangha*) in social issues has a long history dating back to colonial times in which they pursued goals against the French protectorate (Becker 1998), and in line with anti-imperialism against Thailand and Vietnam (Lee 2020a). Whilst their engagement in the Cambodian peacebuilding process following civil conflict does not mark the beginning of Buddhist involvement in social action, it does evidence a remarkable conscious resurgence necessitated by the severe suppression of the Buddhist tradition during the KR (1975–1979) and the People's Republic of Kampuchea rule (1979–1991) (Öjendal and Lilja 2009). While the numbers of monks decreased drastically and their engagement ceased essentially in full, the significant influence connected to their professional and cultural importance endured (Yos Hut 1998).

For survivors of the KR regime, the "very sight of saffron-robed monks, white-dressed elders, and Cambodians gathered around an altar comfort[ed] them" (Mortland 2017: 172). The monks' religious legitimacy, extensive cultural knowledge, and strong social network were meaningfully employed by those who partook in the reconciliation and peacebuilding process in Cambodia (Lee 2020a). With Cambodians accustomed to the leadership of monks, some *sangha* members began participating in bridge-building once again, especially between minority groups and the wider Cambodian public (Kawanami and Samuel 2013). Maha Ghosananda's well-known peace march named *dhammayietra* (walking for teaching/truth) mobilised popular support not only domestically but also internationally. Importantly this ushered in the bridge-building process by monks in Cambodia on a larger scale. Ghosananda also established temples, organised readings and religious conferences, and attended United Nations delegations (Mahatthanadull 2013). Other marches such as the *sithiyietra* (march for peace) soon surfaced, with support from the Independent Monk Network for Social Justice (IMNSJ) and advanced the role of marches as public awareness campaigns (Lee 2018). The IMNSJ and organisations such as Buddhism for Peace evidence further initiatives by monks in creating positive peace in the country (Lee 2020a).

Alongside public events such as marches, Buddhist monks soon resumed charity programmes in support of their communities (Brehm 2021). Faith-based groups such as the Dhamma Dana Association distributed scholarships and study materials; others offered work opportunities, or sermons (Lee 2018). Some organisations provided aid for individuals with HIV/AIDS, drug users, and economically challenged women; aid that transcends identity groups revolving around ethno-religious lines (ibid.).

Significant horizontal bridging has been achieved as a result of monks' efforts, which were eased by the strong networks that monasteries enjoy within their social setting and communities (ibid.). Their continuous accompaniment through people's lives and traditions placed them in ideal situations to shape communities' outlook on the peacebuilding process (ibid.). Socially active monks used the concepts of 'Engaged Buddhism' to build and solidify bridges within their reach.

People reacting positively to the monks' efforts originated from group dynamics of identity. Concepts of respect, karma, and social responsibility encouraged Cambodians to allow monks' actions to take effect. Having said this, negative preconceptions and a severely fractured Buddhist tradition transformed this into a difficult task for Cambodia's surviving monks, of which there were few after the collapse of the KR regime.

Political and economic identities further aided monks in their task of bridge-building between "direct or indirect manifestations of a vertical gap in the society" (ibid.: 98). The negative perception of Cambodia's elite and their mistreatment of civil society unintentionally united mid- and lower-levels of society under an umbrella constructed on political-economic identity. The grouping-in of other identity categories such as religion and ethnicity not only highlights the intersectionality of identity but also demonstrates that monks were able to tap into many identity groups through the process of underlining a common identity, transforming so-called 'Out-groups' into a single 'In-group.'

When assessing Cambodian monks' involvement in the peacebuilding process it becomes evident that important successes have been achieved. In a post-conflict society faced with fractured identity notions, monks began bridging the gaps that separated people within their communities. Traces of identity structures and a deep-rooted respect towards monks enabled them to build bridges to those who agreed with these ideas. Their progress remains important in their communities as well as on the wider grassroots level when challenging the upper socio-political echelons.

Nevertheless, the same identity frames that enabled such success simultaneously obstructed the monks' progress in other ways—a paradox that will be discussed below.

Shortcomings of Bridge-Builders

Whilst the work of monks was often positive, it remained extremely restrained in its reach. Only a small number of monks today survived the genocide, limiting their involvement in the post-conflict peacebuilding process. Endowed with importance in Cambodia's society, monks enjoyed significant success in places they could reach. Their engagement in the peacebuilding process and social action was not, however, universally approved. Some mainstream Buddhist orders, which nurture close relationships with political authorities, claimed that peacebuilding monks overstepped their purposes of non-violent and calm lives (Coward and Smith 2004). The monks' efforts at peacebuilding, in other words, were not normal *sangha* practice. This created a new chasm within the religious community, evidencing that their involvement did not only unite but also distance individuals and groups.

More importantly, however, the Buddhist monks' horizontal bridging simultaneously widened vertical gaps. Much of Cambodia's lay society negatively perceived the government. In this way, a political-economic identity took precedence over other identity groups, such as religion, ethnicity, or gender, creating a large coalition of diverse identities. Whilst this evidences the monks' ability to bridge horizontal gaps by transcending strict identity lines, it also demonstrates that vertical bridge-building between the government and civil society failed to a significant extent, consolidating or even widening such gaps. This is closely related to the nature of the conflict: distrust, anger, and distance to the government made sense in an environment that suffered from top-down violence exemplified by the KR and subsequent regimes. The activism responding to prior conflict can therefore be divisive in nature, especially considering the political backdrop in which it operates (ibid.).

The immense trauma and consequent negative identification of the official, top-level 'Out-group' made it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for monks to fulfil their role in bridging not only horizontal but also vertical gaps. These vertical gaps, it should be noted, were not as extreme as in other neighbouring contexts. Monks in Myanmar, for instance, were given tacit consent of the government to use violence towards

certain ethnic groups, notably the Rohingyas (Selengut 2017). This led to the emergence of Buddhist religious extremism against minority groups, something similarly found in Sri Lanka. The widening of vertical gaps carried through by Cambodian monks can thus be considered relatively minor compared to other contexts.

Whilst government action lent itself to maintenance of the vertical gap, monks were also aware that they needed to actively challenge the government to achieve their aims (Lee 2018). These challenges were carried through by peaceful means which, coupled with the government's readiness to use force against monks (Keyes 2007), severely destabilised the government's accusation that monks were the source of disorder, thereby serving a blow to government legitimacy and obstructing the rebuilding of trust on behalf of citizens who perceived such violence as the worst action by political elite since the KR regime (Sreang 2008). Overall, Buddhist leaders' social engagement provoked harsh government crackdowns that not only delegitimised the top-level leadership but also clearly highlighted the vertical gaps that remained intact or un-addressed (Lee 2020b).

This lack of transformative relationships with the government prevented monks from becoming efficient vertical bridge-builders, pointing at the difficulty of overcoming frames of othering that were imposed on and by them during and post conflict. Although it is of fundamental value in hybrid peacebuilding to involve different groups' participation in the peace process, it is also necessary to acknowledge the potential over-burdening of one particular group. Consequently, a strong intertwined network of actors and institutions must be built in order to avoid the possibility of failure when important groups (Uesugi 2020b), such as the monks in this case, fall short of their duties to transform relationships and build large political coalitions united by a common identity.

In addition to political economic identities preventing sound transformative relationships between the government and monks, the ability to bridge gaps between other communities also evidenced serious shortcomings. As religious figures, monks naturally represent the Buddhist tradition. Yet, they also increasingly aligned themselves with strong nationalistic views. The exclusive nationalism supported by Buddhist leaders has the by-product of indirectly encouraging aggression toward non-Khmer individuals in Cambodia (Lee 2020a). Through their adherence to nationalism, monks automatically alienated various groups of

Cambodia's society, highlighting their likely inability to connect to these groups in a peaceful and meaningful way.

Buddhist monks in Cambodia face difficult identity groupings in their environment, critically impairing them as mid-space actors (Kent and Chandler 2008). The identities formed in the context of their environment constructed certain attitudes and prejudices that affected their behaviour, thereby preventing them from successfully bridge-building. Other challenges in organisational and policy-making fields further called for a widened network and cooperation with the monks in order to prevent failure (Appleby 2008). When assuming that mid-space actors' importance and unique qualities useful to the peacebuilding process arise out of their wide-spectrum network with society and their transformative bottom-up approach, one must also consider that these characteristics may be compromised from the beginning as their position means their inclusion in, or at least experience of, the conflict (Svensson and Lindgren 2013). Given the deep root of these inherent challenges, such issues must be addressed explicitly before and during the peace process. The circumvention of such challenges requires deconstructing these characteristics, predisposing the actors to some forms of exclusionary behaviour in order to usher in a fundamental understanding of one's own biases. Without such processes, as displayed in the case for these mid-space actors in Cambodia, memories and trauma from an identity-centred conflict complicate the prospects of peacebuilding whilst therefore also obstructing Buddhist monks' tasks (Charbonneau and Parent 2013).

Monks as Spoilers

Analysing how identity can both be useful and obstructive in bridging gaps raises the question whether the participation of mid-space actors placed in the settings of identity frameworks is a positive or negative qualifier. In conflicts that evidenced discord along clear identity lines, does belonging to one of the conflicting 'In-groups' benefit the peacebuilding process or hinder it? Participants in the process recognise the unique position that mid-space actors can fill, considering their natural inclusion in society; however, they also tend to ignore how identity can predispose these actors to pursue a certain kind of bridge-building and consequently type of peacebuilding. Such considerations are pondered when the mid-space group in question demonstrates hyper-evident ideologies which can

become problematic, as is done with rebel groups (Swain and Öjendal 2018). When the group is overtly peaceful, non-problematic, and in pursuit of a peacebuilding process favoured by other actors, no evident potential for spoiling the process is addressed explicitly. The identity frames that can turn bridge-builders into spoilers, however, are covert, complicated, and often difficult to trace clearly. It is thus important to acknowledge these mid-space actors' resistant positions within existing identity groupings in order to recognise the potential prejudices that they can add to the peacebuilding process.

That is not to say that certain mid-space actors such as monks should be excluded or restrained in the peacebuilding process. Rather, this serves to demonstrate two points: first, mid-space actors such as monks are positively supported by existing identity concepts which endow them with authority and agency, thereby allowing them to reach their communities on profound and meaningful levels through 'locally grounded legitimacy' (Uesugi 2020b); second, however, if these identity structures encompass othering of groups that should be included in and beneficiaries of the peacebuilding process, their role as bridge-builders may be obstructed, turning them into spoilers. Indeed, the violent Buddhist movement in Myanmar is case in point. Through their placement within the conflict, mid-space actors have the ability to identify clearly the existing conflicts which are pressing issues amongst identity groups; employing their authority to address these conflicts, however, can lead to at least two opposite outcomes: building bridges, or burning them. Due to the intrinsically deeply held character of identity, it is difficult to avoid such spoiling: according to one's own ideas and views, actions that alienate Others—such as the Cambodian government's stance towards monk's peacebuilding activism—likely makes sense.

Rather than abandoning such activities, however, it should be preceded or coupled with a critical understanding of one's standpoint. Despite potential efforts in enhancing mutual understanding, tolerance and coexistence, it remains considerably difficult to break free from concepts deeply rooted in one's identity as a kind of circular reasoning occurs. Yet, without recognising the roots of these oppositions, truly lasting peace that addresses misconceptions and underlying discord between identity groups in the post-conflict society can hardly be made (Richmond 2002). Whilst a positive peace may arise out of the peacebuilding process, division will still likely grow alongside the peace. At this stage, one must consider external actors' and scholars' projection of their ideas to a

foreign, unsuitable setting. Divisions, or in more positive terms diversity, are not necessarily bad. Indeed, they should be preserved where suitable. Addressing identity in the peacebuilding process is not to erase these distinctions but to use them efficiently in the pursuit of hybrid peacebuilding in practice.

Conclusion

This chapter argues for the need to include identity frames within the study of hybrid peacebuilding from an analytical and practical standpoint. It has suggested that identities play a crucial role in bridging the gap between horizontal spaces for local peacebuilding initiatives and the vertical involvement in government-led peace agendas as identity formations of Buddhist monks have reflected in their agency as actors in the context of their ability to position themselves as bridge-builders in postconflict Cambodia. As mentioned, this is concomitant to the relevance of identity frames as an important factor in the articulation of othering that also defines the politics of exclusion and inclusion within conflict and post-conflict societies.

Identities become a double-edged sword as a tool and obstacle in the success and failure of peacebuilding agendas. Although monks in Cambodia have been able to perform a wide-range of activities and tactics to horizontally intervene and contribute to peacebuilding processes, the vertical spaces for formal peace processes have not been readily open for them, which also leaves the question of whether it is possible for one group to bridge gaps at the horizontal and vertical levels. Nevertheless, the centrality of identity frames is still an important aspect of hybrid peacebuilding as it illuminates important aspects that must be considered in hybrid peacebuilding.

The interaction and cooperation of monks with local and international civil society groups begs the question of their role in mobilising popular support for peace processes. After all, religion is only one part of the political equation as such sectors as women's groups, trade unions, youth and student organisations, and business groups have to be behind the peace process as well (Laurent Baregu and Landsberg 2003). In fact, this raises some concerns regarding the relationship of the monks with such organisations and the degree of cooperation they can foster in order to bridge the gaps between the horizontal and vertical spaces for peacebuilding. In this regard, this issue turns to the possibility that the ability of the

monks to bridge the gaps between horizontal and vertical spaces is largely dependent on the manner they are able to take advantage of or create linkages with sectoral groups, which can help them achieve their goals in the peacebuilding process. Of course, this is an issue of the capacity of the monks to cooperate with other Out-groups. In this case, the success of Buddhist monks to fulfil their role as mid-space actors can be determined by their ability to converge these multiple interests and points of contention with the goal of intervening in the peace process.

The chapter's conceptualisation within the context of hybrid peacebuilding has acknowledged that identities could not and should not remain in neat categories given the ability of a single religious group to transgress across different spaces. The following chapter examines the Bangsamoro civil society's hybridisation that has emanated from the interaction and combination of local and international resources, which have provided an opportunity for non-state actors to support and intervene in the formal peace process. For future research, it would be valuable to compare and contrast the role of ethno-religious and other identity groups that operate in different contexts. In Asia, the violent conflict in Myanmar, for example, operates more closely along ethnic and religious divisions, which runs in contrast to the case used in this chapter. Although Cambodia is a relatively heterogeneous state, the political factions within the government run along ideological lines and are typically not based on racial or ethnic groups, which take into account as to why the mid-space role of the Buddhist monks has been largely undermined.

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CHAPTER 6

Frictional Binaries: Hybridity, Civil Society, and Liberal-Local Peacebuilding in Mindanao

Ferth Vandensteen Manaysay and Jovanie Camacho Espesor

Introduction

International and local civil society organisations (CSOs) have typically been included within the conceptual and theoretical discussions of liberal and post-liberal peace approaches. On the one hand, liberal peace approaches identify civil society actors as key players in peace and conflict resolution because of their crucial role in fostering democratic principles and institutions. Civil society is assumed to run in parallel with liberal peacebuilding because it provides platforms for greater participation and accountability from the state in the context of peace processes. Post-liberal approaches, which are referred to as the 'local turn' (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Mac Ginty 2015, 2016) in

F. V. Manaysay (✉)
Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines
e-mail: fmanaysay@ateneo.edu

J. C. Espesor
Department of Political Science, Mindanao State University, General Santos City, Philippines
e-mail: jovanie.espesor@msugensan.edu.ph

peacebuilding, on the other hand, emphasise the importance of local power structures. This takes into account as to why the emergence of the hybrid peace, for example, has highlighted the need to empower local civil society actors. The local turn in peacebuilding recognises the agency of sub-national actors and practices towards the goal of effective peacebuilding in collaboration with international entities (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015; Mac Ginty 2011). Critics of the local turn in peacebuilding, however, highlight the dangers of romanticising the concept of hybridity. One of the main issues stressed against the local turn in peacebuilding has focused on the inability of hybrid peace to practically and conceptually transcend beyond the dichotomised categories of 'illiberal-local' and 'liberal-international' which overlooks local power structures on the ground. For civil society, this has resulted to the detachment of international interventions from local realities and marginalisation of community-based organisations (Popplewell 2018).

This chapter contends that discussions on liberal-local hybridity can most meaningfully gain from asking questions not only about the processes of internationalisation and localisation, but also about the ways in which hybrid mechanisms are able to produce more or less stable outcomes. The goal is therefore to describe not only the competitive, but also the co-constitutive relationships between international and local actors. By turning into the agency of civil society actors, it suggests that the concept of hybridity, which is often represented using dichotomised categories (i.e. 'liberal-international' and 'illiberal-local'), tends to oversimplify the conceptual intricacies and dynamic relationships between top-down and bottom-up peace approaches (Mac Ginty 2010). These 'new binaries' (Richmond 2009: 229) have been theorised as oppositional forces. Such binaries, however, disregard that local ownership and international governance are not always in contestation with each other. The analysis in this chapter contributes to the debates on hybridity by illustrating how civil society actors are able to negotiate the frictional binaries between liberal institutions and resources vis-à-vis local practices, power relations and norms.

This chapter demonstrates these arguments using examples from the subnational conflict community of Mindanao in the southern region of the Philippines. Mindanao provides important insights as a case for this chapter for two reasons. First, Mindanao's civil society serves as an excellent case to examine hybrid peacebuilding because of the strong international-local linkages in the region. Many non-governmental

organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBO) have played an important role in peacebuilding and serve as recipients of large amounts of humanitarian aid and development assistance. Several international organisations and foreign governments have been involved in peacebuilding activities in Mindanao, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), United Nations (UN), World Bank (WB), European Union (EU), New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), among many others. The presence of liberal democratic institutions in the Philippines, however, has entailed that the government did not require state-building mechanisms from the external actors, which is different from the large-scale peacebuilding missions and humanitarian interventions in such neighbouring countries as Cambodia and Timor-Leste. Uesugi (2018: 8), nevertheless, has also observed that "there is a noticeable cleavage stemming from the qualitative difference between the nominal application of a liberal governance system and whether such a system operates properly on the ground." This is due to the existence of local authoritarianism despite the overarching national democracy in the Philippines. Some scholars describe this phenomenon as "competitive authoritarianism" (Helmke and Levitsky 2004) that generates "systemic incoherence" due to the existence of opposing forces "when elements of democracy and autocracy are combined" (Davenport and Armstrong 2004: 541). After all, the protracted conflict in Mindanao has been a result of the failures of existing liberal-democratic institutions to accommodate the interests of the ethnic minorities in the region (Kagawa 2020; Abuza 2016).

Second, Mindanao has been considered as a "hybrid political community" (Deinla 2018) which is characterised by the amalgamation and interaction between liberal-formal and illiberal-informal actors. This entails that local and international CSOs function in intimate local power structures, which are based on the dynamics amongst political lords, insurgents and millenarian families, and marginalised communities (Espesor 2017). The existence of these power players means that the success of liberal-international actors has been dependent on the manner they are able to enmesh themselves within these local networks. In this case, illiberal-local actors cannot be conceptualised without the examination of the influence of liberal-international actors. In Mindanao, it is not unusual to find locals who have been engaged in international NGOs or have

participated in long-term and short-term UN-supported projects. These realities have demanded some amount of localisation and internationalisation, which affect the manner both local and international actors are able to operate in not only the local contexts, but also within the purview of the external entities they identify themselves with such as international organisations. In this regard, there is also a necessity to elucidate whether local peacebuilding and civil society empowerment efforts are intended to hold local governments accountable to their actions and to foster "transformative relationships" (Kagawa 2020) between formerly antagonistic identity-based (e.g. ethno-religious, regional, women) communities. In some ways, liberal-international organisations have also empowered local CSOs to determine their own peace agendas. Local CSOs are strategic agents to penetrate and cascade exogenous liberal norms in the conflict zone.

The rest of the chapter is divided into four sections. It begins with a conceptualisation of hybrid peacebuilding and civil society. It emphasises the role of civil society as a recipient of international and local norms, ideas, and practices, which may sometimes lead to unequal and asymmetrical encounters between international and local actors. The second part presents the role of civil society in internationally-supported peace and development assistance programmes in Mindanao. In this case, CSOs are situated in hybridised contexts which entail that local and international entities are not able to implement their objectives without compromising and taking into account the dynamics of their relationships with other key players. Building on the attempts of the preceding chapters to problematise the practical dimensions of hybrid peacebuilding, the third part describes the following as sites of liberal-local hybridity vis-à-vis civil society involvement in Mindanao: people's diplomacy, indigenous people's participation, and women empowerment. The case of the civil society in Mindanao supports the notion that peacebuilding is a hybrid process of international and local factors (norms, actors, and agencies). The chapter concludes that there is a need to examine the ways in which the hybrid peace approach is able to take into consideration how local civil society actors can possibly leverage international contexts by tapping into the resources they can gain from liberal-international peacebuilding institutions.

Hybrid Peacebuilding and Civil Society

Civil society comprises a wide range of local and international actors, which may include both independent and quasi-government actors (Marchetti 2015). In hybrid peacebuilding, civil society actors have usually been characterised based on their ability to navigate through local actors (e.g. community leaders, local security groups, political elites, CBOs, and NGOs) and international political players (e.g. UN officials and decision makers, international organisations, regional bodies, foreign states, and other international donors). In post-conflict contexts, Richmond (2011: 5) contends that civil society actors have provided a vehicle for the liberal peace agenda's emancipatory promises based on "grounded legitimacy, being derived from local agency as well as international liberal norms." Mac Ginty (2011) has coined the term "hybrid civil society" to support his argument about the need to incorporate the agency and power of local actors. As a process, hybridisation is dependent on the negotiation of opposing forces in which the amenability of liberal-international actors are confronted with local resistance and indigenous alternatives. In this regard, there has been a tendency to ignore and underestimate indigenous expressions of civil society. Mac Ginty (2010: 398) has perceived this issue this way:

> Indeed, it is useful to think of entities (individuals, communities, institutions) as being hybridised from the outset. In this view, social and political processes—such as peacemaking, peacebuilding or postwar reconstruction—involve the interaction of a series of already hybridised actors and structures.

Many scholars have attempted to illustrate the usefulness of hybridity as an alternative approach to the inability of liberal peacebuilding to engage local actors in post-conflict societies (Wallis et al. 2018; Belloni 2012; Uesugi 2020). The questions and criticisms about liberal peacebuilding approach have always been about the suitability of introducing value-laden institutions into the fragile and volatile conditions of post-conflict communities. Hybridity has been touted as a response to the critique that liberal peacebuilding approach has not allowed for the emergence of local forms of conflict resolutions and governance dynamics. In many cases, democracy-building and economic development projects have been

labelled as peacebuilding initiatives without adequate support by international actors in resolving the different grievances on the ground (Burke 2012). Mac Ginty (2011: 7) accentuates the necessity to create a "new understanding of how liberal internationalism operates, especially in its dealings with the local." The contention is therefore geared towards the ability of the hybrid peacebuilding approach to obtain grounded legitimacy from the actors in the peace process and to foster a more inclusive approach in peace and conflict resolution (Richmond 2011: 28). This means that more attention must be slanted toward 'the local' in the form of grassroots local agencies and indigenous people (Mac Ginty 2011: 47). Hybridity has also been conceptualised as a space where international and local actors produce constitutive and competitive interactions with each other. For example, hybridity has been used to interrogate the ability of local actors to resist the top-down approaches of liberal-international actors (Jackson and Albrecht 2018), analyse the relational aspects of peacebuilding between local and international actors (Boege 2018), and consider the ways in which hybridised environments have impinged on gendered powers relations (Grenfell 2018).

Hybridity, however, is not without its limitations as demonstrated in Chapter 2. Hybridity has often been criticised for the concept's over-stretched notions about the boundaries and interactions between liberal and local actors. Millar (2014), for example, has observed that hybridity has been conceptually used in different strands of the post-liberal peace literature (e.g. hybrid peacekeeping missions, hybrid criminal tribunals, hybrid governance, and the hybrid peace) without taking into consideration the multiple layers of relations behind this approach. In this regard, he has proposed the need to clarify the institutional, practical, ritual, and conceptual definitions of the hybrid peacebuilding approach. Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (2011) have also emphasised that following a strict binary schema between liberal-international and illiberal-local actors may pose some limitations in terms of the different sets of questions which can be asked about the political logics of inclusion and exclusion within the peace process. In the same manner, Boege's (2018: 115) research on Bougainville's peace process also highlights the necessity to perceive hybridisation from a relational perspective, which basically involves the presence of "fluid and dynamic process of interaction between 'local' and 'international' actors."

Another criticism about the hybrid peacebuilding has to do with the dangers of the romanticisation of the traditional approaches of the local,

which may be inherently in opposition to liberal values such as human rights, gender equality, and democratic order (Anam 2018). Grenfell's (2018: 237–252) fieldwork in Timor-Leste, for example, has provided an account of the clash between "customary" and "modern" forms of spatiality in relation to violence against women. In Timor-Leste, the dependence of women in their partners has been institutionalised through modern modes of production work, which have also compounded the level of violent experiences of women in the country. In India and Indonesia, meanwhile, hybrid peacebuilding has contained armed separatist movements at the expense of the fundamental liberties and human rights of the marginalised sectors of the population (Wilson 2020: 115). In these cases, hybridity presents a double-edged sword of the constraints confronting locally-brokered agreements and the illiberal character of the peace process which ignore the rights and voices of minority groups.

In consideration of these criticisms, the use of hybrid peacebuilding approach in this chapter is therefore not aimed at demarcating the dichotomised logics between liberal and local hybridity given that the boundaries between these binaries are not always fixed. In Mindanao, for example, the interventions of Islamic and non-liberal "hybrid facilitators" have provided an alternative approach to the Bangsamoro peace process (Uesugi 2018; Santos 2013). In the same manner, as in the case of the community-based peace activities of the Buddhist monks in Cambodia, locally-initiated peacebuilding may not necessarily represent the aspirations of the local people (Lee 2020). Instead, the goal of this chapter is to set out from these categories to examine the spaces of hybridity between international (e.g. international CSOs, UN, EU, Asia Foundation, etc.) and local (e.g. community leaders, local NGOs, sectoral bodies, etc.) actors, which cannot be neatly categorised as liberal and non-liberal. In this regard, Simangan (2018) has used a similar approach in her study about the entanglements between international-liberal institutions and illiberal-local elites in Cambodia based on the analytical utility of the hybrid peacebuilding approach (Mac Ginty 2011; Björkdahl and Höglund 2013). In her study, she finds that the persistent resistance of liberal norms from local elites has resulted to negative hybrid peace in Cambodia where peace can be described as neither liberal nor emancipatory. In the case of Mindanao, the critical analysis of the agency and encounters of civil society actors provides a conceptual space away from the dichotomised notions of the liberal-local hybridity.

Civil Society and Peacebuilding in Mindanao

It is critical to emphasise some contextual differences between Mindanao and other cases within the hybrid peacebuilding literature. Mindanao has often been portrayed based on the political and economic roots of the conflict in the region. Politically, the genesis of the conflict in Mindanao can be traced all the way back to the colonial past of the Philippines, which was problematised through the unsuccessful integration of Muslim minorities within the Catholic-dominated country. In the Muslim Mindanao, there was a perceived struggle between the two religions with Christianity as the anti-thesis of Islam (Tadem 2008: 102). The conflict has mainly been a result of the rejection of the Moro communities against the decision that their 'ancestral domain' should be integrated into the territory of the Philippines. The overarching struggle of the conflict has been an attempt by groups within the region to obtain the right to self-determination or independence, which has evolved into a decades-long secessionist movement (Kagawa 2020).

The complexity of the Bangsamoro peace process, of course, has to do with the presence of competing peace processes which have been running simultaneously under the same territory (Abuza 2016). The first that formed was the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), created in the 1960s by Moro leaders who wanted to achieve self-determination for the region. This has culminated with the 1996 final peace agreement between MNLF and the Philippine government. In 1984, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), however, broke off from the MNLF largely from what is viewed as a disagreement of the leaders towards what the goals of the organisation should be. By splitting the organisation, it has also resulted in many other much smaller actors, some more radical than others. For example, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was established in 1991 as an offshoot organisation from the MNLF, whist the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) broke away from the MILF. Although the peace process between the MILF and the Philippines government has been institutionalised due to the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) and the legislation of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) the recent episodes of political violence by insurgent groups in the Southern Philippines, including the Zamboanga siege (2013), Mamasapano incident (2015), and the Marawi crisis (2017), have also indicated that the peace process is still in a fragile and unstable condition.

Civilian communities, meanwhile, have been confronted with the possible eruptions of Islamic State-inspired violence and greater militarisation due to the recent imposition of martial law. In this sense, there is no clear-cut answer as to whether Mindanao can be considered as a war zone (taking into consideration the presence of breakaway groups like the BIFF and ASG), a conflict area (mostly because of the rampant cycles of violence and extra-judicial killings during elections and terrorist and organised criminal activities), or a post-conflict society (due to the 1996 peace deal with the MNLF and the 2014 CAB and 2018 BOL with the MILF). Nonetheless, the grassroots rivalries between political clans and landlords have also been a matter of concern for peace activists in the region. Such conditions produce "negative hybrid peace" in which liberal norms are challenged, and a repressive status quo is maintained (Richmond 2015: 54).

A major lesson from the Mindanao peace process was the realisation that the government cannot and should not do it alone. There is a need to consult with civil society actors who are demanding for participation since the peace process impacts the lives of the local stakeholders. After all, the "failed experiment" of the peace deal with the MNLF has indicated that autonomy and economic growth are not necessarily mutually inclusive. The fall of the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos during the 1986 Peoples Power Revolution is often seen as one of the major factors which have enabled the growth and development of civil society in the Philippines. In fact, the role of civil society actors in the country's socio-economic and political development has been enshrined within the 1987 Philippine Constitution's Article II (Declaration of Principles and State Policies), Section 23, which states that it is the policy of the state "to encourage non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organisations that promote the welfare of the nation." This takes into account as to why civil society participation has been institutionalised as one of the fundamental laws of the land. It is not hard to imagine that the same political condition has enabled civil society in Mindanao to engage the government in the peace process.

In addition, the passage of the 1991 Local Government Code (RA 37160) has also provided an enabling legal environment for the direct participation of civil society actors in the local governance. The growth of the civil society and the development of the peace process have coincided with the trend towards greater democratisation and decentralisation of political power and economic-decision making process in the Philippines.

These conditions have also opened sectoral representations for women, indigenous people, youth, urban poor, and farmers, among others. In Mindanao, there is an expectation that local CSOs should play an active role in the consultative process of provincial and regional peace and order councils which also provide the accreditation for them. It goes without saying that support for civil society actors has been one of core features of international peacebuilding in Mindanao. Civil society actors in the region have gained a broad level of support from many international NGOs and donor agencies. Aside from the development aid from foreign governments and financial institutions, many local CSOs have also worked with international NGOs, including the Catholic Relief Services, Asia Foundation, and International Crisis Group. International organisations frequently support local CSOs in the form of technical-logistical assistance, facilitation services, and capacity-building programmes.

There have also been attempts from international actors to work with local civil society groups to create different platforms for reconciliation at the grassroots level. MILF's reliance on the expertise of international and local civil society groups, for example, is evident in the establishment of the Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly (BPCA), which has been instrumental in providing important inputs and policies regarding the negotiated autonomy with the Philippine government. In Mindanao, Rood (2005: 21–29) enumerates that the involvements of civil society groups in peacebuilding efforts are three-fold: (1) dialogue between communities (e.g. Bishops-*Ulama* Conference in support of bridging the sectarian divide and preventing communal violence in Mindanao); (2) horizontal spaces for peace (e.g. the establishment of 'peace zones' in Mindanao as a concerted effort between local and international organisations); and (3) vertical involvement in peace policy-making (i.e. the goal of the civil society to influence the peace process through consultative and collective action efforts. Local CSOs, however, have been prone to the capture of both national and local elites. In a report from the Asia Foundation on development assistance in the region, Parks, Colletta and Oppenheim (2013: 120) note that:

> … patronage and corruption are so deeply entrenched that the well-designed plans and aims of donors rarely result in transformative impacts, and more often than not, actually reinforce traditional political power and patronage structures. In sum, aid in Mindanao has become yet another

source of contestation among local actors, as well as a self-perpetuating industry for donors, government, and NGOs, alike.

Nevertheless, local CSOs have maintained a crucial role in the Mindanao peace process given that minority groups (e.g. Moros and non-Muslim ethnic communities) have very restricted powers in the national political landscape. Civil society groups have wide-ranging and broadly-defined activities in the region, including peace movements and alliances, peace education and research, relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, truth commissions and investigative missions, grassroots ceasefire monitoring, dialogue and consultations, interfaith dialogue, arts and culture for peace advocacy, and peace journalism (Abubakar 2007). From this view, the dependence of the MILF peace negotiators, for example, on BPCA's recommendations suggests that civil society actors have become supplementary players in the peace process by pushing for strategies against political violence in the region. Most notably, local and regional CSO networks (e.g. Mindanao Caucus of Development NGO Networks and Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society) have been instrumental in terms of fostering 'transformative relationships' and creating diagonal platforms for negotiations. In this regard, an adequate degree of international support opens an opportunity for civil society organisations to strengthen their capacity in building and maintaining 'transformative relationships' as part of the peace process. Kagawa's (2020) critical analysis of the mid-space actors in the context of the Bangsamoro, for instance, includes the involvement of *Ulama* leaders, who have not only supported humanitarian endeavours in the region, but have also served as a religious blanket for local and national peacebuilding efforts.

In this sense, the role of the civil society can also be attributed to that of mid-space actors or gatekeepers (see Chapter 4) who have the capacity to wield some influence in knowledge formation and possess locally-grounded legitimacy as agents of hybrid peacebuilding. This is concomitant to the ability of local actors to have access to different sources of power, i.e. formal and informal, due to their normative understanding of the contexts and complexities on the ground. Local and international resources, on the one hand, can enable CSOs to play the role of 'bridge-builders' who have the ability to navigate themselves across different levels of peace engagement. On the other hand, however, locally-based actors can also unintentionally become spoilers

especially when their interests and demands constrain the peace process (see Chapter 5).

Surprisingly, peacebuilding activities have not been evenly spread within the southern part of the Philippines. Many local CSOs have pointed out that international peacebuilding has not been extensively entertained in the region if it is not supplemented by developmental and financial interventions, which target such sectoral needs as education, livelihood, and healthcare. Some NGOs, for example, have pointed out the challenge of getting people to participate in their programmes, which is why community-based activities in Mindanao have been geared towards particular interests (e.g. youth, women, indigenous people, etc.) to narrow down the sets of local grievances that need to be addressed. Peace education, for example, is popular area of work which most local and international CSOs have engaged in because it covers not only educational institutions in Mindanao, but also grassroots communities which are willing to learn about better inter-faith relationships and ethnic tolerance. In peace education programmes, local NGOs have usually followed internationally-accepted frameworks such as the curriculum of University for Peace in Costa Rica on intercultural respect, harmony, and active non-violence (Bacani 2004).

Two points are worth emphasising about the dynamics of civil society involvement in Mindanao. The first is that despite the violent conflict the (flawed) liberal-democratic system of the Philippines has still provided some openings for the growth of civil society in Mindanao. Morada and Tadem (2006: 429) have noted that "these openings for civil society are meant to promote not only popular participation but also local accountability and transparency." This is quite different from the experiences of the authoritarian post-conflict countries in Southeast Asia such as Cambodia and Timor-Lester where foreign liberal influence in peace-keeping missions was needed to achieve peace. There has also been a significant level of variation in the activities of civil society actors, which are not completely captured by "outsiders" such as international development groups and security analysts. In reality, "conflict dynamics in one community may contrast starkly with conflict in neighbouring communities where, due to a different configuration of political actors, family or clan networks, ethnic cultural groups, security forces, and/or insurgents, local conflict conditions may be very different" (Schuler et al. 2013).

The second point is that the presumed tensions within the hybridity literature between illiberal-local and liberal-international communities

have not always been clear-cut. This is also perhaps reflected in the lack of comprehensive and critical studies about the wider range of peacebuilding initiatives within the region. In Mindanao, some organisations have drawn from discourses and practices from both local and international sources. The presence of these organisations has resulted to a broad range of programmatic concerns which are not only rooted in communities, but are also located within the radars of international actors. Liberal-local relations contribute to the hybridisation of the peace process. Hence, it is important to identify the areas of dynamic entanglements between local and international actors (Boege 2018: 117).

Sites of Liberal-Local Hybrid Peacebuilding in Mindanao

Hybrid peacebuilding encourages the everyday processes of local-international exchange which demands a process of recalibration and re-negotiation in the relationships between the local and international actors in the course of peacebuilding. It is therefore productive to think about hybridity as a continuum in which locally-based organisations are able to frame their personal grievances within the wider discourses of the international community. In this sense, the specific interplay of the hybridised relationships between the international and the local actors produces a space for accommodation and resistance to liberal peace agendas. In Mindanao, as implicated in the above discussion, the success of local CSOs and community leaders are largely dependent on the manner they are able to take advantage of "skills that allow them to manoeuvre within the intricate power relations that are part of conflict-affected communities" (Espesor 2017: 78).

Three spaces of hybrid peacebuilding engagements in the region, where there have been considerable encounters and entanglements between local and international actors, are people's diplomacy, indigenous people's participation, and women empowerment. The first example in this section shows the ability of local and international CSOs to create innovative and non-formal mechanisms to address the shortcomings of the formal peace process. It supports the contention that hybrid structures may enable local and international actors to strengthen the potential of their engagements. The second example, meanwhile, illustrates the ways in which local actors are able to utilise international ideas to frame their grievances. The presence of international treaties and agreements on

indigenous people's rights, for instance, has provided an opportunity for CSOs to enhance their call for inclusivity in the formal peace process. As discussed in the third example, the goal of empowering women within the formal and informal aspects of the peace process has also been accompanied by the hybrid cooperation between local and international actors. In these cases, the objective of local and international actors has been the encouragement of non-elite actors to exercise their agency and diversify the local voices within the peacebuilding process.

People's Diplomacy

People's diplomacy has been considered as one of the key innovations of the civil society in achieving their role as a third party in the Mindanao peace process. This was pioneered by the Initiative for International Dialogue (IID) which introduced the idea of 'South-to-South Solidarity' as a new framework for peacebuilding and international development intervention. As a Mindanao-based international NGO, IID was founded in 1988 with the goal of promoting human security, democratisation, and people-to-people solidarity. Aside from their work in Mindanao, IID has also been very active in other parts of Southeast Asia, including Myanmar, Southern Thailand, West Papua, and Timor-Leste. One of the achievements of IID was the formation of the Mindanao Peoples Caucus (MPC) which has served as a platform for conflict-affected grassroots communities and organisations in the region. Several NGOs have supported this platform, including the Community and Family Services International (CFSI), Salaam-Mindanao, and Habitat for Humanity, ranging from rehabilitation and livelihood projects for displaced communities to psycho-social interventions and relief operations for victims of trauma.

In 2001, IID provided technical assistance to MPC for the formation of *Bantay Ceasefire* (Ceasefire Watch), a grassroots and community-based ceasefire-monitoring network aimed at connecting the Philippine government's top-down strategies with the civil society's bottom-up efforts in Mindanao. This civil society-led initiative provided an opening for local organisations to independently monitor and verify ceasefire violations with international organisations. It can be considered as one of the first "citizen security" mechanisms and "hybrid structures" (i.e. local-international civil society information exchange) within the evolving peace infrastructures of the Mindanao peace process. In an online interview with the

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (2019), IID's regional coordinator Marc Batac has noted that:

> IID's Moro and Mindanao partners sought the assistance of civil society and IID in helping to galvanize a response and projection of their voices and perspectives into the entire peace process. IID then proceeded to establish platforms and networks to concretize this accompaniment, forming the Mindanao Peoples Caucus (MPC)—a Tri-people (Moro, settlers and Indigenous peoples) network that engaged the peace process.

In essence, the success of Bantay Ceasefire provided a venue for the Philippine government and MILF to recognise the need for the expansion of a civilian-led and third-party mechanism, which targeted the active participation of Mindanao-based and foreign civilian monitors (Iglesias 2013: 4). In addition, Bantay Ceasefire also supported the Independent Fact-Finding Committee (IFFC) under the Notre Dame University Peace Education Centre, the Maguindanao Professional Employees' Association, and Cotabato City Media Multipurpose Cooperative. IID assisted this movement by involving groups from the Global South, especially from the member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In effect, this initiative has provided an opportunity for conflict-affected communities in the region to share their experiences and best practices in resolving the security challenges facing them. This has also proven that local CSOs in Mindanao are capable of mobilising support from organisations at the national and international levels. Eventually, Bantay Ceasefire resulted to a broad consortium of peace organisations in the country dubbed as Mindanao Peace Weavers. There have also been attempts from the part of the Philippine government to include an International Monitoring Team (IMT) within the formal ceasefire monitoring structure. As discussed in Chapter 8, Japan, along with some member-countries of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), was part of this team. The official monitoring system, however, was constrained by the lack of independence and influence of the IMT and Local Monitoring Teams (LMTs) at the grassroots level. These gaps have been addressed by civil society-led initiatives such as Bantay Ceasefire (Colleta 2006: 27).

The strong networks between local and international CSOs have therefore provided an opening for the Bantay Ceasefire to promote people's diplomacy based on the concepts of good governance, peace monitoring,

and citizen participation. In this case, there is blurred notion of the international and the local given that the CSOs in this initiative cannot be easily characterised using liberal peace agendas. For the most part, the formation of this civil society initiative was a hybrid process, which gave priority not only to the participation of international actors, but also to the wishes of the local actors. It also raises the need to underscore the role of the civil society, for example, in terms of their influence during the critical junctures of the peace negotiations. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that broad-based civil society coalitions are important in promoting non-violent mechanisms and mobilising popular support towards the peace process. In this case, the diverse involvement of and cooperation between the international and local actors in the peace process has been considered as beneficial because of the ways in which they have enhanced the legitimacy and the credibility of their political claims. From this perspective, it can be surmised that this cooperative mechanism has opened a window of opportunity for local and international CSOs to create spaces of cooperation (as shown in this book's conceptualisation of mid-space actors). After all, the horizontal and vertical functions of the civil society actors have provided them with foundations for their diagonal functions as bridge-builders and gatekeepers.

Indigenous People's Participation

In Mindanao, civil society groups have generally focused on three broad categories relevant to the rights of the indigenous peoples and minorities which are embodied in the international legal system: rights to protection, empowerment, and preservation of identity. The rights pertaining to protection and empowerment are perhaps the more controversial categories given that the status of indigenous peoples and minorities has always been a matter of political debate. There has been an expectation for the Philippine government to provide indigenous peoples in the region with special protections based on the assumption that such minority groups have been subjected to protracted historical, socio-political, and economic injustices within the purview of colonisation and forced dispossession of lands, territories, and resources. From this perspective, local and international CSOs, for example, have pointed out that the peace process has not fully enshrined the equitable participation and protection of indigenous peoples and non-Muslims.

More concretely, there have been different proposals to address this problem. One of the most prominent solutions has emanated from the inclusion and development of the concept of 'ancestral domain' as part of the power-sharing mechanisms for the proposed Bangsamoro political entity. The formulation of the ancestral domain started during the Tripoli Agreement of 2001, although this concept came into public consciousness as a result of the signing of the 2007 Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD), which was aimed at adding more villages to the autonomous region in the southern Philippines. The agreement, however, was scrapped after the Philippine Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional. CSOs supported the ancestral domain aspect of the peace process not only because it could foster an enabling legal environment for the realisation of one of the important aspects of the 1997 Philippine Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), but also because of the possible institutionalisation of the land rights of the indigenous peoples and non-Muslims within the Bangsamoro peace process. Because they were not included in the official peace process between the government and MILF, indigenous peoples have formed a major part of the membership of the civil society networks in Mindanao.

The efforts of Mindanao-based civil society coalition movements for indigenous people's security of tenure in ancestral domain coincided with the approval of the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG), for example, has contributed in helping indigenous movement leaders deepen their understanding of how existing legal regime promotes indigenous rights. Eventually, the ancestral domain has been included as BOL's core feature. The global recognition of the indigenous rights may have helped create the openness of the Philippine government to entertain the term of ancestral domain. The proposed autonomous entity of Bangsamoro attempts to address the needs of the indigenous peoples in the region, including their freedom of choice and the protection of their rights. Rood (2014), as part of the Asia Foundation's involvement as a peace mediator, raises challenges for the indigenous rights, including the recognition of their ancestral domains:

> Indigenous people's organisations and their allies, though, point out that what is missing from this is a recognition of their ancestral domains (plural). Immediately, lobbying sprang up both in the media and in Congress, and has found an echo among some members of the legislature

> … The MILF has been firm on this matter, regarding those who press the case for recognition of plural ancestral domains as "spoilers" who are diluting the meaning of the Bangsamoro people and the Moro's ancestral domain.

Whilst international donors have been instrumental in supporting the financial needs of local NGOs some community leaders have noted that their intervention has not always been developed based on careful planning. Nonetheless, there is an expectation from these 'outsiders' to be integrated and consulted for the areas and types of assistance that local NGOs need. There have also been unwritten preferences from international donors to mainly engage with large CSO coalitions instead of working with smaller organisations. Rural-based organisations, for example, have been excluded in internationally-organised trainings. The unequal level of resources among local NGOs can additionally be connected to the inability of some grassroots actors to grasp the complex monitoring systems and concepts which are being brought in by international donors. In some cases, international development projects fail because of the lack of coordination between the international donors and local partners. In the case of conflict management mechanisms, local indigenous CSOs also lament that international donors usually ask them to introduce new liberal-based systems of governance even though the norms and practices at the grassroots level are different. Such practices neither set out with conventional values of liberal peacebuilding, and produces tension with the local actors. Richmond (2012: 4) argues that there are dilemmas produced by the encounters between liberal-formal institutions and illiberal-informal actors:

> From the perspective of the international actor agency revolves around how to use its capacity to legitimately induce a top-down liberal peace, so addressing the local causes of conflict. From the perspective of its local subjects agency revolves around how to both learn from peacebuilding or statebuilding in order to address root causes, and how to merge international support or prescriptions with local political frameworks necessary for localized autonomy and identity. However, many of those advocating this are, in fact, quite sympathetic to the peace process and have been operating for years under a "tri-people" framework trying to promote peace and development in Mindanao by bringing together Muslims, Lumads, and "settlers" (Christians whose family origins are from outside Mindanao).

Nevertheless, peace negotiators have also learned that the need to gain input from civil society is not only a local but also a global trend in the light of the inclusion of the rights of the minorities and indigenous peoples in the proposed Bangsamoro autonomous region. International organisations like the UN Development Programme (UNDP), meanwhile, have offered technical assistance and funding to advocate for the participation of indigenous peoples. It goes without saying that indigenous people's organisations also pushed for the expansion of their rights at every step of the way. The support of international actors has been instrumental in enhancing the capacity of local groups to undertake broader engagements in the form of policy consultations. A major success which local actors have viewed in their peace engagements is the improved awareness of the government about the legitimacy of the core grievances of the minorities in Mindanao and the necessity to address the different historical injustices they have encountered.

Women Empowerment

Gender inequality has emerged as one of the leading issues within the hybrid peacebuilding literature (see Grenfell 2018; George 2018). In the issue of the Mindanao peace process, the international community has often lauded the presence of the women in the negotiating team of the Philippines. In this regard, there have been numerous provisions to advance women's rights and participation in the Bangsamoro autonomous region. At first glance, it can be said the gender provisions of the BOL have been heavily influenced by the commitment of the Philippines to such international legal instruments as the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. After the BOL's passage, the UN Women, for example, commented that:

> These provisions create a positive environment for women's participation and gender-responsive governance. However, the advocacy and support from communities, NGOs and other actors—and the buy-in and support from government officials—will be vital to guarantee women's rights and gender equality. Women's participation in the new government is critical to meeting women's needs in laws and policies. These should be crafted in an inclusive process with women, youth and indigenous peoples. They must also consider the conflict, including threats of violent extremism, that has constantly challenged the region.

Such a statement, however, indicates that women empowerment within the peace process has not only been achieved through the political opportunity structures embedded with global gendered norms, but also through the efforts of the local actors. The government's previous lead negotiator Professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, for instance, has noted that the civil society groups in the Philippines have been overwhelmingly comprised of women (Santiago 2015: 13). In particular, the international engagements of Mindanao-based CSOs have ranged from organising consultative meetings and capacity-building programmes to writing resolutions and the policy agendas of women for the proposed autonomous region of Bangsamoro. In this sense, women's civil society groups can be treated as hybrid spaces due to the high level of engagements that they have with international organisations and agendas. They can be considered as local in that the main goals of these organisations are focused on the development of Bangsamoro, but at the same time they can be seen as international because of their engagements with external actors.

The gendered hybrid spaces, however, can also be viewed outside the boundaries of the formal peace process. In particular, women's NGOs have played an extremely important role in the different areas of local peacebuilding such as peace monitoring, conflict mediation and resolution, and gender-based planning. Some women leaders have also formed peace platforms and networks which have partnered with international aid donors (e.g. Bangsamoro Women Solidarity Forum, Mindanao Human Rights Action Network, and the Kadtabanga Foundation). These women-led platforms have been active in informal mechanisms such as Bantay Ceasefire in which they have been applauded for their roles in highlighting the rights and concerns of women in times of conflict (Arnado 2012: 13). In Mindanao, it is worth noting that women's engagement in the peacebuilding activities are also embedded within hybridised power structures which are composed of formal players such as the local and national government agencies and such informal actors as clans and ethnic groups. Some women leaders have also been involved in preserving their traditional approaches through clan organising as a form of conflict resolution. Hall and Hoare (2015: 107) note that women have also participated in the implementation and preservation of hybridised conflict management mechanisms for clan-based conflicts (e.g. *rido*):

Rido does not generally target women and children, but when violence erupts between clans, Muslim women act as pacifiers and documenters…

> Women NGO representatives working on security and peacebuilding are cognisant of the serious challenges faced by IDP women and rido-burdened Muslim women. Nonetheless, they have not been able to map these out in the formal peace process in terms of specific mechanisms or programmatic commitments by the future Bangsamoro Government.

In some cases, local CSOs have also used international spaces to amplify their agendas. The Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society, for example, has often partnered with the UN Women to diversify their understanding of gender issues (Hall and Hoare 2015). In Mindanao, these empirical examples show that there is an intersection between local NGOs and their foreign donors. Although the Philippines has made advancements in terms of the formal participation of women in politics and the peace process, local CSOs can be considered as hybrid spaces where gender issues have flourished. These spaces have allowed women to exercise their agency whist navigating the different tools and mechanisms available to them at the local and international levels. It can also be surmised that international engagements towards women empowerment for the Mindanao peace process have opened spaces for transformative form of local involvement.

In this regard, the participation of women in peacebuilding activities has emancipatory elements as evidenced by the local agencies of the civil society groups through localised and internationalised approaches to peacebuilding. However, this also leaves an important question of whether hybridised contexts have provided an opening for the representation of women on the ground. It also raises similar questions on the ability of minorities and vulnerable populations to enhance their participation given that these concerns also offer an opportunity to operationalize hybrid peacebuilding. Such key issues warrant further investigation from the purview of hybrid peacebuilding as they directly affect the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in peace processes.

Conclusion

The sites of liberal-local hybridity discussed in this chapter imply the need to contextualise the spaces of interaction between dichotomised categories in peacebuilding. The experiences of civil society groups in Mindanao illustrate the ways in which local and international actors operate within hybridised environments. The interactions between these "new binaries"

have been characterised by resistance and accommodation. From the view of the local actors, international donors, for example, can be considered as a double-edged sword. Whilst international actors can enhance the capacity of local CSOs, the former's lack of engagement with the political realities on the ground can also create tensions between them. International actors, meanwhile, is expected to have a dynamic relationship with local actors beyond financial support. As such, the encounters between local and international actors must be analysed in terms of agencies, norms, and spaces. In the case of Mindanao, it is also important to analyse hybridity by taking into consideration not only the institutions, but also the practices and the competitive and cooperative relationships amongst the actors across multiple levels of interaction. Encounters of local and international organisations particularly raise important issues about the tendency of post-liberal approaches to recognise some degrees of emancipation with the support of international agents.

In the hybrid peacebuilding literature, the international-local interface of the actors has typically been seen as a unidirectional mechanism in which the international affects the local. For future research, it would be worth examining the ways in which local actors can contribute in the expansion of international peacebuilding agendas. Of course, this is deeply connected to the challenges confronting the institutionalisation of civil society participation in peace processes. Theoretically, one of the remaining constraints facing the hybrid peacebuilding approach is to develop a practical tool to consider how top-down approaches (i.e. influence of international declarations on national peace processes) can amalgamate with the bottom-up agendas of CSOs to impinge not only on the peace process, but also on policy outcomes such as human rights.

As mentioned, one of the main criticisms about hybrid peacebuilding has been about the use of dichotomies. The process of hybridisation, of course, could not and should not be merely confined within the neat categories of the international and local actors. Mac Ginty (2011: 46), nevertheless, underscores that whist hybrid peacebuilding tends to bifurcate between the spheres of 'local' and 'international' "it does seem that many international peace-support actors are more comfortable thinking about and exercising material forms of power, while local communities in some settings tend to think about power in terms of legitimacy and moral standing." This chapter does not intend to suggest the problematic approval of situating the self-representations of actors. Instead, it contributes to the existing knowledge on hybrid peacebuilding by

citing concrete examples based on the perceived level of entanglements between local and international actors. The varying levels of success of civil society actors in these examples, however, show that hybridised contexts can somewhat produce different outcomes. This entails hybridisation is inherent in the dynamics of conflict that may also lead to the bourgeoning of the everyday local spaces whereby international and transnational relations of power may co-constitute one another.

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CHAPTER 7

Rise of China's Developmental Peace: Prospects for Asian Hybrid Peacebuilding

KwokChung Wong and Fujian Li

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters of this book have focused on exploring the changing environments of peacebuilding using hybrid peacebuilding theory. As a new player in the area of peacebuilding, and primarily focusing on Asia, the rise of China's peacebuilding is open to a great deal of debate. While China has been an extensive contributor to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO), the theory and practices of Chinese peacebuilding have never been made clear by the Chinese government. This chapter aims to identify the traits of Chinese peacebuilding based on its model of developmental peace and on evidence in Chinese practices on the ground. By so doing, it attempts to determine

K. Wong (✉)
Graduate School of International Culture and Communication Studies, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: sunriseinnovator@ruri.waseda.jp

F. Li
Institute of Asian Studies, China Foreign Affairs University, Beijing, China
e-mail: lifujian@cfau.edu.cn

whether China's peacebuilding model can be categorized as a form of hybrid peacebuilding.

An important concept to consider is that of the mid-space actors discussed in Chapter 4. These mid-space actors can help to bridge the gap between the top or national level of peacebuilding undertaken among elites and the bottom or grassroots level of peacebuilding undertaken by locals because peacebuilders use the mid-space as 'transit zones' in which peacebuilders of all levels can interact with each other (Uesugi and Kagawa 2020). Sometimes mid-space actors can function as 'gate-keepers' that reach across the different cleavages of society in the vertical, horizontal and diagonal gaps because these actors perform functions that cannot be effected by outsiders. However, while mid-space actors have the potential to become bridge-builders, they can also become peace-spoilers (Uesugi 2020), where they may impede a peace process or deny international access to their local community. It is important to understand that appearing to be a peace-spoiler does not necessarily mean that these actors aim to spoil the peace process, rather it can simply mean that they want to readjust their position or bring in new actors to increase the number of stakeholders that can strengthen the peace process, as in the case of Bangsamoro in the southern Philippines (Kagawa 2020). It is particularly important to consider the concepts of mid-space actors and adaptive peacebuilding that were introduced in Chapter 3 because China's style of peacebuilding is beginning to show the traits of these existing concepts. Adaptive peacebuilding is a process through which both peacebuilders and local communities come together to learn the means of creating sustained peace (de Coning 2018). Thus, adaptive peacebuilding operates according to the principle that peacebuilders should not lock themselves into a unified, standardised approach to peacebuilding, but should try to adapt to the unique local situation of each society in need. At times, the assumption of using a single unified approach, such as international peacebuilding as a tool to 'fix' conflict-affected societies can be a harmful mentality. In fact, sustainable peace is only likely if complex social systems fix themselves (Luhmann 1990).

This chapter aims to examine China's developmental peace and asks whether it can be recognised as a variation of hybrid or adaptive peacebuilding. The chapter also investigates whether China should continue its current approach in the future by referring to evidence provided by Chinese engagement with the post-conflict societies of Myanmar and Afghanistan/Pakistan. Given that a great deal of the extensive scholarship

on peacebuilding is written from a Western perspective, it is imperative to consider the Chinese perspectives and mindset towards peacebuilding before dismissing the Chinese style of peacebuilding as illiberal or lacking human rights. To clarify the impact that the rise of China's developmental peace has on the environment of international peacebuilding, this chapter first examines the traits and background of developmental peace, which is followed by an analysis of how the Chinese approach is related to existing approaches of hybrid and adaptive peacebuilding. Case studies are then presented to provide evidence of Chinese developmental peace in practice in countries suffering from conflict, such as Myanmar and Afghanistan/Pakistan.

Traits of Developmental Peace as Chinese Peacebuilding

This section explains the origins of China's concept of developmental peace and how China's previous experiences in using developmental peace at home led to shaping this concept into a model of economic development-facilitated peacebuilding. There are three main reasons for China pursuing an alternative model of developmental peace to existing liberal models: (1) its own experiences of being a developing, communist/socialist country; (2) its non-intervention foreign policy; and (3) its desire to develop peace abroad to compensate for its lack of peacebuilding policy at home.

World's Largest Developing Country

China is both one of the largest economies in the world and the world's largest developing country. It not only has the largest economy in Asia, but also has the incentive to contribute to the stability of the region to ensure the realisation of President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the hope that this initiative will contribute to the economic growth of China and partners in Asia and Africa. It is important to note that China is an Asian country that has taken a different path from other Asian countries (e.g. Japan) in its modernization and has not adopted liberal democracy by Western standards. This means that it is highly unlikely that China would follow what the West has been doing in relation to liberal peacebuilding. Some may also see China as one of the few remaining communist/socialist countries in the world. For example, in

2010, the then Vice President Xi Jinping wrote a paper advocating the importance of studying Marxism with Chinese characteristics and said that its core agenda is scientific development and that the contradictions of Western capitalism would eventually lead to regression (Xi 2010). It is undeniable that Chairman Mao Zedong's China was communist, that it actively exported revolution and that it backed communist regimes overseas, such as Cambodia's Khmer Rouge (Wang 2018). However, there is little evidence of exporting revolution being shown by the Chinese government after the nation's reform and opening in the late 1970s.

Given that China is also a new player in international peacebuilding, where existing actors such as the United States (US) and Japan have already made clear achievements, to be a major contributor to such peacebuilding, it cannot simply replicate processes that previous actors have already implemented, and thus must take a different approach to provide tangible evidence that it is an active and responsible member of international society, contributing to peace. Therefore, China may take a socialist approach towards issues such as peacebuilding; however, in reality, when the Chinese government refers to China a 'socialist state', it uses this term more as part of a narrative directed towards its domestic audience. On the international stage, China's approach to peacebuilding is based on non-intervention, respect of the host country's sovereignty, and most importantly, as will be seen in the following section, provision of aid without strings attached.

Further, China's attempt to seek an alternative style of peacebuilding does not mean that desires to go against the West. In fact, it is more interested in cooperating with established norms than fighting with them. However, as Johnston (2003) states, China does not want to be simply a blind follower of the US order, even if it has been the biggest beneficiary of that order. There are two possible reasons for this: the first is national pride and the second, and arguably more important reason, is that China does not always follow rules that were made when China was mostly absent from international affairs (i.e. before 1978) (Glosserman 2020). Feigenbaum (2018) states that China prefers existing 'forms' but not always 'norms'. That is, China agrees that concepts such as peacebuilding are important; however, it does not prefer the norm of liberal peacebuilding established by Western actors when China was not participating in international geopolitics during its isolationism in the 60s and 70s. Unlike Johnston (2003), Feigenbaum (2018) considers China a

revisionist power (ibid.), but neither of them refer to China as a 'revolutionary' power. China provides mainly supplemental institutions to the existing global institutions. For example, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank adds to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank; the BRI to the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO); and developmental peace to liberal peacebuilding. China does not intend to reject the existing forms but it operates under different norms.

Non-intervention and Respect for Sovereignty

While China itself is the largest developing country in the world, it aims to support other developing countries by using the methods it employed to lift itself out of poverty. China must provide this support in a way that respects the sovereignty of the host country, following China's non-intervention principle. This principle has guided China's foreign policy ever since it was first established in the Bandung Conference in 1955 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MOFA] of the People's Republic of China 2014) under the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and was reemphasised in the s Eight Principles for Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries during Premier Zhou Enlai's tour to Africa in 1964 (Zhou 1964). However, it is important to note that non-intervention does not mean indifference, just as abstaining from a particular United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution does not necessarily mean being against the resolution. China is not against interventionism, but it must be with the host country's consent or under the mandate of the UN Security Council. Ruan (2012), a scholar at the China Institute of International Studies, states that China is against the style of military interventionism in which the West has shown. For example, the West's regime-change intervention in Libya ostensibly provided humanitarian aid and acted on the responsibility to protect (R2P), and its creation of highly complicated situations and regional strife in Afghanistan and Iraq. Ruan (2012) adds that the world needs to pay more attention to new players such as China entering the field of international peace, and specifically to become familiar with China as a new actor in international peacebuilding. China's official position in peace-related activities abroad can be summarised with Foreign Minister Wang Yi's remarks that China will continue to uphold the peaceful, legitimate and constructive nature

of its style of conflict resolution with Chinese characteristics (Xinhua 2018b).

'Developmental Peace' as Chinese Hybrid Peacebuilding

The concept of developmental peace originated from a small group of scholars in China. One of these notable scholars is He Yin (2019b), who states that developmental peace is a significant departure from liberal peace because it is based on China's peaceful rise and international aid practices, adding that developmental peace aims to achieve political stability that is supported by strong institutions and economic development. Abb (2018) adds that developmental peace is based on China's own experience of strong state-led development and overseeing of political reforms and on China's principle of maintaining the stability of governing institutions and providing foreign aid with no political strings attached. However, Johnston (2003) notes that China is neither a blind follower nor a radical revisionist of current norms, so it is inaccurate to consider that developmental peace aims to develop into a new norm or become the antithesis of existing models of peacebuilding such as liberal peacebuilding. Rather, developmental peace mainly functions as an alternative Chinese approach to peacebuilding, particularly considering that the premise that development can facilitate lasting peace is shared by major international and Asian institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The main difference with China's developmental peace and others is that China aims to preserve the standing political parties in the host countries, whereas liberal peacebuilding aims to create democracy in the post-conflict society through the expansion of liberal institutions. International organisations such as the IMF and the World Bank lean more towards the liberal model in holding that development will eventually lead to democratisation, as per modernisation theory (Limpach and Michaelowa 2010).

China needs to take advantage of its materialistic power and formulate an approach that will distinguish its style of peacebuilding from that of existing actors such as Japan. At the same time, it needs to uphold the non-intervention principle that forms the core of Chinese foreign policy. Numerous times in the past, the Chinese government has expressed its interest in expanding its role in international peacebuilding. For example, President Xi Jinping's New Year's Speech of 2020 highlighted the many

domestic achievements of China, but also emphasised the importance of its BRI and of building a shared community for all humanity (Xi 2020). However, despite the positive signs of China aiming to adopt a greater role in international peacebuilding, it does not have any official doctrines or policies at home which constitute as a pillar of a 'Chinese model' of peacebuilding. Butler and Wheeler (2012) state that despite its active role in UNPKO, China has yet to play a significant role in peacebuilding. However, this lack of official statement is exactly what China needs: not a standardised template to implement in each conflict area, but a flexible and adaptive peacekeeping policy based on China's core values of development-led peace and non-intervention.

While it may appear contradictory to connect developmental peace (which would be likely to lead China to engage in top-down government-to-government approaches of peacebuilding) with hybrid peacebuilding (which requires a bottom–up grassroots approach), the superficial disconnect between China's developmental peace and style of liberal peace-keeping have been rapidly changing as China engages with more complex Asian conflicts. In fact, in practice, China's developmental peace has been adopting a similar eclectic approach to the approach adopted by hybrid and adaptive peacebuilding. As stated in the Encyclopaedia Britannica (2017), eclecticism is a philosophical idea of practices that choose doctrines from a wide variety of schools of thought but do not completely adopt the parent system. When considering the US style of peacebuilding that is considered to operate according to neoliberal values, Matyok et al. (2011: 127) draw from the work of Galtung to argue that actors such as the US should use eclectic development to expand capitalist ideologies that can include both socialist and African local structures, so that it is possible to be considerate of local practices even if they do not meet the standards of liberal peace. Liberal peacebuilding models have previously been criticised for being overly top-down and institutionalised (Mac Ginty and Sanghera 2012). However, it is important to remember that non-intervention remains at the core of Chinese foreign policy despite that fact that at times, China try to enshrine local ownership when putting more focus on local issues. Given that developmental peace does not have a standardised approach, China is allowed to take an eclectic approach with the different types of conflict in Asia, which mean that developmental peace shares some traits of adaptive peacebuilding because both China's developmental peace and adaptive peacebuilding are process-oriented pragmatic approaches (de Coning 2018).

As stated, non-intervention remains at the core of Chinese foreign policy and thus, when China is engaging in international peacebuilding, the host country's sovereignty is respected through China's developmental peace. This approach is useful when trying to build trust with the host government. For example, China's mediation between Sudan and South Sudan enjoyed support from both sides, despite Beijing's poor relationship with Juba resulting from the fact that China did not force outcomes but mainly set the stage for the conflicting parties to negotiate (ICG 2017). In addition, the RAND Corporation's research on China's foreign aid reveals that among the three types of foreign aid (i.e. grants, interest-free loans and concessional loans), China prefers to give concessional loans, while the US mostly provides grants (Wolf et al. 2013). China's preference for giving aid is vulnerable to criticism. For example, US Vice President Mike Pence made critical remarks against China, referring to its 'debt diplomacy' in Sri Lanka (The Hudson Institute 2018). The West does not consider China a democracy, so traditional donors such as the US sometimes become sceptical of Chinese practices abroad. In fact, China is similar to Japan in relation to providing foreign aid. In addition, accusing China of engaging in debt diplomacy is simplistic because China has forgiven significant debts of its partners such as Cuba and Cambodia (Rapoza 2019). As stated, this is similar to Japan, who in 2012 forgave US$3.72 billion worth of debt for Myanmar and restarted loans (Reuters 2012).

The feature that most differentiates developmental peace from existing models of peacebuilding is its 'no political strings attached' policy. All types of government can receive Chinese aid, so long as the recipient government respects the One China Policy by not recognising Taiwan. For China, regardless of the recipient's type of government, all countries should enjoy equal rights and opportunities for development. This also connects to the concept that is introduced later in this chapter, whereby China focuses on the right to development as a basic human right. Other Asian countries such as Japan displays a similar style. For example, in 2018, Japan was criticised by the West for continuing to provide developmental aid to Cambodia despite Prime Minister Hun Sen's move towards authoritarianism, which discouraged most Western actors from engaging with Cambodia (Kasai and Adams 2018). Given that China is not a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), it has even fewer restrictions on the type of recipient government to which it can provide aid, which allows China

more flexibility in how it supports the development of other developing countries. As a new player in international peacebuilding, China must use this flexibility to its advantage to engage with countries such as Myanmar, Pakistan and Afghanistan, with whom Western countries may have difficulty directly engaging. To some extent, this can be considered a unique 'niche' for peacebuilding of non-Western countries such as China and Japan.

Thus, China's developmental peace is based on its own experience as the largest developing country in the world that does not pursue the liberal model of peacebuilding. Instead, China adopts a more process-oriented pragmatic approach to peacebuilding, maintaining the firm belief that all countries, regardless of their government type, should enjoy the benefits of economic development, and that such development will facilitate lasting peace in conflict-affected societies. China is not a member of the OECD and is less constrained by existing international institutions in relation to providing foreign aid to developing countries. However, given that it is a new player in the field of peacebuilding, China still has many weaknesses compared with experienced players such as Japan. Later, this chapter discusses that China does not have the necessary nongovernment organisations (NGOs) to replicate the Japanese model, and this has resulted in hindering the ability of the Chinese to deliver effective development aid directly aimed at grassroots operations. The following two case studies examine the application of China's developmental peace in the post-conflict societies of Myanmar and Afghanistan to provide understanding of developmental peace in practice.

Case Studies

The following two case studies of Myanmar and Afghanistan/Pakistan explore the practice of developmental peace in post-conflict societies. Strictly speaking, both Myanmar and Afghanistan (with some parts of Pakistan) have ongoing conflicts that require careful attention from international society. The developmental peace conducted in these countries has induced a shift in the Chinese approach from non-intervention to what Lin (2019) refers to as 'constructive intervention'. The following case studies provide understanding of Chinese peacebuilding on the ground in conflict-affected societies to provide evidence that China's developmental peace resembles existing hybrid peacebuilding models.

The case studies identify the unique Chinese characteristics of developmental peace as well as its shortcomings.

Myanmar

Background

China shares a border with Myanmar. As neighbours, Sino–Burmese official relations began in 1950, shortly after the establishment of the People's Republic of China. China and Myanmar often call each other '*paukphaw*', which translates to 'sibling' or 'intimate', demonstrating that the two countries have enjoyed close relations ever since their diplomatic relations were established (Geng 2006). China's engagement with Myanmar is also based on the Sino-Burmese Joint Declaration (signed 29 June 1954), which emphasised that China and Myanmar's relations should be based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (ibid.). That is, China approached Myanmar with a policy of non-intervention. However, China's non-intervention approach to Myanmar encountered difficulties when constant ethnic fighting between Myanmar's armed ethnic groups and the Tatmadaw (Myanmar military) began spilling over the Chinese border, killing Chinese civilians and damaging Chinese property. In March 2015, four Chinese citizens were reported by the Chinese state media to have been killed in a misjudged bombing by the Myanmar air force, and two months later, another mistake killed five more citizens and injured more (Panda 2015; Tiezzi 2015). In addition to fighting spilling over into China, there has been a surge of refugees crossing the China-Myanmar border, which compelled China to take more robust actions to address the problem of the ethnic conflict in Myanmar.

A turning point for Sino-Burmese relations was when Aung San Suu Kyi became the state counsellor of Myanmar in 2016, ruling through a civilian government alongside Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, who has been Myanmar's commander-in-chief since 2011. At that time in 2016, the Chinese government considered how Aung San Suu Kyi becoming state counsellor would change the political situation in Myanmar and how China should react to the shift in Myanmar's new political environment. Zhang (2020) claims that with the rise of Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar became a diarchy, but the same problems (e.g. ethnic tensions and economic underdevelopment outside the capital) remained despite finally having a civilian-led government, alongside the military government of Myanmar. He adds that the eight occasions on which President Xi

Jinping met with Aung San Suu Kyi and the four times he met with Min Aung Hlaing were mainly about addressing ethnic tensions in Myanmar (ibid.). This demonstrates that China recognises that the crux of Myanmar's conflicts is centred on the various ethnic groups that have been in conflict with the Tatmadaw, and that if China is to realise its geopolitical, strategic and economic incentives in the BRI, it cannot remain a side player in Myanmar, adhering to its principles of non-intervention, but would have to directly engage in Myanmar's internal conflict.

While most Western media outlets have focused their attention on the humanitarian crisis with the Rohingyas in Rakhine State, other ethnic minorities, such as the Wa and Kachin minorities, have also been engaged in armed conflict with the Myanmar government. Therefore, the situation in Myanmar requires a targeted approach that needs to adapt to the local situation of the many ethnic groups.

Developmental Peace in the Mid-Space
When considering locating mid-space actors in the ethnic conflicts of Myanmar, China recognises that ethnic tensions are at the heart of most conflicts in Myanmar. Thus, the armed militia of these ethnic groups, such as the United Wa State Army (UWSA), are gatekeepers in the mid-space in Myanmar, and China often must go through these players to engage directly with the grassroots groups. However, the importance of China's close relations with and potential leverage over the Tatmadaw cannot be understated because China is one of the few international actors that have the potential to mediate ethnic conflicts in Myanmar. Sun (2019) claims that over the six years of Chinese mediation in Myanmar, China came to the conclusion that the distrust between the Myanmar government and the country's ethnic groups was too great for any negotiations related to power sharing to occur or to have any positive effect, and top–down negotiations provided little incentive for locals to support the peace process.

Thus, China has sought to transform the relations between the Tatmadaw and the armed ethnic groups through economic development and to reduce the incentives for fighting. China considers that through this approach, the Tatmadaw will be forced to realise that they can no longer defeat armed ethnic militias permanently, thus allowing ethnic groups to be beneficiaries of economic development, which will increase the resilience of these groups to conflict caused by the scarcity of resources. China's developmental peace supports this process by bringing

Myanmar into the BRI megaproject, for example, through the construction of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC), which will encompass Tengchong city and Kachin State's capital Myitkyina, the Ruili-Muse gate of northern Shan State and the Mengding-Chinshwehaw gate, close to Wa and Kokang (Sun 2019).

Returning to the example of the UWSA, the border province of Wa State has received such extensive development through Chinese investment that it resembles a Chinse province more than it does Myanmar. A report by the BBC reveals that Wa State uses the Chinese Yuan as its currency, Mandarin is widely spoken in the state, and basic infrastructure such as water, electricity and even mobile telephone signals are provided across the border from Chinese companies (Fisher 2016). The report adds that the UWSA protects Wa State from the Tatmadaw and that Wa State has enjoyed prosperous relationships with the Chinese owing to its proximity with China (ibid.). For Chinese development to penetrate on the ground in Myanmar (or in the case of the Wa State, to penetrate across the border), China must also have considerable leverage over the UWSA. In fact, the UWSA is armed by the Chinese, and China uses this army as a buffer against the Tatmadaw to push for potential benefits elsewhere in Myanmar, for example, with the Kyaukpyu Port oil pipeline in Rakhine State (Lintner 2019). Given that it is armed with sophisticated military hardware from China, it is unlikely that the UWSA can be defeated by the Tatmadaw. Thus, the two conflicting parties should be more compelled to negotiate, and without fighting, the Wa State's grassroots have the opportunity to enjoy many of the beneficial effects of Chinese development as long as China maintains positive relations with the UWSA.

In the Kachin state, China has assumed the role of a mediator between the Kachin Independence Organisation and the Myanmar government. Without China, it would have been difficult for any talks to occur between these two parties because they harbour a great deal of distrust of each other (Sun 2013).

It is also important to consider the position that the Tatmadaw takes in the ethnic conflicts in Myanmar. Just as the armed ethnic militias are gatekeepers that can allow or prevent Chinese development from reaching their people, the Tatmadaw can also act as a gatekeeper. With the rise of Aung Sun Suu Kyi's civilian government, Myanmar was effectively turned into a diarchy. Therefore, it is important for outside actors such as China to maintain close relations with both the civilian and the military government of Myanmar. China has also armed the Tatmadaw over the years.

Chen and Ning (2020) argue that Beijing needs to stop prioritising the economic benefits of arms sales to Naypyidaw and consider halting these sales because there have been many cases where China has suffered casualties from the spillover effects of the war. If China stops the supply of arms, it would be unrealistic for the Tatmadaw to defeat all the armed ethnic groups in Myanmar, compelling parties at conflict in Myanmar to make peace and work together for economic development.

This principle also applies to the UWSA because they are also armed by the Chinese, and as fighting continues, leading to the stagnation of Chinese development in Myanmar, China should feel obliged to use its leverage over the Tatmadaw and the UWSA to negotiate for peace. Reporting on development in Myanmar, the *Irrawaddy* (a Burmese newspaper) states that recently pledged 4 billion yuan (US$580 million) over three years to support Myanmar's economic development, and that between 2014 and 2019, China invested a total of 4.9 billion yuan (US$690 million) focused on the sectors of infrastructure, agriculture and education (Thiha 2020). Without positive relations between China and both the civilian and the military governments of Myanmar, Chinese development aid cannot reach the grassroots. Without positive relations with mid-space actors such as the UWSA, China would not be able to access Wa State despite its geographical proximity to the Chinese border.

Another case in which China attempts to engage in developmental peace in Myanmar is in the Rakhine crisis. With the Rakhine crisis, China has surprisingly taken a step back towards non-intervention, advocating the importance of allowing only the directly concerned parties (i.e. Myanmar and Bangladesh) to negotiate repatriation of the Rohingya refugees. The role China took between the two was that of a mediator, proposing the Three Point Plan as a three-step approach to ceasing the violence, repatriating the refugees and facilitating the economic development of the Rakhine State. However, this Three Point Plan has received criticism from international actors. For example, Joy (2018) claims that the first point of the plan, which calls for a ceasefire, is no longer relevant because the violence has mostly ceased; that in relation to the second point of the plan, China's role during the signing of the influential repatriation pact between Myanmar and Bangladesh is not clear; and that in relation to the third point of the plan, China understates the severity of the crisis by considering that it can be solved through economic underdevelopment. Human Rights Watch (2018) reported that there are no signs in Myanmar that the refugees will be safe when they return to

Rakhine, despite China's offer to provide the Rakhine State with prefabricated homes to enable refugees trapped in Bangladesh to return (Xinhua 2018a). From the perspectives of the West, China struggles to address problems such as the Rakhine crisis. For example, it is claimed that China is not ready to tackle sensitive issues, unlike traditional donors, because the Chinese government faces similar problems at home (Richmond and Tellidis 2014).

Given the unique situation of Myanmar, in which civilian and military leaders are juxtaposed, China must constantly engage with both Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government and Min Aung Hlaing's military government. Over the years as China has engaged with Myanmar, China has realised that ethnic groups are gatekeepers and any peace process must begin with transforming relations between the ethnic groups and the Myanmar government, particularly the Tatmadaw. This realisation demonstrates that China has adapted to the local situation of Myanmar and has aimed to transform the relations between the conflicting parties through economic development such as the BRI's CMEC to decrease incentives for fighting. However, China's use of a similar approach to effect economic development in the Rakhine State has not had with similar success.

Afghanistan and Pakistan

Background

Afghanistan and Pakistan are considered as one case study because China's peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan cannot be divorced from China's engagement with Pakistan. This situation dates back to 1962 in the Cold War, when both Afghanistan and Pakistan expected China to play the role of a mediator, but at the time, China's Premier Zhou Enlai did not want China assuming the role (Khalil 2018). In fact, Pakistan did not become China's strategic partner until after the Sino-Indian War in 1964. In addition, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, China supported the Mujahideen insurgency against the Soviets, which resulted in strained ties between China and Afghanistan, but also Afghan's belief that Pakistan was behind the insecurity in Afghanistan (ibid.). Further, there are many current reports that the Taliban is in the Western Balochistan province of Pakistan (Notezai 2019), and the fact that Osama Bin Laden was found and killed in Pakistan in 2011 demonstrates how closely Pakistan was involved with Afghanistan and the Taliban. This also means that

China's close relationship with Pakistan also gives the Chinese access to the Taliban.

Afghanistan shares a much shorter border with China that does with Myanmar, but the importance and implications of China's relationship with Afghanistan are no less significant than China's relationship with Myanmar. In 2001 when George W. Bush invaded Afghanistan to retaliate against the September 11 attacks, China provided moral support to the US action. However, this support was only verbal because China did not want to be seen by the Islamic world as directly supporting what was seen by many as an anti-Muslim NATO coalition, fearing that this would fuel further extremism in the Xinjiang province (Zhao 2013). It is interesting that the Chinese government decided to support (but did not provide physical support) the US during the US invasion of Afghanistan despite Sino-US relations being at an all-time low because of the 1999 bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by NATO, which occurred only two years before the September 11 attacks (Hui 2019). When the war ended, China emphasised that the post-war Afghan peace process should be 'Afghan owned and Afghan led', and the Chinese have maintained this narrative to the present day (Xinhua 2020). To support the peace process being Afghan owned and Afghan led, China's permanent representative to the UN, Zhang Jun, stated at a plenary meeting in the UN General Assembly that the Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process must be supported by international actors such as the US in the existing peace talks, while China would also promote peace talks through international organisations such as the SCO and through China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogues (Xinhua 2019b). China also stated that it would continue to support Afghanistan's economic development through implementing a bilateral memorandum of understanding with the BRI to help Afghanistan boost trade links in the region (ibid.).

China is interested in the peaceful resolution of the war in Afghanistan for two principal reasons. First, China wants to prevent the spillover of religious extremism from neighbouring Afghanistan into its relatively short western boarder of the Xinjiang province. Foreign Minister Wang Yi praised Afghanistan's efforts in taking effective measures against the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, and in ensuring Afghanistan's increased cooperation with China through participation in the BRI (MOFA of China 2019). However, China also wants to protect its BRI interests in Pakistan. The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), often regarded as the BRI's flagship project, is constantly under threat of from

militant groups in Pakistan that have links to the Taliban (Biberman and Schwartz 2019). Chinese analysts also say China has benefited greatly from the temporary order created by the US presence in Afghanistan, and if the US is to withdraw entirely from Afghanistan, it must be done in an 'orderly fashion' to avoid creating any sudden power vacuums in the region (Zhao 2013). After the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, it will be the responsibility of regional actors such as China to support Afghanistan's reintegration into Asian economy. Thus, China's interest in order in the region and its economic interests related to the BRI in Afghanistan continue to compel China to engage proactively in aiding the peace process in Afghanistan.

Developmental Peace in the Mid-Space

Pakistan is an important strategic and economic partner for China. Economically, Pakistan provides China with the valuable Gwadar Port, which enables Chinese access to the Indian Ocean, and strategically, both countries have a common regional rival—India. In addition, China's relationship with the Afghan government deteriorated significantly when China supported the Mujahideen insurgency during the Soviet invasion. Meanwhile, Pakistan and Afghanistan have enjoyed close, but not always friendly, relations with each other in the past (Khalil 2018). For example, Pakistan often exploited Afghanistan's vulnerabilities such as its weak state and practiced predatory politics against it, such as attempting to install a mujahideen government in Kabul after Soviet withdrawal in 1989 (Akhtar 2008). As stated, during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan was also accused by Afghanistan of causing the insecurity of Afghanistan. Given that insecurity in the Balochistan province in Pakistan has threatened the wellbeing of the CPEC, China needs to bring its close economic partner, Pakistan, together with a less familiar actor, Afghanistan, to jointly address the cross-border instability that could potentially threaten the BRI. In addition, Pakistan and Afghanistan have often approached China to request its mediation between the Afghan government and the Taliban, and Kabul have expressed interest in being a part of the BRI in connection with the CPEC (Bokhari 2019) if stability is attained in Afghanistan. Therefore, in theory, it is possible for China to engage Afghanistan directly, but it would be more effective to also engage Pakistan because the conflict involves a cross-border regional problem for both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Overall, China's approach to Afghanistan has three levels. On the international level, China and the US engage

Afghanistan through international organisations; on the regional level, China engages Afghanistan through Pakistan; and on the ground level in Afghanistan, the engagement is bilateral between Beijing and Kabul, and will possibly include the Taliban.

Pakistan plays an important role of giving China access to the local Afghan gatekeepers: the Taliban. The China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue has been conducted on an annual basis since 2017. In the first meeting between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Afghan Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani and Pakistani Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, the basic premises of the cooperation among these countries were outlined, emphasising the importance of bringing Afghanistan to peace through mutual trust, with the issue of counterterrorism being mentioned briefly (MOFA of the People's Republic of China 2017). In 2018, when the three foreign ministers (with the new foreign minister of Pakistan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi) met again, the issue of counterterrorism and the Taliban received greater attention (MOFA of the People's Republic of China 2018). Finally, in 2019, the three countries continued to underline the importance of counterterrorism and the greater commitment of Afghanistan to participating in the BRI (MOFA of Afghanistan 2019). Given that the Taliban insurgency is a regional problem that spills over the borders of Pakistan and Afghanistan, it is important for China to include both countries in resolving tensions in the region and the threat of terrorism. Of course, there is always the option for China to engage directly with the Taliban, but this would contradict China's principle of non-intervention if it conducted such engagement without the consent of the Afghan and Pakistani governments.

In talking with the Taliban, China emulates the approach it has taken with other parties such as Myanmar and recognises that the Taliban insurgency is the root cause of the instability in Afghanistan. While the US has also initiated talks with the Taliban, US diplomacy alone is insufficient in bringing stability to Afghanistan. For example, in September 2019, US President Donald Trump called off a scheduled meeting with the Taliban after a bomb attack in Kabul killed 11 people, including one US soldier (Sediqi 2019). Another difficulty in engaging in talks with the Taliban is that they have refused to talk to the 'puppet government' of Kabul and have demanded direct talks with the US; however, this attitude has changed considerably after the many years of fighting in Afghanistan (Jackson 2018). China's recognition of the Taliban as a

gatekeeper is important because it shows that China has considerable adaptability in its approach to Afghanistan. It could even be argued that China is practising Track II diplomacy in this case. For example, in top-down government-to-government talks, China remains flexible in involving many stakeholders, such as Pakistan, the Afghan government in Kabul, and the US, related to the conflict, which is seen in the establishment of a Quadrilateral Coordination Group consists of China, the US, Pakistan and Afghanistan that was characterised as a peace mechanism for strengthening unity and forming consensus (Global Times 2017). In addition, China has organised direct talks with the Taliban as well, with the consent from Kabul, but specifics of these talks remain classified for now.

China realises that it cannot rely only on the top-down government-to-government approach in Afghanistan because national identity and unity has never been strong in Afghanistan (K.R. He 2019a). For example, Dupree (2002) notes that despite the rich cultural heritage of Afghanistan, attempts to facilitate national unity have seen mixed success because Afghans took little pride in their country's heritage before the war, and even less after. Since Afghanistan's state unity is so weak, it is important for outside intervenors such as China and the US to help Afghans first to consolidate a common national identity, or at least to strive for a common goal through the establishment of a 'transformative relationship'. Kagawa (2020) argues that a transformative relationship is an asset that enables mid-space actors to connect with each other through shared norms and experiences. Through a transformative relationship, gatekeepers can help to rebuild broken trust and relationships between conflicting parties.

Jackson (2018) states that on the ground, the Taliban have relinquished their cruel and brutal ways of the past and are attempting to show a different face—that they can do everything the government can do, but better. That is, the Taliban were once peace-spoilers who denounced the US-led Afghan government in Kabul as a 'US puppet' (Sediqi 2019), but are now trying to compete with the government in Kabul as a provider of public goods to the grassroots communities in Afghanistan. Given that the Afghan government is mainly focused on the reconstruction of major cities, the rural areas are run mostly by the Taliban, who appoint village elders as civil servants to monitor schools and hospitals or collect taxes in villages, and at times, to provide connections to Kabul (Jackson 2018). The precise extent of the Taliban's control is difficult to judge, but in

many areas, it is an accepted fact that the Taliban are in charge even without flying its flag (ibid.).

Given that it is difficult to nurture the creation of a national identity in Afghanistan in the short term, China is investing in constructing a transformative relationship between the Taliban and the government in Kabul through working towards a common goal of rebuilding Afghanistan. Because Afghanistan needs foreign aid to rebuild its war-torn country, China has already shown positive signs that it wants to incorporate Afghanistan into the BRI, connecting it with the CPEC in Pakistan. An overseas analyst on Afghanistan claims that Afghanistan's natural resources would be better exploited by neighbouring countries, and that China, with its economic resources, happens to be the only country capable of doing so (Sarwar 2020). While this may omit consideration of other potential regional actors such as India and Japan, China is definitely one of the closest sources of foreign aid for both Kabul and the Taliban if they decide to cease direct violence and to compete with each other to attract foreign aid or investment such as is offered through Chinese development projects included in the BRI. This is similar to the CMEC in Myanmar, where special economic zones could be established and where an increase in the number of stakeholders in these projects would lessen the likelihood of direct violence that could jeopardise development and lead to losing the support of the locals. Both Kabul and the Taliban could be empowered by development projects because the Taliban too have shown signs that they require local support with the help of village elders, transforming their gatekeeper role from peace-spoiler to bridge-builder.

However, it is always useful to remember that China still considers itself an outsider to Afghanistan's problems. Through the Istanbul Process, a platform created for Afghanistan to discuss regional issues with its neighbours, China has pushed for reconciliation processes for local ethnic groups in Afghanistan (Hu 2018). In relation to specific development aid, one of the first forms of infrastructure that China built in Afghanistan was hydraulic engineering, and as water begins to flow, there will be electricity and other developments (Sun 2014). For the future, President Xi Jinping has encouraged Chinese companies to actively invest in Afghanistan (ibid.), but of course these investments will only occur if the situation becomes stable in Afghanistan. Therefore, there are clear and strong incentives for the Taliban to become bridge-builders if they are competing with Kabul for governing rights of the country, as continued fighting and violence will scare investors away.

Shortcomings and a Step Forward

Chinese peacebuilding through developmental peace is by no means perfect. It is a new approach that has many loopholes that make it a target of criticism from the West. One of these weaknesses is the lack of Chinese NGOs that can support the bottom-up process. China's NGOs are under-developed, not only because they are too tightly controlled by Beijing but also because at times, they are seen as jeopardising government aims, such that even environmental NGOs can be subjected to strict regulations (Feldshuh 2018). In contrast, many Japanese NGOs are familiar with the situation at the grassroots level (MOFA of Japan 2017) because Japan conducts its Official Development Assistance (ODA) through these NGOs and has public-private partnership organisations such as the Japan Platform that provide emergency humanitarian aid, and enable the coordination of government and private sector funding with NGOs (Japan Platform 2019). Unlike Tokyo, Beijing has not shown the same type of support for local NGOs in the host county it operates, such as Myanmar. For example, Chen and Ning (2020) argue that in Myanmar, communities that are located away from the city centres may not feel the benefits of the BRI, and thus, such communities would prefer a Japanese NGO to construct a school or dig a well in their local village.

A potential remedy for this problem is that China would substitute the role usually played by NGOs with Chinese State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), similar to the way in which Japanese NGOs and JICA coordinate the public and private sectors to efficiently deliver ODA to the host country (JICA, n.d.). A study conducted in Myanmar demonstrates that many Chinese SOEs are conducting grassroots projects, where smaller Chinese private companies provide logistics support for larger companies while also engaging with local companies (Dunn et al. 2016). However, the problem with Chinese SOEs substituting Chinese NGOs does little to improve Myanmar's general negative public perception of China. In a policy brief written by the International Growth Centre presents evidence that Chinese companies on the ground are subject to negative bias because they are from China, and that this bias is greatly reduced when the foreign company is from Japan (Yao and Zhang 2018). In fact, Dunn et al. (2016) note that Chinese SOEs are generally aware of the environmental and social impacts of investment, but that these companies often lack the capacity to address issues related to these impacts, thus these researchers suggest that Chinese SOEs should collaborate and

share experiences with established foreign companies on the ground. In contrast, private companies are more difficult to monitor and often rely on the knowledge of their local partners for information on environmental and social impacts of investment (ibid.). This reveals the inexperience of Chinese companies operating in grassroots development compared with experienced foreign actors such as the Japanese private sector. As China becomes more engaged in peacebuilding, these shortcomings can be addressed more effectively with closer coordination between Chinese actors and their local counterparts such as private companies and NGOs, as well as between Chinese actors and established foreign actors such as Japanese companies and NGOs.

Another common criticism directed against China is the lack of promotion of human rights. In Myanmar, Human Rights Watch (2018) criticised the rushed repatriation process of the Rohingyas, where the issue of citizenship has never been addressed. In defence of China, it can be argued that the Chinese have a fundamentally different understanding from the West of what constitutes basic human rights. While the West considers metaphysical concepts such as identity as a basis of human rights, as seen in the Rakhine crisis, China considers human rights of groups such as the Rohingya refugees are met by ensuring the equal right to live a life with dignity under the economic development that Chinese BRI projects can bring to the Rakhine State. Xinhua (2019a) (China's state media agency) reported that China, on behalf of 139 states in the UN, called for the full realisation of the right to development for all people in 2019, stating that all people should have equal rights to participate in development and ensure 'a life of dignity'. With Afghanistan, it is also possible that China will continue to engage with the government to improve the standard of living for the locals as violence ceases and development is allowed to occur.

It is also possible that Chinese peacebuilding based on developmental peace can drive the overall peacebuilding environment in the region towards being more elite driven. The Chinese style of developmental peace emphasises the fact that stable government-centred policies are most efficient in helping a developing country achieve economic development, as was true for Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and China. Currently, there is no clear evidence that China has been in close cooperation with grassroots mid-space actors such as local NGOs. Some of China's local engagement that is not with the official government of the host country is mainly with local armed groups such as the UWSA. To

some extent, engagement with such groups still represents a somewhat elite-driven process because the unarmed civilians do not always have a say in the decision-making process between the UWSA and the Tatmadaw. However, it is also important to recognise that local armed groups are also a type of mid-space gatekeeper. For example, Kagawa (2020) argues the importance of building a transformative relationship with Bangsamoro rebel leaders.

Another example of China focusing their relationship mainly on local elites is seen in their relationship with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) that plays a role of gatekeepers to the Taliban in Afghanistan. Taliban commanders stated that the power of the ISI is "as clear as the sun in the sky" (Waldman 2010). While they are not a puppet of the ISI, the Taliban are often at the mercy of the ISI's power and the ISI has previously arrested Taliban leaders with the aim of disrupting peace talks because Pakistan does not want peace in Afghanistan. However, without the ISI, the Taliban find it difficult to even host meetings (ibid.). Western powers have a troubling relationship with the ISI as there is little evidence that the US and international pressure has had any impact on safe havens in Pakistan for the Taliban (ibid.). Because of the ISI's profoundly important role in Afghanistan and its deep connections with the Taliban, and because of China's close relations with the Pakistani government, the Chinese are granted access to the ground level of Afghan communities under the Taliban's control. Unlike the ISI, China's main interests in Afghanistan are economic, that is, China seeks peace in Afghanistan for the sake of the BRI.

Given the amount of geopolitical competition in Asia, peacebuilding in this region may not always be based on altruistic motives. For example, the geopolitical implications of China's engagement with the Taliban in bringing peace to Afghanistan for the BRI may be only a by-product of China's close relationship with Pakistan to counter India. In addition, China may exercise its leverage on the UWSA only to prevent excessive foreign influences on Myanmar using the UWSA as a buffer with the Tatmadaw. The West, with its epistemology of liberal peace has done the same by facilitating regime change to sweep out authoritarian regimes and replace them with Western friendly democracies, giving rise to arguments that Western regimes are more interested in being agents of transformation than helping with conflict resolution (Orakzai 2015). The Chinese model is not perfect by any means, currently, China continues to collaborate with government and local elites more than with local grassroots

groups. This may be because China itself does not have a well-developed system of civil society and NGOs to support its developmental peace on the ground. Perhaps this is where actors such as Japan who have the necessary tools such as NGOs can supplement China's efforts after China gains unique access to mid-space actors through developmental peace.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the chapter, we asked whether China's developmental peace represents a form of hybrid peacebuilding: the answer is yes and no. China's developmental peace has transcended its previous foreign policy principle of non-intervention, and has pushed China to engage not only with the host country's government through a top-down approach, but also with a much wider variety of local actors to pursue the bottom-up approach of hybrid peacebuilding. However, given that China is still a beginner in hybrid peacebuilding, it faces criticism from both international and local communities for its lack of engagement with grassroots groups. Therefore, it may be more accurate to say that China's developmental peace is a style of Asian peacebuilding that has traits of or the potential for hybrid peacebuilding. China is aware that no standardised template of peacebuilding can address the wide variety of different conflict scenarios, and that peacebuilding must be adaptive to the different types of conflict faced in different regions.

As the second largest economy in the world, China is keen to be an active player in international peacebuilding. In Myanmar, where China was traditionally constrained by its non-intervention principle, the Chinese government was eventually compelled to address the root problems of ethnic unrest as border clashes became more serious, causing casualties among Chinese citizens. China's peacebuilding goal in Myanmar was to increase the resilience of local ethnic groups through the BRI's CMEC so that these ethnic groups longer had to compete with the Tatmadaw for scarce resources. China has engaged with gatekeepers such as the UWSA and maintained friendly relationships with these gatekeepers, leading to a type of development in Wa State that made the state look like a Chinese province. In addition, China has not forgotten its fundamental principle of non-intervention, as seen in the fact that it continues to engage with the Tatmadaw to convince both sides to cease violence to allow development to occur in Myanmar under the BRI.

To enable development in Afghanistan, China must collaborate with its local economic and strategic partner, Pakistan, because the conflict in Afghanistan is a cross-border regional problem for both China and Pakistan. Through mediating the peace process between Pakistan and Afghanistan, China created the opportunity to engage with the Taliban, who were the key gatekeepers, and to address the root cause of the instability in Afghanistan. Because the Taliban are competing with the Afghan government in Kabul as a provider of public goods, the Taliban are more interested in the peace and development that the BRI offers. Given this interest, the Taliban could be transformed from a peace-spoiler to a bridge-builder because they want to attract more Chinese investment in the areas they occupy.

However, China's developmental peace also attracts criticism. The lack of the presence of Chinese NGOs at the grassroots level of the host country severely hinders China's ability to deliver aid to grassroots communities that are located away from the cities that receive Chinese aid and are the focus of BRI projects. Even when China attempts to remedy this through its SOEs to directly target remote communities in the host country, the negative image of China held by the people in countries such as Myanmar and Afghanistan makes it difficult for China to effectively deliver aid in such areas. China has also been criticised for not placing sufficient emphasis on the importance of human rights when it has served as a mediator. However, this criticism mostly arises because of the mismatch between China and the West over what constitutes basic human rights, and which aspect of basic human rights must be prioritised. The Chinese focus more on the physical side of human rights, prioritising providing grassroots groups with the right to economic development and to live a life in dignity because for China, economic development is one of the best ways to realise human dignity. Meanwhile the West, puts more priority on ideas such as human rights and democracy, with economic development coming afterwards.

As conflict situations change around the world, processes of peace-building must continue to adapt and evolve. Complex conflicts involving ethnic minorities in Myanmar and non-state actors in Afghanistan can no longer be solved through a standardised approach of expanding liberal institutions as guided by the model of liberal peacebuilding. New approaches such as hybrid peacebuilding, which places strong emphasis on the interactive nature of the top-down and bottom-up process, and adaptive peacebuilding, which changes the course according to the needs

of the society concerned, are considered vital for peace to be sustainable. China has employed the model of developmental peace and attempted to apply it to neighbouring countries suffering from conflict, such as Myanmar and Afghanistan, through collaborating with its neighbours, Bangladesh and Pakistan, respectively. China's developmental peace shares many traits and similarities with the Japanese style of peacebuilding, which will be elaborated in the following chapter of this book. Unlike liberal peacebuilding, China's developmental peace does not apply a standardised approach, but treats each conflict as a unique situation that requires China to continue adapting its approach to ensure it is responsive to changing realities on the ground. In this sense, China's developmental peace is adaptive. However, this developmental peace needs to be improved so that it can achieve closer engagement with the grassroots level, transforming China's developmental peace into a fully developed model of hybrid peacebuilding.

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CHAPTER 8

Japan's Peacebuilding and Mid-Space Actors: A Bridge Between the West and the Rest

Yuji Uesugi and Anna Deekeling

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters, it was discussed how the hybrid peacebuilding theory might transform existing approaches to peacebuilding. The aim was to solidify the theoretical framework of an operationalisation of the hybrid peacebuilding theory so that it can better address the realities of peacebuilding in Asia. In contrast, this chapter takes an inductive approach and examines Japan's approaches to peacebuilding, which is defined by the Japanese government as "consolidation of peace" and "nation-building" (MOFA 2007).

Before turning to the main task, three core premises of this study are recapitulated here. First, mid-space actors who enjoy access to different sources of power, both formal and informal, and maintain a deep cultural

Y. Uesugi (✉) · A. Deekeling
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: uesugi@waseda.jp

A. Deekeling
e-mail: annadeekeling@fuji.waseda.jp

and normative understanding of their community, can assume the function of a gatekeeper (Uesugi 2020). Second, these gatekeepers possess inherent characteristics that cannot be emulated by outsiders. These include *transformative relationships* (the ability and willingness to interact with key stakeholders outside one's immediate social sphere), *locally grounded legitimacy* (a collective trust of the constituency gained through their knowledge and power), and *laissez-passer* (a special access to information and resources that are closed to strangers). Third, depending on the circumstances, these gatekeepers become either bridge-builders who can cross over the existing cleavages or spoilers who can oppose and jeopardise ongoing peacebuilding efforts.

A logical corollary of these propositions is that outside intervenors need to identify mid-space actors and work with them and, if necessary and appropriate, help them serve as bridge-builders. This chapter is an attempt to evaluate Japan's peacebuilding efforts from that angle. The following sheds light on three cases of outstanding Japanese engagement with mid-space actors in conflict-affected localities in Asia—Timor-Leste, Myanmar and Mindanao, the Philippines. Features of Japan's peacebuilding approaches are outlined first, and then, empirical records of Japan's peacebuilding efforts in the above three cases are examined. Before concluding the chapter, the shortcomings of Japanese approaches are also discussed.

Features of Japan's Peacebuilding

This section highlights distinctive and unique characteristics of Japan's peacebuilding approach. An inherent trait of Japan's peacebuilding is found in the origin and the genesis of modern Japan, a non-Western nation-state located at the eastern offshore end of the Eurasian continent (Umesao 1957/1967). Japan's defeat in the Second World War (WWII), and most notably its post-war Constitution, has shaped the basic foundation of Japan's peacebuilding approach. In the following, features of Japan's peacebuilding approach are outlined from three angles: (1) historical traits, (2) aid architectures, and (3) three recurrent practices.

Historical Traits as a Bridge-Builder

Having undergone a difficult modernisation process in the nineteenth century and embarked on a costly colonisation of its neighbours in the

first half of the twentieth century, Japan learned the lesson that the sense of emancipatory local ownership is a key to successful modernisation and development. Japan once endeavoured to establish the Great East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, in which Japan was conceived to serve as a bridge between the colonial powers in Europe and their colonies in East Asia, with an aim of establishing an autonomous regional order that would emancipate East Asia from European control (Ikeda 2008). After this dream was shattered, Japan sought to present its representational self-image as a peacebuilder in the post-WWII world (Iwami 2016). Along the same line, Japan has promoted its own capacity as a bridge-builder (Black 2013), this time, bridging between developed countries in the West and developing countries in general but especially in Southeast Asia. The Japanese government justifies this role not only through its geographical location but also through its own experience as a former developing country trying to catch up to the West in the nineteenth century, and in the aftermath of the fierce defeat of WWII.

Japan's own history of encounter with and infringement by the West, as well as its experience of post-war reconstruction under 'colonial arrogance' (Richmond 2018) of the US, has equipped Japan to refine international peacebuilding to be a more reflective and adaptive undertaking (de Coning 2018). Utilising its own experience of modernisation by adopting Western systems and adapting them to fit with the domestic context, Japan has projected itself as a great example of how to exploit outside intervention for its own advantage and prosperity.

Aid Architectures

Official Development Assistance (ODA) has been a substantial tool for Japan's peacebuilding efforts. Although ODA started mainly as reparation payments for WWII to Japan's neighbours, the Japanese government used it to promote its own economy through contracting Japanese companies for infrastructure and development projects in Asia (Reilly 2013). This is a prototype of a win-win approach that Japan advocates. Under the policy of 'Boomerang Economy', private investments and concessional loans by Japanese investors supported large-scale infrastructure and capital-intensive investments in developing countries (Seekins 2015). For example, in 2016, 51.1% of bilateral Japanese ODA was used for economic infrastructure and services, while 59% was for trade promoting incentives for developing countries (OECD 2018: 349). In addition,

Japan's private enterprises play an important role in Japan's aid architectures beyond the Government-to-Government level. Around 38% of Japan's multilateral ODA is privately funded in cooperation with the World Bank Group (ibid.: 347). Also, an increasing number of Japanese companies engage with local businesses in developing countries (ibid.: 346).

Japan's ODA has two principal aid modalities: Yen loan and technical cooperation. The former was implemented by the Japanese government in partnership with Japanese private enterprises. This public-private partnership (PPP) is also known as the 'flying goose' model of economic development. The PPP was formed as a vehicle for delivering Yen loan projects, which symbolise Japan's long-term commitment to and guarantee for continuing interest in the successful development of its investment destinations. In the area of infrastructure and development assistance, the PPP has been a driving force for Japan's ODA. On technical cooperation, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has led numerous human resource development projects which contribute to empowering mid-space actors to function as bridge-builders and thus insider-partial mediators for their communities. Complementary collaboration between JICA and Japanese Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the execution of Japan's ODA is another spearhead of Japan's peacebuilding approach, which is called the ODANGO. In short, the twin engines of Japanese approaches are the PPP and the ODANGO.

It is undeniable that a large portion of Japan's ODA pours into economic development, concentrating on building key infrastructures to boost the economy of both Japan and developing countries. Japan's private sector collaborates with the Japanese government and continues to play a vital role in this endeavour (MOFA 2008). As Japan has located its PPP for economic development under the 'peace through development' narrative, it would be misleading to omit the contributions made by Japan's private companies to peacebuilding. While they have recently begun to undertake an increasing number of community development projects in conflict-affected areas, so far these projects involve only national actors and their interface with mid-space actors remains underexplored.

Three Recurrent Practices

The recurrent practices of Japan's efforts can be classified into three: (1) apolitical nature, (2) request-based, and (3) non-interference. While they are closely intertwined with one another, all of them point to an underlying Westphalian virtue: primacy of Government-to-Government relationships.

Japan has been reluctant to get involved in politically sensitive issues. With this, Japan's ODA has kept an apolitical nature, revolving around Japanese expertise in areas of technical solutions and support. This practice is closely linked with Japan's emphasis on economic development, particularly through infrastructure development via Yen loans. In 2003, when the Japanese government revised its ODA Charter, it decided to use its foreign aid to facilitate democratic development abroad. Still, the approach remained distinctive from that of Western donors. Ichihara (2017) called this an "ostensible" departure from Japan's traditional policy as Japan's democratic support centred around helping state institutions, in effect avoiding unnecessary conflicts with the aid-recipient government.

The second recurring practice is that Japan's ODA projects are in principle formulated based on requests from the aid-recipient government. Although Japan can maintain a certain degree of leverage on the final decisions through offering advice and technical support to key figures in the aid-recipient government, this practice has given the aid-recipient governments a sense of security that Japan would not bluntly intrude into their internal terrain, which resulted in lowering their protective barrier of sovereignty.

The third practice is represented by Japan's non-interference stance, which enabled Japanese actors to engage in situations where access was denied for Western donors. This non-interference posture of Japan helped its peacebuilding actors gain an initial advantage by reducing suspicions in the minds of internationally isolated actors. On the contrary, Western donors suffered a deficit of trust due to their intrusive approach that exploited aid as a concealment for regulating the behaviour of an aid-recipient society so that it would follow 'universal' models/standards. The principle of non-interference, which can be traced back to the United Nations Charter (Chapter 1, Article 2.7), served as a Westphalian framework for Japan to invest in developing countries without criticising unpleasant policies of its counterpart.

Japan's Peacebuilding Approaches in Practice

Having outlined the orthodox features of Japan's peacebuilding efforts, it is now time to turn our attention to the core quest. While maintaining an orthodox approach of mainstreaming the Government-to-Government interface, some Japanese actors made innovative departures from the recurring patterns in three distinctive peacebuilding settings in Asia—Timor-Leste, Myanmar and Mindanao. The records of Japanese engagement in these cases are scrutinised by focusing on the interaction of Japanese actors with mid-space actors who hold the capacities to bridge vertical, horizontal and diagonal gaps that hamper the peace process (Uesugi 2020).

Mid-space actors possess attributes of their unique social position that is rooted in access to varying sources of power and their deep cultural and normative understanding about the community they control. Acknowledging the importance of mid-space actors and their function of placing restrictions on the outreach of an outside agency can enhance the potential of external actors for working with local actors outside the immediate range of governmental control. This point is worth noting if one subscribes to an assumption that acquiring sufficient and accurate knowledge about the local context and dynamics is a prerequisite for successful outside intervention. Japan's official peacebuilding actors such as JICA have worked through the central government of an aid-recipient country, and often collaborated with Japanese NGOs to carry out projects at the grassroots. This pattern of partnership can face a difficult challenge, however, when the central government does not have its grip on subaltern communities at the grassroots level. Under such circumstances, for Japanese actors to operate in areas beyond the reach of the central government, they would have to earn the trust of mid-space actors and help them build bridges over existing cleavages.

The mid-space actor typology introduced in Chapter 4 of this study suggests that outsiders may support mid-space actors by empowering them as bridge-builders, often through offering them technical and political skills training, and sharing information that can widen their perspectives about the conflict dynamics and domains. Building upon the typology, this section explores the following two inquiries. How have Japanese actors and mid-space actors interacted with each other in the peacebuilding process? How have Japanese actors supported them to better serve as bridge-builders? To clarify these questions, the following

section examines the empirical records of Japan's peacebuilding activities in Timor-Leste, Myanmar and Mindanao, where Japan has engaged in the capacity development of mid-space actors including key gatekeepers in the respective peacebuilding processes.

Timor-Leste

Background

Japan's engagement in Timor-Leste was unprecedented as Japanese actors started their support to Timor-Leste before Timor-Leste became independent in May 2002. The conventional approach of Japan's ODA was based on the Government-to-Government agreement. Nonetheless, before a sovereign authority was established in Timor-Leste (except that the UN Transitional Administrator was given the legal authority to govern by the UN Security Council), the Japanese government set the priority of its support to Timor-Leste in three areas: (1) human resource development, (2) infrastructure rehabilitation, and (3) rural development. Although none of JICA's projects had specific features of peacebuilding (JICA 2008: 12), they were introduced under the 'fast-track' scheme to meet the urgent needs on the ground. JICA initially hesitated to extend its support to security and justice sectors as it was understood that Western donors were interested in engaging in these sectors where Japan's resources and expertise were limited (ibid.: 14). Accordingly, many humanitarian aid and development projects delivered by the Japanese actors including NGOs were apolitical in nature.

In Timor-Leste, the timing of Japan's intervention went against convention, but the repertoire of its peacebuilding efforts remained unvaried. After all, the basic philosophy of Japan's peacebuilding engagement was that any humanitarian aid and development projects could contribute to peace in a post-conflict society (MOFA 2011). For example, Japanese Ambassador Iwao Kitahara proudly stated, under the banner of 'water of life', that providing clean water for all could reduce the risk of children being infected by illness, and claimed that "if people are healthy, so is the country" (Embassy of Japan in Timor-Leste 2009).

Engagement with Mid-Space Actors

Nevertheless, there were two innovative approaches made by Japanese actors to engage with mid-space actors in Timor-Leste. The first case was initiated by the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) who were deployed to

the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). The second initiative was led by a Japanese NGO called the Okinawa Peace Assistance Center (OPAC).

Japan deployed its SDF engineering unit to UNMISET, authorised under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to take all the necessary means to achieve its mandate. Although Japan's engagements were limited to non-coercive activities, it was the first time that Japan sent its SDFs to a UN peacekeeping operation acting under Chapter VII. SDF's engineers deployed to UNMISET took part in an innovative programme named the Recovery, Employment, and Stability Program for Ex-combatants and Communities in Timor-Leste (RESPECT) that aimed to address some of the immediate needs of mid-space actors in the rural areas of Timor-Leste. RESPECT encompassed over 300 projects that were funded by the Japanese government, channelled through the United Nations Development Programme (MOFA 2011). SDF engineers who were deployed on the ground to undertake rehabilitation of damaged infrastructures were mobilised to offer 'technical support', or more precisely on-the-job training, to former members of a liberation army called the FALINTIL. Because of their long-term commitment as guerrilla fighters in the jungle, many of the FALINTIL senior members were in poor physical condition and had a weak education background, and thus more than 1,300 former FALINTIL combatants were not recruited in a newly established defence force and the police (Uesugi 2014a; Howe and Uesugi 2015).

After independence in May 2002, FALINTIL veterans who felt neglected raised their voices against their government. They became a major source of instability in a newly born state as they maintained their influence over their former cadets and members of the community. Therefore, Japan's attempt to engage with frustrated mid-space actors through RESPECT had the potential to evolve into a sound peace-building strategy. Nevertheless, RESPECT did not go beyond a stop-gap measure to provide livelihoods (daily allowance) to mid-space actors in Timor-Leste, albeit it was conceived as a capacity development opportunity for former combatants to facilitate their reintegration into the civilian life (MOFA 2011: 96). Japan's involvement remained at the superficial level and no Japanese actors were available to follow up the initial contacts with mid-space actors developed through this undertaking. In 2006, frustrated actors both inside and outside the security apparatus turned against

the peacebuilding process and led their followers to cause a security disturbance in Dili that shook the earlier investments and achievements in the security sector of Timor-Leste (Uesugi 2014b, 2018a).

The next example of Japan's engagement in the mid-space was attempted by OPAC, which was founded by one of the authors of this chapter. While most of the Japanese NGOs which operated at the grassroots level in Timor-Leste followed the conventional Japanese approach, OPAC together with JICA launched an unprecedented project called the Community Peace for Development in 2010 (which lasted until 2016). Before the launch, OPAC had worked with JICA in 2002, 2005, 2006, 2009, and 2010, inviting around 25 prominent mid-space leaders from Timor-Leste to Japan each time for training (over 125 trainees in total). The trainees included, for example, district administrators (an equivalent of a governor), civil servants, police officers, village chiefs, NGO representatives, youth group leaders and former members of the clandestine movement (OPAC, n.d.).

Building on the multiple networks developed through these training programmes, OPAC earned the trust of two key local counterparts of the project: (1) the National Directorate for Prevention of Community Conflict (NDPCC), that was under the Secretary of State for Security, and (2) the Comoro Village Council (Higuchi 2013). The NDPCC was established in 2008 after the Government of Timor-Leste failed to prevent the crisis in 2006, with an aim of preventing community-level conflicts from posing threats to the nation-wide stability (Ribeiro 2008). One of the major concerns for the NDPCC at the time of joint project planning was fragile security situations in Comoro Village, located at the outskirts of the capital city where a large number of youth from various rural areas gathered to find jobs, and several martial arts groups (gangs) were organised to offer a sense of protection and belonging to vulnerable people who were away from home (Lopes 2009).

After consultation with the NDPCC leadership, OPAC's assistance for the NDPCC's effort to address the security concerns in Comoro Village was divided into two: (1) national level efforts geared toward capacity development of mid-space actors, and (2) sub-national level efforts revolved around establishing platforms for information sharing through multi-level networks (Higuchi 2013). OPAC extended its support to build platforms and networks for dialogue among mid-space actors at the national level, which included the staff of the NDPCC, the Secretary of

State for Youth, various national NGOs specialising in conflict prevention, youth organisations, and district and sub-district police commanders (OPAC 2011).

This initiative led to the institutionalisation of the Conflict Prevention and Response Network (CPRN) which brought together both state and civil society actors in Timor-Leste working toward peacebuilding (Belun 2014; da Costa 2013: 32–35). Upon the launch of the CPRN, an NGO called the Belun, established with support from the Center for International Conflict Resolution at Columbia University, played an important role (Cutter et al. 2004). Because OPAC was collaborating with both the NDPCC (a government actor) and the Belun (a civil society actor), a national-level platform for dialogue was constructed rather smoothly.

OPAC's second major activity was implemented in Comoro Village, where repeated skirmishes between rival martial art groups occurred frequently (Scambary 2019: 122). Upon the introduction of activities aimed at contributing to conflict prevention in Comoro Village, OPAC consulted with the Comoro Village Council. One of the highlights of OPAC's sub-national level activity, implemented jointly with the NDPCC, was a village-wide workshop on conflict prevention that received endorsements from the Comoro Village Council and a local monastery. In the workshop, mid-space actors such as traditional leaders (*liurai*), representatives from youth and women's organisations, and leaders of martial arts groups, all assembled in one place to analyse the security challenges they faced and discuss ways to overcome them (OPAC 2011).

Even though the effects of OPAC's intervention are unverifiable and it is difficult to establish the causal relationship, OPAC sought to institute contacts with mid-space actors, whilst a decade was invested in nurturing relationship and earning their trust before the project was launched officially.

At the same time, the CPRN was kept as a consultation and information sharing forum at the national level, and no formal mechanism was institutionalised between the national level and the sub-national level in the CPRN. While bridge-building support made by OPAC could have been amplified to cover a much wider geographical range beyond Comoro Village, such attempts did not bear fruit and OPAC's efforts were limited in terms of their impact and the scope. Therefore, what OPAC endeavoured in the mid-space in Comoro Village cannot be generalised as Japan's peacebuilding approach in Timor-Leste. Still, this case deserves

more than a passing notice as it demonstrates that approaches elicited from the hybrid peacebuilding theory would work in a real situation.

Myanmar

Background

Japanese engagement in Myanmar, particularly after the military coup d'état in 1988, has deviated from that of the West. It provided much needed support for Myanmar in times of diplomatic isolation and economic decline (Seekins 1992; Reilly 2013). Although Japan had been one of the top donors among the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, it had to act in concert with the West when economic sanctions were placed on Myanmar. After the birth of democratic government in 2011 and with the sanctions being partially lifted, Japan resumed its ODA to Myanmar in 2012, which amounted to over 82% of the total foreign aid that Myanmar received from the OECD countries in 2013 (MOFA 2018).

Japan's flagship development aid to Myanmar has been Yen loans for infrastructure projects which aimed to promote sustainable economic development. Besides the major infrastructure projects that would support the central government's National Comprehensive Development Plan, Japan has allocated its ODA projects in Myanmar's border states where ethnic armed groups reside. Japan carries out its infrastructure projects under the PPP scheme, in which the Japanese private sector plays a pivotal role. For example, in 2013 JICA launched a Regional Development Project for Poverty Reduction that covered all seven states controlled by ethnic armed groups (i.e., Chin, Kachin, Karen, Kayah, Mon, Rakhine and Shan). In 2020, the Government of Myanmar and JICA signed loan agreement which included the Regional Infrastructure Improvement Project (JICA 2020a).

These projects are apolitical in nature as their expected outcomes included reducing poverty in and inequality among Myanmar's bordering states (JICA 2020b). At the same time, a new development was witnessed as these Yen loan projects were introduced in conflict-affected areas as a peace dividend, which had been avoided before as such an attempt could drag Japan into a politically challenging situation.

Engagement with Mid-Space Actors

One of the most noteworthy peacebuilding approaches in Myanmar can be found in efforts made by The Nippon Foundation (TNF), a Japanese NGO (to be more precise, public interest incorporated foundation), which has operated in Myanmar since 1976 (TNF, n.d.). Its humanitarian support in the areas of health and education continued even during the period of military rule in Myanmar (ibid.). In concert with the shift of the Japanese government's policy toward Myanmar in 2012, TNF began its quiet diplomacy in the area of Myanmar's ethnic conflicts. The Chairperson of TNF, Yohei Sasakawa, who was appointed as the Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar in 2013, took advantage of TNF's four decades of commitment in the country when he started a peacebuilding project that aimed at fostering confidence-building between the central government and armed ethnic groups. To establish an initial contact with leaders of armed ethnic groups, he sought support from Katsuyuki Imoto, a Japanese Buddhist monk and the head of another Japanese NGO that was set up to collect ashes of former Japanese soldiers who died in Myanmar during the Battle of Imphal in 1944 (Nojima 2019). Imoto played an instrumental role in the launch of the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC), a coalition of 12 opposition groups, which created a united front to negotiate with the Myanmar's central government (Molloy, unpublished). Through this endeavour, Imoto earned the trust of not only gatekeepers in armed ethnic groups in Shan, Karen, Kayah and Mon States, but also of President Tein Sein who asked Imoto to serve as a go-between (ibid.; Imoto, n.d.).

Since then, TNF has supported a series of national dialogues among different stakeholders and adversaries, which had little guarantee of instant and visible outcomes. With self-sufficient financial resources at its disposal, TNF did not have to be accountable to donors, and thus had a luxury of operating with a long timeframe. It did not even need a 'success' story to attract further funding and to marshal sufficient financial resources to continue the project. It could afford to wait for the time to become ripe for the peace process to evolve naturally. This was a huge advantage of TNF acting as a reliable patron for mid-space actors, since most of the official peacebuilding actors of the OECD members, including those of Japan, had to be transparent and accountable to donors (and their tax payers) and were expected to bring positive results in a relatively short timeframe. In fact, unlike other actors, TNF did not have to

claim its contribution to the peace process, which allowed it to operate from behind the scenes. It served as an enabler and convener of the peace dialogue by paying travel expenses on behalf of the armed ethnic groups, but it did not interfere with the substance of the peace dialogue (Mori 2018).

In concert with the progress made at the negotiation table, TNF provided positive incentive in a timely manner as a peace dividend for communities which signed a ceasefire agreement (Molloy, unpublished). Its combined funding scheme worked to its advantage, and its ability to deliver what was required gave TNF additional strengths. While TNF has its pooled fund at its disposal, since 2013 it has been granted funds from the Japanese government to provide humanitarian aid to the people in conflict-affected areas under the control of armed ethnic groups (TNF, n.d.).

Furthermore, being the Special Envoy of the Government of Japan as well as TNF's Chairperson, Sasakawa assumed a hybrid function and performed quiet multi-track diplomacy at all levels (Track 1, 2 and 3). He was in a position to manoeuvre his official capacity to marshal Japan's ODA and to link up with the highest-ranking officials in Myanmar's central government. At the same time, he could also distance himself from the official endeavours by the Japanese actors such as the Japanese Embassy and JICA in Myanmar to circumvent the situations that are diplomatically too sensitive.

Desmond Molloy (unpublished: 11), who served as an aid to Sasakawa in TNF's Myanmar Liaison Office describes TNF's approach as "Sustained Incremental Trust Establishment and Support", which is in essence a trust-building approach. TNF maintained its independence from the Western donors throughout the process, which enabled it to remain more adaptive and flexible to dynamics on the ground, while promoting various forms of peace dividend through a conflict sensitive approach (ibid.).

In addition to peace dialogue support in the field, TNF invested in human resource development of the Tatmadaw (the armed forces of Myanmar). Instead of criticising the Tatmadaw, TNF helped to initiate the necessary reform by themselves, believing that it was not wise to push them into a corner, which could have made them feel isolated and induced radical reactions. Each year since 2014, TNF invited around 10 highest-level commanders, including the Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing, of the Tatmadaw as well as high-ranking officers from the Ministry of Border Affairs (also under the control of the Tatmadaw),

including the Minister Lt. Gen. Thet Naing Win and Lt. Gen. Ye Aung, to Japan (Sasakawa 2014; IUJ 2019a). TNF also funds a programme called the Training Program for Capacity Development for Leadership Potential for Government Officials at the Ministry of Border Affairs in Myanmar offered by the International University of Japan (IUJ 2019b). All these concerted efforts constitute Japanese investment in relationship-building with Myanmar's mid-space actors as well as their empowerment and capacity development.

Let us recapitulate Japan's peacebuilding engagement with Myanmar's mid-space actors. The above discussion shows two points. First, it was essential that appealing incentives were provided to both the central government and the state governments (under the control of armed ethnic groups) to earn their trust so that Japanese actors were permitted a broader and deeper outreach in the bordering states in conflict with the Tatmadaw. Second, it was useful for Japanese actors to remain patient and stay within the parameters set by the central government so that they were not seen as demanding and threatening, while extending its altruistic support for the most vulnerable people in conflict-affected communities to help increase the legitimacy of mid-space actors who were inclined towards peace. The case of Japan's peacebuilding engagement in Myanmar was indicative of the fact that when disciplinary acts by the West can exert pressure on the recalcitrant gatekeepers to alter their behaviour, an alternative conciliatory approach based on long-term commitment and a trustworthy relationship can induce them to explore alternative options.

Mindanao

Background

Japan's engagement in Mindanao deserves special attention as it encompasses long and broad cooperation across various stakeholders, and includes not only development assistance but also mediation and facilitation services in the peace process. Japan's engagement in Mindanao departed from a more conventional style in December 2002 when Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced the "Support Package for Peace and Stability in Mindanao" (Ochiai 2019; Ishikawa 2014; MOFA 2002).

Under the new policy, JICA employed both conventional and innovative approaches. The former revolved around the assistance provided to the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which was established in 1990 as an official sub-national entity responsible for the

administration of the territory, based on the 1974 Tripoli agreement made between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). A more innovative approach was employed in the second peace process, this time with the GPH and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which is the focus of this section.

Engagement with Mid-Space Actors

Japan's innovative approaches to mid-space actors in Mindanao can be found in four domains. The first interaction was made possible with the launch of the MILF Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA), an organisation created to undertake the formulation of the Bangsamoro Development Plan (JICA 2015a). The second connection was made through another MILF organisation called the Bangsamoro Leadership and Management Institute (BLMI), which served as a vehicle of capacity development for the MILF combatants and emerging gatekeepers. The third point of contact was developed through Japan's engagement in the International Monitoring Team (IMT) through which JICA's development experts were given access to non-permissive areas beyond the control of the central government. The fourth encounter was the Consolidation for Peace (COP) in Mindanao, a series of Track 1.5 mediation efforts created to provide opportunities for mid-space actors to exchange their views on the peace process (Ishikawa 2014: 87–92).

The BDA was established by the Central Committee of the MILF in 2002. While the BDA had close ties with the MILF, its leadership was not drawn directly from the MILF (Kilmesova 2015: 223). Instead BDA's leadership was composed of respected members in the Maguindanao area, many of whom were medical doctors and former members of the Bangsamoro Development Council, a civil society organisation (ibid.). In other words, the BDA consisted of various gatekeepers and assumed a leadership role in not only fulfilling its mandate of reconstruction, rehabilitation and development in the conflict-affected communities in Bangsamoro but also transforming itself as a key lynchpin for peacebuilding (Abubakar 2019: 194).

The BDA was recognised as Japan's legitimate counterpart for territories in Mindanao beyond the reach of the central government before the comprehensive peace agreements were signed between the GPH and the MILF. It gave Japan a channel to provide a peace dividend to conflict-affected communities in Bangsamoro to entice mid-space actors into the peace process. Japan also contributed to the capacity development of the

BDA (JICA 2015b) and, through the BDA, Japanese actors such as the Japanese Embassy and JICA were able to implement a variety of grass-roots development projects under the rubric of the Japan-Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development (J-BIRD) for the most vulnerable people in conflict-affected areas in Bangsamoro (Kilmesova 2015: 224).

The BLMI was established as a dividend of an agreement between the GPH and the MILF (Conciliation Resources 2012). It was a training facility for MILF mid-space actors to enhance their capacities in preparation for the establishment of the new Bangsamoro Government (ibid.; Abubakar 2019; Mabasa 2018). The GPH contributed to the operational fees while the Japanese government, under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project, constructed the facility for the BLMI (ibid.; Felongco 2011). Under the Comprehensive Capacity Development Project for the Bangsamoro, JICA used the BLMI as a springboard to offer an alternative livelihood to the MILF combatants that could reinforce the efforts of the MILF gatekeepers who were supportive of the peace process (JICA 2017; 2018).

The IMT was established in October 2004 in response to the cease-fire agreement made between the GPH and the MILF in 2003. It is an unarmed cease-fire monitoring team originally composed of the military, police and civilian personnel from Malaysia, Brunei and Libya (MOFA 2010). Japan announced its participation in the IMT in July 2006 in a statement titled "Japan Takes a More Active Role in the Mindanao Peace Process" (MOFA 2006). Unlike other countries that have despatched their military or police officers to the IMT, Japan endeavoured to add a new department specialising in social and economic development to the IMT and send JICA personnel to that department, so that they would act as hinges of Japan's development assistance in conflict-affected areas in Bangsamoro. Through the IMT's activities of cease-fire monitoring, Japanese representatives were able to access deep into communities affected by conflict and communicate needed information on the ground back to the Japanese Embassy and the JICA office in Manila for project formulation (Uesugi 2015).

Because of this special engagement in the grassroots communities under the control of the MILF where access was not granted to ordinary aid workers, Japanese actors were able to establish regular contact with mid-space actors in the hinterland. Legitimate requests for support made by gatekeepers were transmitted, along with the situation analysis on the

ground made by Japanese actors in the IMT, to the Japanese Embassy in Manila, which were often responded to with tangible measures under the banner of the J-BIRD in a timely manner. This combined effort helped Japanese actors to earn the trust of mid-space actors who were encouraged to support the peace process (ibid.).

The COP in Mindanao was another unprecedented attempt for JICA as it sought to engage itself with political exercises. Under the COP from January 2006 till June 2014 JICA organised six seminars with the Universiti Sains Malaysia (Ishikawa 2014; JICA 2019). The COP started as an opportunity for mutual learning among sub-national stakeholders from different conflicts in Asia—Mindanao, Aceh and Southern Thailand. In the first two seminars and the fourth seminar, the participants drawn from these conflict-affected areas shared their lessons (JICA 2014). The third seminar, which was held in 2008 when the official peace talks for Mindanao had been stalled, was given a special task to serve as an alternative channel to the official mediation process. The seminar focused on the peace process in Mindanao and the participants were limited to mid-space actors in Mindanao such as civil society representatives, religious leaders, scholars, journalists and government officials (ibid.). Sachiko Ishikawa (2014), who was JICA's interlocutor for the COP, argued that the COP provided an optimal platform for addressing needs and exchanging perspectives of the civil society actors in Mindanao. When the formal peace talks resumed as a result of the breakthrough summit meeting held in Japan in August 2011, the fifth seminar was held in January 2012 with Track 1 stakeholders such as representatives of the ARMM government, all governors in the ARMM, and Members of the Congress (JICA 2019). After the comprehensive peace agreements were signed in March 2014, the last seminar was held in Hiroshima, Japan, in June 2014, at which President Benigno S. Aquino III and MILF's Chairman Al Haj Murad Ebrahim were present. This time, the COP was set out to further solidify the work for an inclusive framework of the peace process in Mindanao, and remaining issues were discussed and trust relationships among the participating gatekeepers were consolidated (ibid.).

These COP sessions provided safe-space for formal and informal actors to interact with each other, which promoted mutual understanding and a pivotal shift in the recalcitrant gatekeepers' perspective, from isolation and power-hoarding to recognising the value of interaction and trust-building (Ishikawa 2014: 87–92). The COP broadened Japan's horizons

of engagement, as Japanese actors such as JICA have been recognised as trust-worthy and productive contributors to the peace process. The COP took the advantage of existing family ties between actors in Malaysia and Mindanao that provided a basis for earning trust of mid-space actors (Ochiai 2019), who could reach out to various stakeholders outside their own immediate sphere. Their presence helped establish the COP and nurtured it as a broader and more resilient network of interaction and dialogue.

The most important function of the COP was that it provided platforms for mid-space actors to interact not only with each other but also with other key stakeholders at different levels and intermediaries from outside. It gave gatekeepers, who were not allowed to participate in the official peace talks, a channel to express their concerns. In effect, the COP functioned to bridge horizontal, vertical and diagonal gaps. Through this bridge, Japanese actors gained informal access to mid-space actors from different domains such as the MILF rebel community, the ARMM community and the Christian community, and a chance to build trust with them. For instance, two innovative Japanese ventures in Mindanao emerged through discussion with mid-space actors at the COP. The first one was the dispatch of JICA's staff to the IMT, and the second one was the channelling of Japan's ODA to conflict-affected areas in Bangsamoro through the BDA (Uesugi 2015).

A detailed analysis of the interaction between Japanese actors and mid-space actors in Mindanao illuminates both strengths and existing gaps in Japanese approaches to peacebuilding. The lessons drawn from the case study of Mindanao are twofold. First, JICA has served as a spearhead of Japanese initiatives and has attempted various innovative measures which transcended recurrent patterns of Japan's peacebuilding practice. Second, JICA's innovative initiatives were designed to create a conducive environment for mid-space actors to interact with each other and exert their influence on the formal peace process, and they did not interfere with the substantive aspects of the peace process.

Shortcomings of Japan's Approach

The previous section discussed innovative approaches of Japanese peacebuilding applied in Timor-Leste, Myanmar and Mindanao, which showcased ways that Japanese actors engaged with mid-space actors in conflict-affected zones. What the previous section did not cover includes

shortcomings and negative effects/consequences of Japanese efforts. Hence, this section elucidates these unexplored aspects and suggests a way forward to overcome these shortcomings.

Shortcomings

The first limitation is associated with Japan's strength of being seen as non-threatening. Japanese actors are only allowed to enter into non-kinetic permissive environments. This principle also applies to Japanese SDF personnel as part of the pacifist doctrine enshrined in the Japanese Constitution (Dobson 2003). While this policy of staying away from coercive measures has reassured aid-recipient governments of Japan's altruistic motives for engagement, it severely limited the parameters within which Japanese actors were allowed to operate.

The second limitation is related to the fact that Japanese support is request-based, which gives the aid-recipient government decisional power about what projects are to be pursued and where (Uesugi 2014a: 215–220). This practice prevented Japanese actors from reaching those who were diametrically opposing the aid-recipient government. In Mindanao, while the COP provided a platform for the rebel and governmental representatives to meet, it did not include representatives of certain key power holders. For example, 'warlord politicians' who had vested interests in the existing order and thus were hostile to the peace process that could shake their power-basis, were not integrated into various Japan's efforts such as the COP (Espesor 2017). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to verify the cognitive impact which Japanese engagement had on the perceptions of mid-space actors. Rather it seeks to shed light on the fact that Japanese actors in each case established diagonal relationships with mid-space actors and facilitated vertical as well as horizontal interactions constructively among them.

As the hybrid peacebuilding theory indicates, it is vital for peacebuilders to be able to engage with as many stakeholders as possible to bridge existing cleavages. Underestimating the problem of unequal representation of mid-space actors in the peace process and the influence of local power structures that involve actors other than the primary interlocutors at the negotiation table can reinforce existing gaps in the distribution of aid and development (Taniguchi 2019). As proven in the case of Timor-Leste, marginalised and frustrated groups can undermine peacebuilding endeavours and amplify disparities which already exist

in a society rather than leading to equitable and sustainable growth (Mac Ginty 2008; 2010). Japan's avoidance of politically sensitive issues, as well as unequal distribution and accessibility of aid for a broad range of mid-space actors, can cause existing conflicts to deteriorate, by widening disparities on the ground, and furthering discrimination towards marginalised groups.

A Step Forward

The question is how to circumvent political, socio-economic and psychological blockages placed by the central government in the channels that lead to crucial mid-space actors in the hinterland, who are considered hostile to the incumbent government or the ongoing peace process. One way to avoid this central dilemma is to acknowledge that peacebuilding endeavours are inherently 'political' (Hughes 2012: 102–103). Development projects have an indirect socio-economic impact, and they can influence dynamics in the local context and reshape existing power relations. The decision over which project is to be implemented has significant political implications for the prospect of peacebuilding. Thus, as demonstrated in this chapter, Japanese actors can continue to utilise their humanitarian and development assistance as positive incentives to entice both the government and mid-space actors to move towards a peaceful settlement. Yet, they should be aware of the unintended political consequences that their apolitical intervention could bring, and keep their efforts responsive, adaptable and flexible in relation to the fluctuating political landscapes (de Coning 2018).

On this point, Japan should stay within accepted parameters and refrain from using the fact that peacebuilding is inherently political as an excuse to infringe upon the sovereign rights of other countries. Mutual trust remains a key factor for guaranteeing smooth execution of peacebuilding efforts. This brings us back to the dilemma of selectivity. The most pragmatic response is to uphold its long-term commitment and stay patient and tolerant towards slow progress in peace processes. While Japanese peacebuilding actors can mobilise reinforcement from the development community, including its private sector, they are essentially equipped with two tools for providing peace dividend: Yen loans and technical assistance. Japan needs to come up with more effective ways (including optimal combinations of various aid modalities and projects) to employ a set of

incentives at its disposal to facilitate its access to and cultivate a trust-relationship with mid-space actors who have broken or dubious ties with the aid-recipient government. At the same time, Japan should be open to various types of possibilities for expanding its horizon and gaining deeper accesses to hidden mid-space actors in the hinterland.

Conclusion

This chapter adopted the typology of mid-space actors introduced in Chapter 4 to verify the overarching theoretical arguments of this book. It examined in what way Japanese peacebuilding actors operated in three conflict-affected areas focusing on their relationship-building attempts with gatekeepers, and how Japanese actors were able to approach and collaborate with them. Throughout the journey, this chapter strove to clarify where Japan already holds its potential for becoming a 'hybrid peacebuilding facilitator', a bridge between the Western interventionists style of peacebuilding and the anthropological approaches indispensable for realising emancipatory peacebuilding (Uesugi 2018b; Richmond 2018).

Mid-space actors such as FALINTIL veterans in Timor-Leste, commanders of the Tatmadaw and armed ethnic groups in Myanmar, and rebel commanders and warlord politicians in Mindanao were all considered 'illiberal' by the Western donors, as they did not root their leadership in rational or democratic legitimacy, but their source of power lay in their prestige and lineage. Thus, Western donors were reluctant to treat these actors as legitimate in their dialogue-building approaches. Although security and intelligence actors of the West do not hesitate to collaborate with these 'illiberal' elements, developmental actors of the West are usually covered with a façade and their ethical codes prohibit them from engaging with these actors. On the contrary, Japanese actors explored this turbulent passage by nurturing the relationship with these 'illiberal' mid-space actors. In this respect, the notions of 'non-interference' and 'apolitical' allowed Japanese actors to approach seemingly 'illiberal' gatekeepers. On this point, Japan has also utilised its private sector involvement in economic development to counter acts of spoiling by addressing material needs of gatekeepers and their community. Japan's distinctive stance on the primacy of trust-building through long-term commitment and mutual respect has worked well in the three cases examined in this chapter.

By scrutinising Japan's ability to work between the central government and mid-space actors, and to fill the gaps between locally grounded approaches and those of Western donors, this chapter arrives at the conclusion that Japan has manifested its potential as a 'hybrid peacebuilding facilitator'. Japanese approaches were instrumental in bridging existing cleavages between mid-space actors and Western donors, which contributed to achieving emancipatory local ownership and sustaining peace in conflict-affected communities in Timor-Leste, Myanmar and Mindanao (Manantan and Simangan 2019).

Being a non-Western member of the OECD, Japan identifies itself as a bridge between the West and the Rest. This underlines Japan's self-identity as a bridge-building nation, which is represented by its "kakehashi" policy (Black 2013). Because Japan has been recognised as an integral part of the OECD or the Global North, its unique positionality and potential as a hybrid peacebuilding facilitator have been overlooked. But it does not mean that Japan can automatically claim such a role. Japan has demonstrated its capacity to act as a hybrid peacebuilding facilitator between Western approaches and locally grounded approaches in three specific cases in Asia. If Japan would be able to overcome its shortcomings such as the lack of inclusiveness and access to mid-space actors in the hinterland, Japan might be able to emerge as a full-fledged hybrid peacebuilding facilitator. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to investigate Japan's peacebuilding involvement outside of Asia, if Japan can fulfil similar functions elsewhere, Japan could rightfully claim its role as a bridge between the West and the Rest.

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Conclusion: Alternative Theory and Practice of Peacebuilding in Asia

Yuji Uesugi, Anna Deekeling, Sophie Shiori Umeyama, and Lawrence McDonald-Colbert

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this volume is to highlight shortcomings in the practical application of hybrid peacebuilding. A typology of mid-space actors is presented to function as a bridge for the existing gap between theory and practice. Insider-partial mediation is put forth as a suitable medium for addressing the blockage between academic knowledge and operationalisation on the ground without compromising the premises of complexity

Y. Uesugi (✉) · A. Deekeling · S. S. Umeyama · L. McDonald-Colbert
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: uesugi@waseda.jp

A. Deekeling
e-mail: annadeekeling@fuji.waseda.jp

S. S. Umeyama
e-mail: sophieumeyama@fuji.waseda.jp

L. McDonald-Colbert
e-mail: lawrencecolbert@akane.waseda.jp

and hybridity. This assumption is then tested in two case studies from an insider perspective, highlighting additional key factors to be considered when engaging with mid-space actors. Identity was explored through the case of Cambodian Buddhist monks whilst the case study of Mindanao analysed the role of civil society. The case studies of China and Japan provided perspectives of outside intervenors focusing on their peace-building endeavours in Asia. The aim of this closing chapter thus is to integrate these findings and conclude whether or not the gap between hybrid peacebuilding theory and practice has been bridged.

COMPLEXITY AND HYBRIDITY

Chapter 3 assessed hybrid peacebuilding from a complexity perspective, highlighting crucial takeaways for the successful operationalisation of hybridity. Adaptive peacebuilding (de Coning 2018) was further discussed as an approach which engages well with complexity. Both adaptivity and hybridity address the concerns of a complex systems approach to peacebuilding, though the sites of their emphasis vary. An adaptive methodology of peacebuilding that emphasises flexibility marries well with a hybrid epistemology for which inclusion and openness is paramount. The contentions of this chapter served as the theoretical foundation upon which Chapter 4 developed hybrid peacebuilding into a practical application via constructing a typology of mid-space actors.

Complexity theory provides a deeper understanding of how dynamic and multifaceted systems like societies can lapse into conflict. Social systems must be self-sustainable and resilient so that they can respond and adapt to external or internal impulses. Resilience manifests within social institutions that are rooted in the unique contexts of a society; power structures, cultural practices etc. are important sites to ensure robustness in the face of pressure. Thus, peace must be built upon the internal strengths of a conflict-affected society in order to ensure its sustainability (de Coning 2016). It is therefore imperative that local peacebuilders are active participants in the peacebuilding process so as to foster resilience and achieve sustainable peace. The role of outside intervention is to facilitate the process of societal transformation through supporting the capacity of local mid-space actors to initiate and nurture long-lasting relationships.

Adaptive peacebuilding proposes a complexity-informed approach that can respond to shifting dynamics on the ground, including inter-actor

relations. Hybrid peacebuilding underlines the significance of paying attention to the idiosyncratic context of each conflict-affected society and advocates for the inclusion of a broad array of representatives in the peace-building process (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). The primary concern for adaptive and hybrid peacebuilding is the centrality of dynamism in the relations between actors; how they constantly influence one another, how their interactions influence them, and how such feedback affects the peacebuilding process over time and space (Richmond and Mitchell 2012).

A complexity-informed approach illuminates the varying capacities of participating actors and highlights the implications of these capacities for peacebuilders. Chapter 5 demonstrated that identity can be mobilised for a dual capacity of connector and divider. Identity itself is further part of complex emergence and intersectionality, thus transforming over time. Chapter 6 amplified this finding through its discussion of the role of civil society in Mindanao. It stressed that use of oversimplified binaries—'liberal' and 'illiberal' actors—can block pathways to relationship building to actors on the ground. Chapter 6 further accounted for the omission of support for certain actors and found that their inclusion or exclusion has a direct impacting on a peace process by destabilising local power balances. A complexity-informed approach cautions prospective interveners that the social context in which actors exist must be taken into account and that intervention may lead to unpredictable outcomes. Actors are not inherently trapped in a single, fixed identity such as 'illiberal'. Rather, their identity is subject to change and is influenced by their position within relationships and surroundings.

The premise of complexity and hybridity lies in the careful consideration of all dynamics whilst maintaining adaptivity to change. Consequently, how can one conceive of a practical approach that would navigate through constantly evolving complexity, emerging relations, and unpredictability? Chapter 4 addressed this question by discussing a typology of mid-space actors, which could be used by outsiders when extending their support to a conflict-affected society.

Mid-Space Actors and Hybridity

Mid-space actors are defined as local leaders who are equipped with unique social attributes that support their function as gatekeepers for their respected communities. To fulfil this role, they encompass the ability

to tap into various sources of power, both formal and informal, while possessing a deep cultural and normative understanding of their locality. They can develop distinctive capacities that enable them to connect with actors beyond their immediate sphere of influence. These capacities include (1) *transformative relationships* (the ability and willingness to interact with key stakeholders outside one's immediate domain), (2) *locally grounded legitimacy* (a collective trust of the constituency in their leadership, which is generated and justified through leaders' access to power, cultural norms, and other information and resources), and (3) *laissez-passer* (a special access to idiosyncratic information and resources that are unattainable to strangers). Because outside intervenors usually do not possess these critical capacities, it is essential that they identify and collaborate with these mid-space actors in order to create positive impacts on the peace process.

The empirical studies of this volume demonstrated that mid-space actors emerge as either bridge-builders or spoilers depending on their relational positionality in time and space regarding the conflict and peace process. This suggests that acts of spoiling committed by mid-space actors should not be linked to their inherently 'illiberal' nature or selfish motives. Instead, they may obstruct access of other stakeholders simply because they wish to protect their community from unknown outside intervention, or to draw attention from and deliver messages to outsiders. Their act of spoiling may be a side-effect triggered by other efforts to bridge a different gap (Newman and Richmond 2006).

In Chapter 5 Cambodian Buddhist monks served as an example of mid-space actors who succeeded in bridging horizontal gaps among different communities yet failed to establish a needed vertical bridge to reach the top/national stakeholders. It was argued that the identity of these monks functioned in both ways: it facilitated the horizontal bridge-building while hindering the vertical bridge-building. Identity is intertwined with the three capacities as the consciousness of self and others can (1) influence the decision (or perceived ability) to approach outsiders, (2) help create intra-community bonding that grants legitimacy, and (3) deny the access of outsiders to internally shared knowledge. The case study of Cambodian monks indicated that recognising the disposition of mid-space actors' identity was key to appreciating the bridge-building prospects in this particular context. It also suggested that the identities of mid-space actors influenced the perceived relations between them and other stakeholders at different levels or spheres and

shaped the ability of mid-space actors to connect stakeholders and created access-points for dialogue.

Chapter 6 discussed how civil society organisations in Mindanao contributed to the establishment of a shared identity among different actors, especially between international actors and local communities, including marginalised groups who were initially excluded from the state-led peace process. The case study demonstrated the dichotomisation of commonly employed narratives in peacebuilding, as was done for local vs. international. By exposing these polarised spaces of interaction, it became clear that the concept of 'illiberal' actors is a phenomenon imagined by 'liberal' actors. 'Liberal' actors' domination of the discourse led to the ultimate classification of 'illiberal' actors. Such a classification reinforces an oversimplified binary of 'right' and 'wrong', hindering equal and inclusive participation of all relevant stakeholders in the peace process. While this can be seen as a negative effect of the local-liberal binary, through adopting the international (or liberal) norm frameworks mid-space actors have marshalled resources from outside of their immediate social realm and translated their needs into the narratives of international actors.

By functioning as cross-cultural translators, civil society representatives in Mindanao established a diagonal bridge between the local/bottom and international actors, channelling external resources and aid toward the grassroots. They also succeeded in connecting horizontal gaps between different communities by building *transformative relationships* to cut across social cleavages on the ground. Yet, the biggest challenge they faced was the lack of effective vertical links to the top/national level, which prevented them from realising a more inclusive approach to peacebuilding.

Chapters 7 and 8 demonstrated how the identity of an outside intervenor would affect the ability of outsiders to engage with mid-space actors. Chapter 7 revealed that due to its state centric focus and elite-driven modality, the Chinese peacebuilding approach lacks connections with potential mid-space actors who can articulate the grassroots reality regarding the subaltern needs on the ground. China may have to diversify its own peacebuilding agencies beyond conventional state actors to include Chinese State-Owned Enterprises or expand its partnership with non-state actors in the recipient country to overcome this limitation. In addition, the lack of a critical stance against authoritarian regimes has given Chinese endeavours a reputation of supporting illiberal peace, although China refrains from meddling in the internal affairs of other

states. While strict adherence to the Westphalian principle helped establish trusting relationships between the two Asian donor governments and aid-recipient governments, such a practice may induce negative repercussions from the Western donors as Asian 'pragmatic' approaches can undermine Western 'dogmatic' approaches. Japan has succeeded in projecting its efforts as complementary to those of the Western donors, given that Japan's fundamental polity is democracy. On the other hand, China, as a non-democracy, faces difficulties convincing Western donors that its efforts are complementary in the same way as Japan. The question of how China and Western donors can find a way to coordinate with each other without converting their fundamental polity and identity remains.

Chapter 8 revealed that Japan maintained a dual identity as a successful example of modernisation and post-WWII recovery, which helped Japan to function as a bridge between the West and Asia. This dual identity provided Japan with the necessary access and expertise to engage with mid-space actors in a meaningful manner. As Japanese aid functions within frameworks set out by a recipient government, Japanese peacebuilders have been able to build connections to actors that might be blocked for Western donors. At the same time, unlike China, Japan identifies itself as a civilian power and is unable to offer military aid and sanctions to warring factions, thus it lacks leverage over recalcitrant mid-space actors. Nevertheless, Japan's grassroots-based and community development projects have been operated by Japanese NGOs often in partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and/or the Japanese embassies in the respected countries, which has given Japan an extensive reach and commitment to actors on the ground. With this Japan was able to create a unique access point for communication and point of interaction with mid-space actors. The type of interactions are various, such as capacity-building, community development and facilitating discussion.

The two cases jointly illustrated that the identity frames of outside intervenors have shaped their approaches to peacebuilding and influenced their engagement with mid-space actors in the aid-recipient societies.

Alternative Approaches to Peacebuilding

Chapters 7 and 8, which examined the efforts of two leading peacebuilders in Asia, China and Japan respectively, illustrated two alternative approaches to peacebuilding. These approaches, whilst sharing some similarities, are distinct and both represent a considerable deviation

from conventional Western-style peacebuilding. Chinese 'developmental peace' approaches focus on large infrastructure and thus resemble the economic peacebuilding approach discussed in Chapter 2. Unlike the Western liberal peacebuilding, Chinese approaches are not liberal value-driven, foregoing concerns for democracy and human rights and focusing instead on technical construction projects. Both Chinese and Japanese approaches respect the sovereignty of the aid-recipient country and retain the decision-making power of national governments. Whereas Japanese approaches include bottom-up feedback mechanisms to involve on-the-ground beneficiaries, Chinese endeavours lack such a dynamic and thus face a significant inclusivity gap.

The lack of sufficient bottom-up projects that encourage local ownership and participation of grassroots communities means that Chinese approaches miss an imperative aspect of hybrid peacebuilding. Chinese approaches further lack the capacity to build trusting relationships and diagonal bridges between international and grassroots actors as they do not engage sufficiently with the hinterland. These deficits prevent China from functioning as a truly hybrid peacebuilder. However, due to the size and magnitude of aid capacity China possesses, the influence of Chinese approaches on the conventional peacebuilding endeavours cannot be underestimated. Unless guided in a more inclusive direction, Chinese approaches threaten to dismantle the nuanced understanding of interactive processes of peacebuilding developed by hybrid peacebuilding theory. As proposed in Chapter 7, peacebuilding actors such as Japan could collaborate with China to supplement the shortcomings of Chinese approaches by relying on trust-relationships with mid-space actors who have access to the communities at the grassroots level.

Chapter 8 discussed strengths and weaknesses of Japanese peacebuilding by examining three cases of Japan's involvement in Asia in which Japanese actors attempted to engage with mid-space actors in conflict-affected areas without compromising their positive relationships with the respective national governments. As an integral member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Japan can operate within the framework of the OECD standards and when appropriate it can influence the behaviour of Western donors, ensuring their efforts to support mid-space actors in building horizontal, vertical and diagonal bridges across societal cleavages.

Both China and Japan enjoy unique positions that allow them to engage and work with 'illiberal' actors who are side-lined by Western

peacebuilders. Japan's strength lies in its ability to remain within acceptable parameters that exist between local norms/customs and Western standards/principles, whilst China's strength stems from its immense material power, enabling it to formulate and finance numerous development projects. Japan could assist China in identifying acceptable parameters, although their geopolitical rivalry may hinder cooperation. Collaboration between these two Asian leaders has a potential for constructing a new innovative and effective alternative to Western liberal peacebuilding on the ground.

Key Findings

This study sought to bridge contemporary gaps between hybrid peacebuilding theory and practice so as to achieve its effective operationalisation. It explored how engagement with mid-space actors and their accumulated local understanding might aid intervenors in supporting on-the-ground peacebuilding. Guided by the insights of complex system theory and the mid-space actor typology, four empirical studies were conducted: two from an insider's perspectives (Cambodia and Mindanao), and two from outsider's perspectives (China and Japan).

This study was based on the premise that theory and practice should work hand in hand to enhance each other's advantages. Theories provide general guidance on what and how to analyse but they need to be complemented by analytical lenses such as complexity and hybridity so that the outcomes can be adapted to fit into the contextual reality. In practice, these analytical lenses help peacebuilders visualise a shared and systemic understanding of the local situation, allowing them to stay flexible and adaptive, and thus tuned.

Hybrid peacebuilding theory demands consideration of the inherent complexity of social systems and inclusivity of all relevant stakeholders. The scope should therefore not be fragmented by limiting it to individual elements of system. It is important to pay attention to the micro relationships among actors in a local context, and the macro field of these actors and their environment. Conflict-affected societies should not be seen as static structures. Rather, they are dynamic possesses and constantly emerging relationships, highlighting that outsiders can only be relevant if they remain open and responsive to such changes in the environment of intervention.

This volume tackled the question of how to connect the altruistic motives of external interveners to both national elites and grassroots actors through engaging with mid-space actors. It is the contention of this book that external interveners can assist the emergence of a hybrid peace based on locally grounded legitimacy by engaging with grassroots stakeholders alongside the national elite. This in turn can be achieved through the mobilisation of mid-space actors who themselves have legitimacy grounded in their interactions with local constituencies. These mid-space actors can provide access points for wider society, acting as bridges between the international community, national governments, grassroots organisations and local communities. These mid-space actors can be sourced from a plethora of locations. They may be cultural leaders, religious leaders, of NGO members. The Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly (BPCA) and the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA), discussed in Chapters 6 and 8 respectively, are some good examples of a mid-space agency introduced in this book. Both institutions were established by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) as a forum for discussion and a site of engagement with local populations. The BPCA was instrumental in providing inputs and evaluating policies regarding the negotiated autonomy between MILF and the Philippine government. The BDA offered a venue for international actors to engage with subnational communities and the beneficiaries on the ground to formulate responsive development plans. Mid-space actors such as the BPCA and the BDA provide the essential function of network-creation, acting as an entry-point and mediator between international or national bodies and those communities most affected by conflict. The relationships built by mid-space actors are able to be utilised to build trust within local communities for peacebuilding efforts and confer commitment downstream from top-level to bottom-level participants. Collaboration between local, national and international actors creates deeper understanding, streamlines communication and aids in information-sharing and norm diffusion. This means that national-level efforts are going to be more amenable to local conceptions of peace and justice, while simultaneously managing expectations to strengthen against spoiling.

Conclusively, this study demonstrated that mid-space actors could provide a viable focal point for encouraging the establishment of self-resilient social institutions from within without dictating the content of such emergences. It also showed that the conceptual framework of hybridity could improve current models of peacebuilding. Ultimately, this

volume highlighted the need for an understanding of local peace narratives in the context of complex post-conflict societies. It also emphasised the need for a commitment to responsiveness and trust-building from outside actors to their insider counterparts. Overall, it contributes to the growing literature on peacebuilding by underlining the significance of awareness for change from within, which would lead to sustainable and resilient institutions of peace.

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Index