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**The Art of Conflict Transformation
Through Dialogue**

The Art of Conflict Transformation Through Dialogue

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Introduction

The field of conflict transformation and peacebuilding has significantly developed over the past few decades. The first part of this article offers a critical evaluation of the field's development and the deficits which can be observed, referring in particular to the research of Jean Paul Lederach (1995, 2000) and his rediscovery of Paulo Freire's work for a critical approach of conflict transformation based on dialogue.

The second part gives an overview of the Transcend Approach and the integrative approach for conflict transformation and peace-building which we are using in our own mediation project for supporting the peace process in Sri Lanka. We have been working for several years with an influential dialogue group in the Sinhala dominated South (the "Austria group"), in the same time also with political leaders of the "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam", and on the grassroot level mainly with the Buddhist social organization Sarvodaya. We are also using this approach in our workshops and trainings for conflict transformation and peacebuilding in Central Asia, the South Caucasus, the Middle East, Southeastern Europe and the African Great Lakes Region.

The Transcend Approach is based on the critical and constructivist peace research and peace work of Johan Galtung (2004, 2000, 1996) and in the framework of this article, we are focusing on the basic contribution of Galtung. However, in our own approach of "Integrative Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding", we are aiming to integrate the Transcend Approach and several others, ranging from neomarxist to poststructuralist, postmodernist or transpersonal, and in particular the theories of Edgar Morin (1999), Cornelius Castoriadis (1982) and Frederic Jameson (2002), as well as the praxeologies of Paulo Freire (1992), Claudio Naranjo (1993), Jacob Levy Moreno (1953) and Vamik Volkan (1999). The "Integrative Conflict Transformation Approach" which we are using is a work in progress, and is constantly being refined and developed for use in training, research, counseling and mediation. Comments and dialogues are highly appreciated.

1. The failure of diplomacy and the development of conflict transformation approaches

Far from ushering in a peaceful era with the end of the Cold War, the 1990s were marked by the new phenomena of postmodern wars, the majority of which have taken the form of "ethnic conflicts" - intra-state wars based on the politicization along the fault-lines of nationality. The responses to these violent conflicts were based on a framework of "humanitarian" intervention. Since September 11th and the onset of the "global war on terrorism", politicization along religious and civilizational fault-lines has emerged into the foreground. The new postmodern war, in which the killing of civilians is the main strategy for all sides, surpasses the classical modern war in complexity and has proven resistant to traditional approaches of resolving armed conflicts.

Even in the case of peace negotiations in which traditional agreements were discussed or eventually reached, violence has on occasion broken out again. This has happened, for example, in Angola, Rwanda, Palestine/Israel, and just now, in the case of Sri Lanka. In the cases of Angola and Rwanda, there were more deaths after the agreements were

signed than during the preceding civil war (O'Toole 1997). In the new context of the "global war on terrorism", the new constitution has failed to bring peace to Afghanistan, the war against Iraq is possibly turning into a civil war, and the failure of the Israel/Palestine peace processes since Oslo has opened a new cycle of retaliation and war in the Middle East. The issue of the final status of Kosovo/a is raising the prospects of renewed violence, while in Bosnia the Dayton Accord's complex political system imposed by the outside forces of the International Community has not lived up to expectations.

One of several reasons for these failures of negotiations and agreements lies in the lack of a complex conflict analysis. These new forms of direct violence are only the tip of the iceberg of the new structural and cultural conflict formations in the new phase of "global, multinational world capitalism" (Jameson 1991), which can not be reduced, in a very simplifying manner, to conflicts between "globalization" and "anti-globalization". Capitalism is only one basic social formation in the social "deep structure", existing in contradiction with much older and relatively autonomous social formations like militarism, state tyranny or patriarchy.

Galtung (1998) has focused on four complex global conflict formations, now overlapping all over the world, interlinked with the social conflicts and contradictions on the local and regional levels (class, gender, generation, race, normal/deviant, nation, territory, and environment):

- the geo-economic conflict formation (the World Economic Crisis)
- the geo-military conflict formation (the NATO Expansion into Eastern Europe and Central Asia and the geo-military reactions from China, India, Japan)
- the geopolitical conflict formation (the State/Nation controversy, new nationalism and separatism)
- the geo-cultural conflict formation (the revival of the Christian-Muslim Antinomy)

1.1. The rise of a Multi Track approach to conflict resolution

The traditional approach to negotiation is based on a win-lose understanding of conflict, where there is a definite and fixed amount of resources which must somehow be allotted. Parties have goals, and the parties must give in on some points in order for the goals to be compatible with each other. The language of this approach is "win-lose," "zero-sum," "pure conflict," "competitive," "legalistic," with tactics including "carrot and stick," "power-coercive," "threats, bluffs, concealment," and "compromise towards the middle."

The need for a different, more complex approach, not only for a more complex conflict analysis, but also for a more complex praxeology, made clear by the persistence of violent conflicts over the past decades, has led to the development of alternative, civil, dialogical approaches of conflict management, conflict resolution or conflict transformation, which have gained prominence since the end of the Cold War (Purkharthofer 2000).

The arena of multi-track initiatives is unofficial, and the activities take place outside of government offices, and through NGOs, rather than embassies. It offers a space for the participants to think creatively without being held accountable to what they discuss in these closed sessions. This is especially important when the issues are too sensitive to be discussed publicly. The interactions can furthermore help overcome some of the trust issues which are inherent between conflict parties (Chigas 1997). As such, it can have an impact on the “ripeness” of the conflict for a negotiated solution, allowing for official negotiations much sooner than would otherwise be the case.

In our approach, we incorporate the integrative approach of the Ethiopian peace researcher and mediator Hizkias Assefa. He differentiates between approaches based on the level of mutual participation of the conflict parties (ranging from conflict suppression to conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation), and the different methods used (ranging from force to arbitration, negotiation, mediation and reconciliation) (1999).

The first analytical problem solving workshops in which high level representative of conflicting nations met on an unofficial basis began to take place in the 1950s (Rothman and Olsen 2001). This approach aimed at international conflicts developed further for application in intrastate conflicts in the late 1960s, emerging from diplomatic and law related circles. These lead to “Track II” initiatives (Lumsden 1996), such as the efforts of Roger Fisher (Harvard Negotiation Project), Herbert Kelman (Problem Solving Workshops), Harold Saunders and Vamik Volkan (The Tree Model) and others. The approach has since developed into more complex “multi-track initiatives” and “systemic” conflict transformation and peace-building, supporting official peace processes with informal civilian diplomacy, problem solving workshops, dialogue projects and development counseling (Ropers 2004). The role of NGOs and academic groups in assisting in the resolution of intra-state conflict has been particularly important with these approaches.

Although there are no calls for Multi-track efforts to replace Track I efforts, a strong multi-track initiative can make a difference when the parties officially meet at the negotiating table (Rothman 2001). And they can even create the possibility of having negotiations in the first place.

1.2. Gaps in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding

Even with the new approaches to conflict transformation and peacebuilding, there are important deficits which must be addressed so that these new approaches can lead to a “positive / sustainable / just” peace, aiming for more than a simple ceasefire and the absence of violence.

Addressing this, sociologist, mediation trainer and conflict transformation expert Jean Paul Lederach (1995) has developed a transformative, dialogical approach to conflict transformation and peace-building with specific reference to the school of popular education in Latin America and Africa, and particularly of the school of Paulo Freire. “The work of Paulo Freire and my own direct contact with many efforts at popular education in Latin America and Africa are perhaps the most important influences on my

thinking and training activity” (25f.). He focuses on the following points: First, popular education is never neutral. It is centered on the concept of conscientization, “the process of building awareness of self-in-context that produces individual growth and social change. Second, popular education is a process of mutuality. ... Third, people and their everyday understandings are key resources. ... Finally, posing problems relative to real-life situations and challenges rather than providing prescriptions about those situations is an important pedagogical tool.” (26)

“Conscientization,” Lederach writes, “believes that people are knowledgeable about, capable of naming, interacting with, and responding to their own realities in dynamic ways. In regard to multicultural settings, this principle is based on several fundamental ideas. First, the elicitive principle suggests that people in a community are capable of identifying and naming the realities of conflict they face. ... Second, it suggests that the most useful, transformative and constructive critique of the problems, strengths, and weaknesses related to handling conflict within a given cultural group emerges from that group. ... Conscientization ... invites a particular group to reflect within itself on the strengths and weaknesses of its own heritage, knowledge, and modalities related to conflict — in contrast to reflecting on the threat or modalities of others or adopting a posture that members must initially learn from others because they have no resources” (1995, 112f.).

The conflict worker is no longer there to be the expert, to lecture to the participants and impart certain content, but rather to be a facilitator, in dialogue with the participants, who together are engaged in a process oriented activity.

In his latest book, “Pedagogy of Hope. Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed” (1992:173 ff.), Paulo Freire describes this potential of a peace process as a “learning process”, on the basis of his experience in a “culture circle” session with armed activists in El Salvador, after the peace accord in 1992:

“A learning process might appear whereby the powerful would learn that their privileges, such as that of exploiting the weak, prohibiting the weak from being, denying them hope, are immoral, and as such need to be eradicated. It might be a learning process, at the same time, for the crushed, the forbidden-to-be, the rejected, that would teach them that, through serious, just, determined, untiring struggle, it is possible to remake the world. The oppressed may learn that hope born in the creative unrest of the battle, will continue to have meaning when, and only when, it can in its own turn give birth to new struggle on other levels. And finally, it may be learned that, in a new democratic process, it is possible gradually to expand the space for pacts between the classes, and gradually consolidate a dialogue among the different – in other words, gradually to deepen radical positions and overcome sectarian ones. In no way, however, does this mean, for a society with this sort of living experience of democracy, the inauguration of a history without social classes, without ideology, as a certain pragmatically postmodern discourse proclaims.”

For Freire, a peace process, with a peace agreement achieved, is a moment in the struggle, not the end of the struggle. When the peace process is not addressing the deeper roots of violence, the core issues, the justice gap, the peace process will probably fail. Violence will continue in structural and cultural forms and sooner or later, direct violence may re-emerge.

On the basis of this Freirian paradigm, Lederach (1999) identifies three gaps in conflict transformation in the context of many peace processes in the last 15 years, not only in El Salvador 1992. He points to an interdependence gap, a justice gap and a process-structure gap. In his latest work, *The Moral Imagination*, he has pointed out a deeper deficit, the “authenticity gap” (2005). Addressing these gaps is a critical concern for the further development of peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

1.2.1. The “interdependence” gap

Usual approaches to conflict resolution have meetings or negotiations between conflict partners on equal levels--generals with generals or the equivalent (para)-military position, leaders with leaders, grassroots with grassroots. Efforts have tended towards these kinds of horizontal relationships, with the idea of fostering interdependence, building relationships across the major line of social cleavage along which the conflict is formed. There have been, for example, numerous projects which have brought Palestinian and Jewish Israeli youth together.

However, the vertical links within a conflict party are overlooked. The relationship between the elite level, the midlevel leaders and the grassroots level has not been addressed, and there is a gap in the interdependence between these vertical levels, which is what Lederach is referring to.

1.2.2. The “justice” gap

A second gap emerges most prominently when some sort of agreement, which is supposed to bring an end to the conflict, is signed. It is clear that there is generally a significant decrease in direct violence once this happens. Yet the original structural and cultural contexts of the conflict formation often remain unaddressed. In an asymmetric conflict formation, direct violence is often (or can rapidly become) the response of one group to the structural violence which is perpetrated by another group. When a peace agreement, or even a ceasefire, is signed, there is an expectation that the decrease of direct violence will also be accompanied by a decrease in structural violence, that the population will experience the benefits of a peace dividend. However, as Lederach writes, “the expectations for social, economic, religious, and cultural change are rarely achieved, creating a gap between the expectations for peace and what it delivered” (Lederach 1999, p.5).

1.2.3. The “process – structure” gap

A further gap which Lederach identifies is between peace process and peace structure and it has much to do with the confusion between whether peace is an end product or a process. The process-structure gap can occur when a peace process focuses too much on attitudes (the process) or too much on finding a solution (structure). Therefore, it is

important not to focus too heavily on a linear approach of ceasefire, then negotiation, then agreement, then reconciliation. The process should start where there is the best opening and if possible, on multiple levels.

This gap is markedly visible after a negotiated peace agreement is signed. A peace process will often lead to the creation of a new political structure (positions, institutions, constitutional changes). These are important changes, but they are only the beginning of the post-war/post-violence phase of a peace process. A sustainable peace also needs attitudinal changes, new relationships need to be fostered, a new social structure and culture of peace needs to be developed and the entire way in which conflicts are approached needs to change.

What these peacebuilding gaps have in common is that they arise from an incomplete vision of what peace work entails. One can attribute this in part to the legacy of the traditional approaches of conflict resolution through military, diplomatic, legal means, which long predate the systemic contexts of modern warfare, capitalism, secularism and the modern nation state system. This legacy, hammered into the deep psyche of most societies over a period of millennia, has left us with the notion that once an agreement is signed, however it may have been settled, it is final and the problem is resolved. The result is an overemphasis on elite negotiation and interdependence between elites, while neglecting the elites' need for interdependence with the people they aim to lead and govern. It also results in an over-emphasis of a peace or ceasefire agreement, while the complex processes necessary for peace and the transformation of conflict are neglected. The final result is a superficial peace without roots or chances for development.

1.2.4. The “authenticity” gap

Beyond the techniques of negotiation, mediation, and intervention approaches, something more, albeit less tangible, is needed. What is missing is peace as an organic process fuelled by the creativity, dedication and vision of those who live in conflict. Peace must be organic. This means that it must be developed from within as opposed to imported or imposed from without. There should be ownership of the peace by those who have to live with it. This corresponds to what Lederach refers to in *The Moral Imagination* as the “authenticity gap” (2005, p.49).

Lederach argues that a specific “moral imagination” is needed in order to transform conflicts. This is what we refer to as the potential to “transcend” a conflict, the capacity to go beyond the existing reality and to jump into a new reality.

Conflict transformation and peace-building approaches usually seek to impart knowledge and skills, a specific method that can be used to resolve conflicts. Lederach (2005) points out that in the process of professionalizing the field of peacebuilding, the emphasis on technique has overshadowed the fact that peacebuilding is also an art.

The role of the peace and conflict worker should therefore be to support a process of self-reflection, to strengthen the capacity for empathy, to awaken the creative potential for imagining a new reality and to empower non-violent strategies, through a dialogue with all conflict participants--while continuously engaging in a critical reflection of their own approach, combining different methods like feedback, self-evaluation or supervision.

In the case of our dialogue project in Sri Lanka, we are using all these methods, including nonverbal supervision through “systemic structural constellations” (Varga von Kibed 2002).

2. A complex, integrative approach to conflict transformation and peacebuilding:

An overview of the Transcend Approach

Developed over the past fifty years, beginning with the groundbreaking work of Johan Galtung, the Transcend Approach seeks for answers not only how to stop direct violence, but also how to transform structural and cultural violence. Over time, it has developed through the research and practices of many peace practitioners and has incorporated the work of several researchers and practitioners from a wide range of backgrounds. Today it consists of a philosophy, a set of values continuously reevaluated through critical self-reflection, a set of theories (but not a new grand theory) continuously reevaluated through empirical research, and a praxeology, a set of various methods and tools for dialogue continuously adopted to the practical lessons learnt in the field.

“Praxeology” refers to human action, and in the Transcend Approach, praxeology refers in particular to dialogue processes, starting with dialogue with each conflict party separately. This is done in order to prepare each conflict party for conflict transformation, from prevention to negotiation/mediation to (re)conciliation, through a process of self-reflection and exploration of the deeper, collective unconscious dimensions of the conflict formation, similar to the process of conscientizacao in Freire’s educational work.

“Mechanistically or idealistically it is impossible to understand what occurs in the relations prevailing between oppressors and oppressed, whether as individuals or as social classes. Only in a dialectical understanding [...] is it possible to comprehend the phenomenon of the introjection of the oppressor by the oppressed, the latter’s ‘adherence’ to the former, the difficulty that the oppressed have in localizing the oppressor outside themselves. Once again the moment comes to mind when, twenty-five years ago, I heard from Erich Fromm, in his house in Cuernavaca, his blue eyes flashing: ‘An educational practice like that is a kind of historico-sociocultural and political psychoanalysis.’ This is what dogmatic, authoritarian, sectarian mechanists fail to perceive, and nearly always reject as ‘idealism’. (89f.)

Transcend work is also comparable with “historico-sociocultural and political psychoanalysis” - like other approaches such as those of Paulo Freire’s emancipatory pedagogy, Jakob Levy Moreno’s sociodrama or Augusto Boal’s emancipatory theatre work. Galtung was a very good friend of Paulo Freire and they had many fruitful dialogues in the late seventies in Geneva. However, Transcend focuses more on conflict transformation, not only on micro and meso levels, but also on macro and mega levels of peace, development and civilizations.

The following section is meant as a brief overview of the Transcend Approach to peacebuilding and conflict transformation, and is the basis for our integrative approach to conflict transformation in mediation, counseling, training and research.

From a Transcend perspective, the goal of peacebuilding and conflict transformation is to enable people to be self-reliant in dealing with conflicts using peaceful means. Especially when working in foreign societies, the aim of a Transcend conflict worker is to intervene as little as possible. Peace workers from the outside, who move to and then live in the country of conflict, often become part of the conflict themselves. They are often no longer able to distance themselves from the conflict; they perceive the conflict as their conflict, becoming “conflict thieves.” This provokes counter-productive dynamics. On the one hand, the conflict workers start competing with each other, on the other, confronted with deadlocks or backlashes, they themselves feel helpless and become frustrated and cynical. Therefore the Transcend Approach focuses primarily on building and strengthening local capacities through counseling and training.

When working directly with conflict parties (within the framework of conflict counseling, facilitation or mediation), the Transcend Approach stresses the importance of working with the conflict parties separately, in order to facilitate a process of critical self-reflection. Self-reflection enables the conflict parties to better understand themselves, the others and the conflicts which divide them. In doing so, conflict parties are better able to formulate and/or reformulate their goals, and to come up with better, non-violent strategies in order to achieve their goals. In the best case scenario, the conflict parties do not need third party mediation anymore, but are able to engage in a genuine autonomous dialogue and agree on solutions to their common problems.

The Transcend Approach is a complex, “integrative” approach to peace-building and conflict transformation, integrating actor-oriented approaches (transforming strategies, actions, behaviors), structure-oriented approaches (transforming goals and contradictions) and culture-oriented approaches (transforming values, attitudes, assumptions). Although the Transcend Approach is also in favor of integration, consensus, cooperation, mutual learning and creative collaboration, the aim is for equity, equality, and symmetric power structures. Therefore it does not exclude “dissociative peace strategies” (non-violent struggle, satyagraha), as a way to empower the exploited or oppressed conflict party, with the deeper goal of (re)creating the conditions for “associative peace strategies” (negotiation, mediation, conferencing and reconciliation).

2.1. Philosophy

The Transcend Approach is grounded in a complex epistemology of scientific research focusing on value-oriented fields like peace and development, a social anthropology focusing on basic human needs, and a social philosophy of “positive / sustainable / just” peace.

2.1.1. Epistemology

The Transcend Approach is based on a tri-lateral concept of science, consisting of empiricism, criticism and (social) constructivism, which allows for the integration of realism, idealism and art (Galtung 1977). Empiricism is confronting the data (what is

observed) with the theory (what is predicted). This focuses on the past. Criticism is confronting the data (what is observed) with values (what is desired). It is an exploration of the present. Constructivism is exploring the possibilities for the future, confronting values (what is desired) with theory (what is predicted) (Galtung 2002). Empiricism helps us to distinguish between correct or incorrect. Criticism helps us distinguish between better or worse, and constructivism between adequate or inadequate. Such an approach leads to a new concept of science, integrating theoretical complexity and participatory action research, allowing the combination of critical value-orientation and pragmatic solution-orientation, based on the focus of basic human needs.

2.1.2. Philosophical anthropology

The philosophical anthropology of the Transcend Approach puts the human being at the center of social development and peaceful conflict transformation. Human beings have basic human needs, shared by all human beings, and at the same time universal (regardless of one's biographies, cultural meanings or social structures) and particular (embedded in one's biographies, cultural meanings or social structures).

In the debate about universality or particularity of such human needs, it is interesting to remember the critique of Edward Said on Michel Foucault, referring to a debate between Chomsky and Foucault on Dutch television in 1974 (Said 1983, Chomsky 1981). Both agreed to the task of analyzing the forms of power and violence in current societies, in order to promote the political struggle for social emancipation. Beyond such an analysis, Chomsky also stressed the necessity for a vision of a future society, which would fulfill the needs of human beings. Foucault was against such a vision, like the idea of a just society, because such visions would only be inventions of one's own civilization, the result of one's own class system, and the expression of a power struggle. In that debate, the Transcend Approach would search, like always, the complex position of "both - and something more than that".

Basic human needs are what define us as human beings. Using Ken Wilber's terminology, one could also refer to them as physiological, social, spiritual and psychological needs (Wilber 1995). But contrary to idealistic (Wilber, Maslow) or materialistic (Marx, Heller) hierarchies of human needs, Galtung's concept of basic human needs, like that of Max-Neef's (1991), assumes that there is no hierarchy in basic human needs. Galtung distinguishes four categories or classes of basic human needs: Survival, as opposed to death; Wellbeing, which refers to what we need to live from, such as food, clothes, shelter, access to a healthcare system, access to an educational system; Identity, which means a sense of life, something to live for, not only to live from; and Freedom, meaning having equal choices (1996). All needs are interdependent and interrelated.

As Peter Lawler (1995) points out, this is a highly controversial approach: "The defenders of different types of social formations would argue that it is only within their preferred society that human needs are best understood and satisfied. In order for a theory of human needs to have critical effect, it must therefore be able to distinguish between true and false needs, a fact acknowledged by many needs theorists. Beyond identifying the most basic needs – the prerequisites for human existence – needs-talk is

necessarily contingent upon a whole host of culturally and ideologically specific categories. Connected with this are difficulties with distinguishing various needs from the closely related category of wants" (140f.).

But these controversies can only be transformed through a permanent dialogue about basic human needs.

All four classes of basic human needs are involved in programming the many concrete psychological Ego-needs, social interests and cultural values. Identity, in the sense of a basic human need, is the form, not the content, and in that understanding neither a concept for any pre-modern cultural essentialism nor any post-modern cultural relativism. Freedom, in the sense of freedom of choice, is not the same as the value of individualism, as in the western Ego-Culture (in relation to the We-Cultures in other regions and civilizations) or as the ideology of liberalism, neoliberalism or libertarianism. Basic needs are neither psychological Ego-needs nor values, but are defining the non-negotiable needs of social human beings and as such an anthropological approach to discuss, evaluate, deconstruct, reconstruct, criticize, democratize, integrate or mediate cultural values (and intercultural value conflicts). In that regard, the four classes of basic human needs are at the same time integrating and transcending the civilizational-specific values of the French revolution and the western approach of Modernity.

Although there is no objective hierarchy, human beings and societies tend to prioritize basic human needs, and tend to base collective values or political ideologies on this prioritization. Marxism puts the basic human need of (material) wellbeing at the center of its ideology, liberalism puts the need for (political and economic) freedom at the center, nationalism puts the need for (national) identity at the center, while militarism puts the survival (of the state) at the center. In deep-rooted conflicts, one can often observe a pathological fixation on one of the basic needs. People are known to sacrifice their lives for their religious and cultural identity (such as the right to use their own language), while wellbeing and survival are often sacrificed in the struggle for freedom or identity.

The Transcend approach aims to deconstruct and reframe these ideologies or pathological fixations. It assumes that all basic human needs are equally important and that, if there is to be a sustainable solution to a conflict, all of these basic human needs must be fulfilled. There are no basic human needs for systems, states, institutions, organizations or political parties. The latter represent cultural values and social interests, and these values and interests can be translated and reframed according to basic human needs. This allows for a critical differentiation between basic interests/values and specific group-centered or ego-centered interests/values.

2.1.3. Social philosophy

The social philosophy of the Transcend Approach recognizes that the dominant paradigms in the studies and politics of International Relations - such as the conservative "peace through balance of power" or the liberal "peace through law," are insufficient in order to transform conflicts in a sustainable manner. (We are referring here to a few meta-theoretical paradigms, not to the many theories like neo-realism, neo-

institutionalism or social constructivism). The Transcend Approach is in search of “conflict transformation with peaceful means”, beyond the mythical assumptions of postmodern peace like “democratic peace”, “humanitarian intervention” or “comprehensive security”.

The same can be said for the dominant paradigms and myths in the studies and politics of development, modernization or civilization. “Galtung’s evolving perspective on human development aimed to go beyond a political economy of development and explore how a particular worldview and development goal, the ‘bourgeois way of life’, permeated the globe. This global telos was seen to incorporate both underdevelopment on the global periphery and overdevelopment in the global center.” (Lawler 1995, 151)

On the basis of the social-ecological and neo-humanistic paradigm of “basic human needs for all”, it follows a complex paradigm of “peace by peaceful means”, what could become concrete only through a dialogue with all conflict partners in a specific conflict constellation.

Inspired at the same time by oriental bakhti yoga (Gandhi’s satyagraha) and occidental conscientización (Freire’s Christian personalism), the Transcend Approach aims not only for non-violent behavior, but also structural symmetry (through equality, autonomy, integration and participation), cultural pluralism and individual self-realization.

When it comes to the philosophy of practice, the core concepts of the Transcend approach are creativity, empathy and non-violence. Non-violence is the corner stone of the approach, as violence only serves to further escalation to an endless cycle of retaliation.

The way out of violence is through creativity and empathy. Creativity, in all its forms, is what distinguishes human kind from other living beings. It is the mental capacity to see something which does not exist, and to then achieve it. Going from a structurally and culturally violent condition where the basic needs of many are unfulfilled, and imagining and fulfilling the achievement of basic needs for all, within a culturally and structurally peaceful system, requires that individuals (and groups) make use of their full creative potential. The work of conflict transformation must be less technical, less legalistic, and more creative in order to overcome the limitations of what has been done, to go beyond and create something new.

Empathy with the other ensures that the creative power is used for peaceful purposes rather than violent ones. As in Moreno’s psycho-, socio- and axio-drama, it is putting oneself in the shoes of the other, reversing the roles to which one is accustomed (Graf 2006). This should not be confused with sympathy which involves an affinity for the other or their actions. Through compassion and empathy one can understand the other, even if the others’ ideas and actions are anathema to one’s own.

2.2. Theories

2.2.1. A Complex Social Theory: Action, Structure, Culture and the tri-lateral Unconscious

Comparing the work of four major social theorists (Peter Berger, Norbert Elias, Michel Foucault and Anthony Giddens) Roger Sibeon (2004) explores their underlying concepts with regard to their distinctions between action- and structure-levels and between micro- and macro-dimensions, and is engaged in a critique of four long-standing deficient modes of social scientific thought - reductionism, essentialism, reification and functional teleology. He refers to new multi-level research strategies, especially that of Layder (1997). Layder identifies four social domains, two subjective and two objective dimensions of society: "These are psychobiography, the largely unique, asocial components of self and behaviour; situated activity, which refers to face-to-face interaction and intersubjectivity in situations of co-presence; social settings, that is, the locations in which situated activity occurs; and contextual resources, consisting of macro-distributions and ownerships of resources (relating, in particular, to social class, gender, and ethnic divisions) and widespread cultural meanings, discourses, and social practices." (Sibeon 2004, 187). Each domain has relative autonomy but overlaps and influences the others.

The theoretical basis of the Transcend Approach is very similar to this approach. It focuses on a deep understanding of the complex interdependencies of human interactions, structural relationships and cultural meanings and the unconscious. The unconscious means latent or implicit dimensions of all of these levels ("deep action", including deep behavior and deep psychology, "deep structure" and "deep culture"). At the deeper level of the conflict formations, there are collective behaviors of groups, including unconscious behaviors, which have the aim of fulfilling one's basic needs, with implications for the fulfillment of the basic human needs of the others. There is also the context of social structure, including unconscious (latent) contradictions (deep structure) and the context of cultural meaning, including unconscious (implicit) assumptions and attitudes (deep culture).

Galtung's tri-lateral concept of the unconscious is transcending the concepts of psychological unconscious of Freud, Adler or Jung. In future research, it should be integrated with other concepts, like the concept of large group identities (Volkan 1999), the 'political unconscious' (Jameson 1981) or the societal imagination (Castoriadis 1987).

Pathologies of deep structure

Deep structure can be defined as the unconscious or latent patterns of relations between the segments of society - between the old and the young, men and women, between races and ethnicities, between the powerful and the powerless, along every social cleavage. A deep structure is structurally violent when there is an asymmetry of power between the different segments of society resulting in the violation of the basic human needs of a group. It is then linked with discrimination and exploitation. Violent deep structures include slavery, colonialism, and patriarchy. Deep structure influences every

aspect of a society's organization, and the patterns of power relations are often recreated in the family, workplace, and government.

Deep Structure can exhibit certain pathologies, and Galtung identifies these as the PSFM Syndrome (1996). PSFM stands for Penetration, Segmentation, Fragmentation, and Marginalization. Penetration is the extent to which those with power are able to condition those without, to accept the structure. Segmentation is the extent to which information is controlled by the elite, and where the average individual does not have access to the whole picture. Fragmentation is the extent to which those without power are isolated along the different fault-lines and therefore do not have contact with each other. Marginalization is the extent to which a segment of the population is prevented from interacting in society and the world at large.

There are remedies to PSFM, often found in the deep history of social organization of a given society, which is the basis for a peaceful deep structure. The counterpart to PSFM is autonomy instead of penetration, integration instead of segmentation, solidarity instead of fragmentation and participation instead of marginalization.

Pathologies of deep culture

The deep structure can be observed by looking at what the major societal fault-lines are, and which groups are favored over others. For the analysis of the deep culture - for example ethno-nationalistic deep culture - it is important to look at the national anthems, street names, national myths, literature, sagas, music, statues, specific proverbs, and other similar carriers of the deep culture, and to reflect with the conflict party about the meanings that are coming with these symbols. It is also important, at this stage to reflect on collective trauma and glory and how this influences the conflict constellation on the surface. It might be also useful to start reflection on religious and cultural values and frameworks and how these influence the way how the conflict parties interpret the reality, how they make peace and war.

If assumptions and attitudes are on the surface, then below them are deeper attitudes and assumptions, the operating paradigms which form the deep culture, the sum of unconscious (usually forgotten or unspoken) practices, codes, discourses, directives, rules, stereotypes and prejudices about the self and the other. More specifically, deep culture is composed of the "social cosmology" of a society. It is "a web of notions about what is true, good, right, beautiful, sacred" (Galtung 2000, p.33).

In conflicts, and in particular in protracted conflicts, these deep attitudes and assumptions often work to impede a peaceful end to the conflict, and are the raw materials for the dynamics of escalation and polarization, which are in turn exacerbated by populist and fundamentalist policies. Throughout culture (in religion and ideology, language and art, empirical and formal science) such deep-cultural meanings can be used to legitimize direct or structural force, and are transferred from one generation to the next.

Lederach (2005) suggests a set of embedded circles that flow toward the past, starting with a circle that includes recent volatile events. "The circle of recent events lifts out the most visible expressions of the political, military, social, or economic conflicts." (141). The circle of recent events phases into the wider sphere of "lived history". A third, wider

circle of time is the context of memory, or “remembered history”. Vamik Volkan is exploring this circle of time, particularly from the discipline of psychology, as remembered events that create a “chosen trauma” (Volkan 1999). Finally, the deepest history, is the “narrative”, “the understanding of how people come to see their place on this earth, in a figurative sense and their place as tied to a specific geography, in a literal sense” (Lederach 2005 : 143). That is exactly the dimension Galtung characterizes as “deep culture” (Galtung 1996).

Deep culture has its own pathologies. Galtung identifies the cognitive pathology of “Dichotomy, Manichaeism, and Armageddon” (the DMA Syndrome) and an emotional pathology of “Glory, Chosenness and Trauma” (the CGT syndrome). The DMA syndrome reduces each conflict constellation to only two conflict parties (Dichotomy), about which there is one good side, with an opposing bad or evil other (Manichaeism), so that a final decisive encounter becomes inevitable (Armageddon). Nations with a CGT syndrome suffer from heavy traumata (multiple traumatic events), and dwell on injuries and defeats that were perpetrated by enemies. They maintain and publicize myths which tell of their past and future glory. And they believe in a political religion, believing that they are chosen by transcendental forces for political missions.

In times of crisis, when a group is faced with a complex situation yet needs to maintain consensus in order to (re)act effectively, these deeper dimensions of conflict assert themselves on the surface level. The way in which the situation is understood, and the ensuing reaction will be guided on the group level by the pathology of the deep culture. A basic hypothesis of Transcend is that a just, sustainable solution can be only achieved if the deeper dimensions are addressed and brought into the consciousness of the conflict parties. It is then that new, transformed attitudes and assumptions, goals and strategies, and behavior can be realized.

2.2.2. Peace, development, civilizations - and the tri-lateral theory of violence

The complex social theory allows the construction of a critical-constructivist peace theory, on the basis of a complex tri-lateral theory of violence: direct, structural and cultural violence and in the following a theory of peace, a theory of conflict transformation, a theory of development and a theory of civilizations (Galtung 1996). It encompasses what is violence, what is the conflict formation underlying the violence, what is the perspective of a peaceful solution and what is the way to conflict transformation and peace-building.

Direct, structural and cultural violence as a theoretical model for violence goes beyond the common understanding of violence. A riot / revolt / revolution with the accompanying violence remains puzzling without a deeper understanding of violence. Mass violence does not erupt without a reason, although the reason is not a justification. This type of direct violence is an event. To understand the event one needs to understand the process which led to it.

Structural violence is the difference between the potential and the actual. Although the potential and the actual can in practice never coincide completely, it is more the enormous gulf between the two which is worrisome. A violent structure impedes the

development of the group and the self through a structure (sometimes visible, usually not). Cultural violence is the hardest to change, it is the deep-rooted constant which generates and legitimates structural and direct violence, especially when there is a reaction (violent or not) against the structural violence by those who are victims of it.

From this point of view, “development” can be defined as the process of structural conflict transformation, in search of the fulfillment of basic human needs, with the possible outcome of more structural violence or more structural peace; and civilization as the process of cultural conflict transformation, with the possible outcome of more cultural violence or more cultural peace towards “the other”. Peace, development and civilization are interrelated.

The majority of approaches dealing with conflict are limited to the understanding of violence as direct violence. At best, the result can be a compromise that brings an end to direct violence. In general the conflict is put on ice, until at some point it re-emerges. In the worst cases, of which there are a number, the violence is worse than before. There is, in any case, no sustainable peace to be had. The justice gap therefore needs to be addressed; the violent structures and cultures need to be transformed.

2.2.3. Conflict and conflict transformation

In the Transcend Approach, conflict is seen as having three main components- attitudes, behaviors, and contradictions. Conflict is not the same as violence. Conflict is a challenge. The outcome, whether it is creative, constructive and peaceful, or whether it is violent and destructive, depends mainly on behaviors, attitudes and goals. The behavior is the visible element of the conflict. Often, as the cycle of animosity and violence spirals, the contradiction (the incompatibility of goals) is eventually forgotten. This is especially the case of protracted violent conflicts, in which violence creates a self-perpetuating dynamic, and the violence obscures the real contradiction.

A complex model for conflict dynamics

Human beings, in order to fulfill their basic human needs, become part of a group, and develop specific individual as well as group goals. In the outside world, these goals meet the goals of others, and when the goals are incompatible, a contradiction occurs and a conflict emerges. If the contradiction is perceived negatively and no solution can be found, it is likely that it will lead to an act of violence. This act does not resolve the contradiction. To the contrary, violence has the effect of worsening the contradiction. Violence then often leads to counter-violence, further polarizing the attitudes and assumptions about the others, setting in motion a process of de-humanization.

Experiencing large scale violence is always a traumatic event. When a society is exposed to that, it needs to come up with coping mechanisms. Myths are created and passed on from one generation to the next. In this way, collective traumas can endure for centuries. They are stored within the deep culture and are often reactivated in situations of crisis, once again influencing the actions and goals of the individual or group.

Similar dynamics can be analyzed with regard to the structures. The experience of collective trauma through war and violence and the inability to resolve the contradiction(s) lead to the creation of structures which only serve the purpose of

achieving the fulfillment of basic needs of one's own people, excluding the needs of the others. Since the others are perceived as an obstacle to achieving their goals, this leads to discrimination, exploitation and in the worst case, an attempt to destroy the others - even if this leads to self-destruction.

A complex model for conflict transformation: diagnosis, prognosis and therapy

The conflict transformation process follows the model of "diagnosis", "prognosis" and "therapy" as developed in the centuries of medical sciences and practices. This is a metaphor of course, and especially a metaphor for soft or alternative medicine and for soft or alternative psychotherapy. If someone does not like this metaphor, it could be easily changed to the model of "systemic therapy" (with the concepts of "observation" instead of "diagnosis and prognosis", "solution-orientation" instead of "therapy").

The aim of conflict counseling and peace dialogue is to empower participants to be able to escape vicious cycles of violence by fostering a more complex understanding of conflict dynamics, the conscientization of the deeper contexts, and the reframing of goals. This should take them from operating on the basis of positions, to that of interests, then values, and finally to engage the other on the basis of basic human needs as the common human ground for all conflict parties, working to overcome the incompatibility of goals.

2.3. Praxeology

The Transcend Approach's praxeology is based on deep dialogue, or trans-cultural and trans-civilisational poli-logue (Wimmer 2002), as a method for delving below the superficial level, and into the "collective unconscious."

The praxeology of the Transcend Approach stipulates that each conflict party should be worked with separately in order to develop their understanding of their own goals as well as developing vertical interdependence (in order to prepare the conflict parties for creative negotiation and mediation).

This, however, cannot be achieved at the negotiating table. Therefore the transcend praxeology does not start with a roundtable. It does not wait for the readiness of the oppressor for a dialogue, but starts the dialogue within each conflict party, especially within the civil society. There is always someone within a conflict party who is in search of a creative solution.

This means bringing together a broad range of individuals, from the same conflict party, but with different backgrounds, like government officials, NGO representatives, local leaders, military personnel, journalists, religious leaders and intellectuals. This has been also the approach in our own project in Sri Lanka.

Each segment of the population represented brings in insights which would not normally be shared with those from such different backgrounds. It allows the process to go along vertical lines rather than horizontal ones, and like this vertical interdependence is fostered. Each participant on their return can act as multipliers, and their efforts within their segment of the population should be assisted by the conflict workers. Such

activities are especially important at the grassroots level, empowering them as well as conveying the insights developed during dialogue seminars.

The participants of such seminars take part in their personal capacity and the sessions are carried out under the Chatham House Rule. The unofficial, private, nature of the meeting, allows for individuals to express ideas and explore possibilities which would be against the stated position of their respective organizations. It also helps build a collegial and trusting atmosphere necessary for an honest and deep dialogue. As well, if possible, it is best to take the participants out of the context of the conflict and into a third country which is not party to the conflict. Participants have often commented that this has allowed them to gain a different perspective on the issues.

The praxeology also includes a multiple-orientation approach. Attitudes, behaviors and contradictions must be worked on simultaneously. On the attitude/process level, the stress is on developing empathy for the other parties. On the behavior level, the stress is on non-violence. On the level of the contradiction, the solution is elaborated based on the principle of creative conflict transformation and the attainment of basic human needs for all.

The goal of the conflict worker is the achievement of the basic human needs for all. It also reassures the conflict parties that the conflict worker will not sympathize with one conflict party more than another. When a conflict party may have committed a disproportionate amount of the violence, they know it, and become very defensive, sensitive to criticism. The reference to basic human needs as the clear partisanship of a conflict worker allows the conflict parties to understand that criticism is not against them as individuals, nor coming from a moralizing standpoint.

A further characteristic of the praxeology is that the conflict worker may put forth their own ideas and proposals for possible solutions, especially when there is an impasse on an issue. This must be done carefully, and with the clear message that this is a proposal for consideration, not an imposition. It should always remain up to the conflict party to decide whether to follow that proposal or reject it.

3. The Deep Dialogue Process: four phases, seven steps

Galtung structures the Transcend Approach along four phases (with four methods):

- The first phase is to understand the goals of the conflict parties.
- The second phase is the reframing of illegitimate goals into legitimate goals, with the criteria of the fulfillment of basic human needs of all conflict parties.
- The third phase consists of the elaboration of an overarching formula for a sustainable solution on the basis of the integration of these legitimate goals.
- The fourth phase is the process of (re)conciliation.

Complementary to Galtung's four phases for conflict transformation, the authors of this article have developed over the past four years the practice of a six step process for a "deep dialogue process" (plus a seventh step for reconciliation), applicable in different forms of conflict transformation from conflict training or education to conflict counseling

and conflict moderation (facilitation, conferencing, negotiation, mediation), at the micro, meso or macro levels, either before, during or after violence. Each of these seven steps addresses a particular concern for conflict transformation, alternating according to a double dialectic between analysis/observation and therapy/solution, and between past and future, with both dialectics being anchored in the present.

The aim of Phase I (which is composed of steps 1 and 2) is to go from antagonism to empathy, and develop a more complex understanding of the conflict formation.

Step 1 is a form of analysis of the present. The goal is to develop an understanding of all actors, their behaviors/strategies and relationships, and of the contradiction. The guiding question is: What is the conflict about?

Step 2 is the analysis of the past, a diagnosis geared towards understanding the assumptions and attitudes of the conflict parties and how they interact with the contradictions and the goals. Here the main question is: How did the conflict occur?

In Phase II, the process is one of going from empathy to creativity, to differentiate between “just / legitimate” and “unjust / illegitimate” goals. The goal is the transformation of illegitimate goals into legitimate ones that respect the basic human needs of all conflict parties.

Step 3 is a therapy of the past, a form of social constructivism in which there is an exploration of the collective unconscious of the conflict formation. The leading question is: What is the context (obstacles and resources) of the conflict?

Step 4 is an analysis of the future, a form of “prognosis” through the analysis of the basic needs constellations, and the fixations or “pathologies” which are present. This can be achieved by asking: How will it continue, if nothing is changed?

Phase III is the process of going from creative invention to nonviolent action. It entails the construction of an overarching formula which fulfills all legitimate goals and the creation of a new reality between the conflict parties.

In Step 5, the therapy of the future, new attitudes, assumptions and goals are constructed, integrating the basic human needs of all conflict parties. The guiding question is: What can be done?

In Step VI, the therapy of the present, an action plan is constructed and new practices are elaborated. The leading question is: What are the next steps?

Phase IV with Step 7 is closing the conflict transformation process of Phase III and opening the process of (re)conciliation; the building of new peaceful relationships between each of the conflict parties.

It is important to stress that this whole process of deep dialogue(s) is not a sequential process. The seven steps were elaborated for didactical purposes and serve the purpose to make conflict workers, counselors and facilitators aware of the different dimensions and dynamics of conflict formations, and to provide them with a mental map for finding the right questions in the right time, when working with each conflict party separately. It is not about getting from step 1 through 7, and thinking that the process is complete. The process goes from one phase to the others and back again. All seven steps can occur

within a day, yet not be achieved after a period of years. It is the mental map, but not the landscape of a conflict formation.

4. Conclusion: beyond neutrality

As we try to show, the Transcend Approach – open to an integration of many other approaches like the Freire Method (1992), the Moreno Approach (1953), the Tree Model Approach (Volkan 1999), the Tetralemma Approach (Varga von Kibed 2002) and others - should allow the conflict worker to refer to a philosophy, a critical social theory (not only of society but also of world society) and a comprehensive praxeology for conflict transformation through (deep) dialogue. The tools and methods should come out of such a philosophy, theory and praxeology, and should be guided by them.

In the Transcend Approach there is also the basis for a new legitimacy of the intervention of the conflict worker, beyond classic neutrality or all-partiality. Especially in the case of representatives from the hegemonic Western world working in other parts of the world, training and constant further education in self-reflection of their own civilisational values, social interests and basic needs hierarchies, is crucial. In this approach, legitimacy for any kind of intervention is based on the dialectic relationship between a conscious partiality of the conflict worker for the basic human needs for all and the practice of an all-partial and self-reflective dialogue with all conflict partners.

So equipped, the conflict worker may be able to grasp the moment of “serendipity” (Lederach 2005, 113f.) and may, further more, be able to actively work towards the kairos points in history that enable radical social change with peaceful means. Serendipity means the making of discoveries by accident, while in pursuit of something else, like the discoveries of The Three Princes of Serendip, which refers to an old name for Sri Lanka. As Lederach writes, “Serendipity, it seems, is the wisdom of recognizing and then moving with the energetic flow of the unexpected. It has a crablike quality, an ability to accumulate understanding and create progress by moving sideways rather than in a direct linear fashion” (115).

Appendix: A detailed description of the six steps

Phase I: Understanding the conflict formation

Conflict transformation work is not scientific conflict analysis. The aim in phase one therefore is not to try to come up with an “objective” understanding of the conflict, but rather to understand how the conflict party itself perceives the conflict. The process-oriented goal in phase one is to build up trust between the conflict worker/trainer and the conflict party. The structure-oriented goal in phase one is to give each conflict party the possibility for a better understanding of the contradiction, their goals and the goals of the other conflict parties.

Step One: Understanding all actors, their behavior and their relations in the context of the contradiction

The underlying question of the first step is “what is the conflict about.” It is a question about the present, what is happening at that point. It is an analysis of the antagonism which exists between the conflict parties. The analysis takes place on the level of Attitudes, Behaviors, and Contradictions.

The conflict party should start out by identifying their goals and those of the other conflict parties. As well, the forgotten and hidden actors should be identified. These are generally parties to the conflict who are involved in some way, but not always visibly so. The relationships between the conflict actors should then be examined.

One tool for the whole six-step process is a diagram of five possible outcomes. Originating in Taoist and Buddhist logic, it offers five possible outcomes instead of the usual either/or framework of Aristotelian logic. To these two options, it adds “neither-nor,” “compromise” and “transcendence.” Transcendence means not only “win-win” (or integration, consensus, collaboration), but “both and– something more,” meaning the overcoming of the incompatibility of the goals on the basis of the fulfillment of the basic human needs for all conflict parties.

Five Outcomes

A first way of making use of this diagram, is to place the two main contradicting goals as perceived by the conflict party at the positions either and or. Then the conflict parties are placed along the diagram relative to the five possible outcomes. In general, most conflict parties fall somewhere on a line between the two either/or positions. This line is the one along which traditional approaches to negotiations seek to move the actors, with the goal being some form of compromise in the middle. Except for the point of compromise, when moving along this line between the goals, there is a constant power-asymmetry in the possible outcomes. It is a competitive process, and the dynamics of competition leads to a bad compromise, since each side must give in on some points, yet tries to hold on to as much of their original goals as possible.

The diagonal between the neither/nor position and the transcend position, also going through the compromise point, is what we refer to as the “peace diagonal.” Even if the outcome of the process is a compromise, a negotiation running along this line is a more

peaceful one, as it does not arise out of competition, but out of a dialogue, and with symmetry. What one party has, so does the other.

By placing the conflict parties within the diagram, it is possible to identify which actors are already at a point where they are not satisfied with the stated goals of either major conflict party. Such a conflict actor will often fall somewhere close to the neither/nor point of the schema. As the Transcend process is one of changing the (inadequate) preexisting patterns, these conflict actors can play a key role as they are more amenable to finding creative solutions which would also take into account their goals and needs.

Furthermore, the application of this framework to the conflict is the first step in putting forward the idea that there are more options out there than win-lose or compromise, that there is a possibility that the needs of all can be satisfied, through a creative solution.

Step Two: Understanding the assumptions, attitudes and how they interact with contradictions and the goals

Step two is primarily one of self-reflection for the conflict party. It focuses on the past, looking to identify both what happened, as well as what failed to happen, leading to the present situation. When a conflict party does not see any hope in the present, then it is useful to look into the past, and see what could have been done then to make the situation better. The process of analyzing the past is an anamnestic one, a reflection aimed at remembering, and to a certain extent, reliving what has happened before. It is a form of therapy for the past. The guiding question of step two is "How did the conflict occur?"

The aim is to develop an understanding of how the assumptions and attitudes of the conflict parties affect their goals. The assumptions are used to justify the goals. However, since they are not as visible, they are often not discussed, but taken as self-evident "truths." In the case of Sri Lanka, the Tamil Tigers assume that the rights of Tamils in a predominantly Sinhalese state will never be guaranteed. Their goal of Tamil Eelam- an independent Tamil state- arises from this assumption.

During this step, the assumptions, and the resulting goals and strategies, are examined. It is important to bring up also the strategies used by the conflict parties. Since the conflict is ongoing, it is clear that the strategies have not sufficed. Usually these strategies are violent, and it is a good opportunity for the conflict party to reflect on how well violence has served their needs.

Within a dialogue, non-violence as an alternative should be explored as a strategy. Often the response is that this was tried and failed. Yet in almost every case, the nonviolent period of the conflict is relatively short compared to the violent struggle which followed, and the nonviolent strategies from the time were not adequately developed or pursued. One example of a deeper assumption on the deep culture level is the belief that violence offers better results than nonviolence, a kind of "presumption of the supremacy of violence," sometimes also rooted in the biblical metaphor of Armageddon.

When a violent strategy fails, it is generally taken to imply that more violence is needed, or that new violent strategies and weapons need to be developed. Failures in achieving a

goal through a nonviolent strategy are generally taken to imply that violence is needed. There is no thought of developing new nonviolent techniques or of perseverance. And the greatest irony is that when the conflict parties, exhausted and suffering, come to the negotiating table, it is violence that receives the credit for bringing them there. "See, with violence, we have at least come this far." Changing this assumption completely is a long and difficult process, however bringing up the issue is already an important step.

To strengthen the idea that there are alternatives to violence and to the current situation, looking back to how conflicts were dealt with in the past can offer an insight into alternatives which have worked in a concrete way. This brings out the positive experiences which may help guide and bring hope to the ongoing process.

To look into what has happened, and to begin the process of reevaluating assumptions is something very emotional for participants. It is important not to avoid these emotions, and it is important to acknowledge these feelings. The therapy of the past begins here, but the entire process is an ongoing one.

Phase II: Differentiating "just/legitimate" from "unjust/illegitimate" goals

The process-oriented aim of phase two is to create "analytical empathy" within the conflict party for the other conflict parties, to create the understanding, that the conflict only can be transformed if basic human needs for all are fulfilled. The structure-oriented goal is to give the conflict parties the possibility to reflect upon the unconscious dimensions of the conflict and to prepare the ground for formulating new legitimate goals, assumptions and attitudes.

An indicator of whether this aim has been achieved is whether the conflict party can identify what is illegitimate within their own goals and what is legitimate within the goals of the others.

Step Three: Exploring unconscious assumptions & attitudes and unconscious contradictions & goals

The third step goes into a deeper understanding of what the conflict is "really about," by examining the deeper contradictions, the assumptions and attitudes, and the interests of the conflict parties. The idea is to gain insight into the historical development of the conflict, the structural and cultural context, as well as the unconscious obstacles and resources to peace which exist in the collective unconscious. This is an analysis of the past, of what happened, what could have happened, and why things happened. The conflict trainer/worker accompanies the conflict parties in this exploration of the deeper dimensions of the conflict. One guiding question is "What are the structural and cultural obstacles and resources?"

After this process, the conflict trainer/worker should have a basic idea of the deep culture and deep structures of the conflict formation in question. For example in the analysis of ethno-nationalistic deep cultures, it is important to look at the national anthems, street names, national myths, literature, sagas, music, statues, specific proverbs, and other similar carriers of the deep culture and to reflect with the conflict party about the meanings that are coming with these symbols. It is also important, at

this stage to reflect on collective trauma and glory and how this influences the conflict constellation on the surface. It might be also useful to start reflection on religious and cultural values and frameworks and how these influence the way how we interpret the reality.

The deep structure can be observed by looking at what the major societal fault-lines are, and which groups are favored over others. The conflict trainer/worker is there to help identify those aspects of the society which have sunk into the unconscious, and make the conflict parties aware of those deeper elements.

This process of deep dialogue cannot be done overnight. Identifying and recognizing the recurring themes and patterns which are deeply ingrained in the society and culture requires continuous attention and numerous discussions. This process is perhaps the most difficult one of a conflict transformation process because it requires conflict parties to dig deep unto their past and collective unconscious, and to find what is constructive as well as what is destructive and therefore needs to change. Again, this is not something which can be achieved by a few people over a few discussions. For meaningful change in the deep structure and culture of a society to occur, the discussions must take place throughout the society over an extended period of time. As with the conflict transformation process in general, one cannot expect for this entire process to be completed in a short time. It is simply important for this process to start, making the conflict parties aware that there are deeper dimensions to the current situation, and to understand that they are influenced by the deeper level and therefore need to understand it better.

Having, to the extent possible, recovered the deeper underlying elements of the conflict from the level of the collective unconscious, the conflict parties can then proceed to examine how the deeper levels have influenced the progression of the conflict at the surface level, especially the attitudes, assumptions and goals.

Step Four: The analysis of basic needs constellations and fixations

Step four moves again from an analysis of the past to one of the future, posing the questions of what the situation will be like if the basic human needs will not be satisfied in the longer run (negative scenario), and what needs to be changed in order to ensure the basic needs of all conflict parties on the basis of structural symmetry and intercultural learning (positive scenario).

When the conflict parties bring up one of their positions, the conflict trainer/worker's role is to place those positions within the context of the social and cultural interests and more deeply on the individual basic human needs which are not being fulfilled. If a group is not allowed to use their language in their interaction with their government or in the educational system, then it is their need for cultural identity that is not being addressed, and the conflict trainer/worker should point this out. Awareness of how the denial of basic needs on the deeper level emerge as particular grievances on the surface level, and the connection between the two levels, needs to be raised.

Basic human needs are nonnegotiable. Therefore, it is one of the tasks of the conflict worker/trainer to create an environment which allows the conflict parties to become

aware of their basic human needs and the behaviors, strategies, fixations or pathologies linked to their needs. This is done through dialogue, but also through non-cognitive methods like sociodrama, systemic constellation work, and large group psychology. Differentiating between actors and their goals and strategies, conflict trainer/worker is all-partial towards the actors, but undertakes a value-centered, dialogue-based exploration of their goals and strategies. Goals and strategies that violate basic human needs are not legitimate, and this must be clearly communicated to the conflict parties. Goals that need to be achieved in order to make the fulfillment of basic human needs possible need to be supported. The conflict trainer/worker, neither neutral nor all-partial, needs to take the side of basic needs, simultaneously challenging and supporting a conflict party depending on the compatibility of the party's strategies and goals with the respect of the basic human needs of the others.

If this principle is clearly communicated to the conflict parties and at the same time, through dialogue, the concept of basic human needs within the specific cultural and social context is constantly re-evaluated, then conflict parties are willing to accept this frame of reference. It has been our experience that conflict parties find this concept more understandable than all-partiality or impartiality, which goes counter to their very partial viewpoints. The fulfillment of basic human needs for all as frame of reference guarantees the transparency of the conflict trainer/worker. It also minimizes the risk of unconsciously referring to one's own cultural values.

The concept of basic human needs is used to differentiate the legitimate goals from the illegitimate ones. The litmus test is whether a goal prevents the attainment of the basic needs of the individuals from another conflict party. The conflict parties need to examine which particular basic needs they are focused on, and also which basic needs they may be neglecting in order to maintain that focus. As well, the basic needs of the other conflict parties need to be explored, putting the one conflict party into the position of their antagonists which leads to an increase in the understanding of the other as well as empathy. Often, the preprogrammed responses to the perceived goals of other conflict parties make it difficult for this process to take place, and the work of the conflict trainer/worker is to develop the capacity for empathy.

One method is to ask the participating conflict party to go through a role reversal and argue the position of the other side, expressing the basic needs of the other side. A second important reason for such an activity is that the understanding at that moment which one conflict party has of the other is expressed clearly. This gives not only the conflict trainer/worker a clearer understanding of how one conflict party perceives the other, but also improves the conflict party's understanding of their own perceptions. However, care must be taken when engaging participants in such a role reversal. It is only possible under certain conditions, when the setting is safe, trust exists, care is taken to not (re)traumatized the participants.

Phase III: Integrating the legitimate goals with an overarching formula

Once the conflict party is able to empathically perceive its adversaries, it is ready to think about possible solutions. The conflict party should to this point perceive the situation no longer as a destructive conflict, but as a common, challenging problem that

needs to be addressed. The process-oriented aim of phase three is to evoke spontaneity and creativity within the conflict party, so that an overarching vision, strategy and formula (which are the solution-oriented aims) can be found.

Step Five: The construction of new attitudes, new assumptions and goals

Step five is the integration of the legitimate goals of all conflict parties into an overarching framework, through each conflict party alone, without the presence of the others, in order to prepare them for future negotiations or mediations. There is a return to the five outcomes with the focus on finding transcending solutions to the problem, finding the structure for peace which enables the attainment of wellbeing, freedom, identity and survival for all. The conflict trainer/worker together with the conflict parties continue the process of examining the deep dimensions, but with more of an emphasis on the positive aspects which can be used in transforming the conflict. The solution must reflect the positive deep behaviors, cultures and structures of the conflict parties. Doing so ensures that the new peace culture, structure and praxis will be legitimate in the eyes of the conflict parties and will have the benefit of deep roots within the society.

Using the diagram of the five possible outcomes, the “either” and “or” points are relabeled with the newly elaborated legitimate goals of the conflict parties. The parties should then undergo a brainstorming process of coming out with possible solutions which address the legitimate basic needs of all parties. In this creative process, some of the best ideas are those which may sound impossible at first. This is generally a good sign, because such a reaction is typical when someone is faced with a completely new idea, different from those which have been discussed before. Time needs to be given in order to allow this new idea to be assimilated. Conflict trainers/workers are also there to help elaborate proposals and ideas without, however trying to impose those ideas. Rather, these proposals should serve as examples of the kind of creative thinking necessary for the conflict transformation process.

New structures, culture and strategies for peace and the overarching formula should fall along the peace diagonal, with a creative integration of aspects of neither/nor, compromise and transcendence. Working along this peace diagonal ensures that the new structures fulfill the requirements of equity and reciprocity necessary for a just peace through a cooperative process. The elaboration of solutions according to these principles engages the conflict parties to develop a common vision of the future. It is a therapy of the future. And it is at this point that the conflict parties are truly ready for the round table, for honest negotiations because they are internally prepared to do so, rather than being externally coerced.

Step Six: Creating new behaviors, an action plan for the present

The process returns full circle to the issues of the present, but now focused on the therapeutic elaboration of the actions necessary in order to transform the conflict. This is done in the light of the deeper understanding of the conflict and of the alternatives developed in order to address the inequities of the past and present. The most important thing about step six is the creation of a new reality, a reality in which there is a palpable change in the relationship and a transcendence of the conflict. With a conflict party,

having reached this point in the conflict transformation process, the action plan can be to bring forward this new vision to the other conflict parties, to share with them this new vision. The sixth step is also the first step to (re)conciliation. Any agreement, no matter how just or creative, must be accompanied by a process of (re)conciliation, transforming the relationships, structures and cultures, and establishing a permanent dialogue between all communities and segments of the society in order to ensure that peace will have the deep roots it requires in order to thrive.

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