New Thoughts on Power: Closing the Gaps between Theory and Action

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1.
Introduction

Much has been thought and written in recent years about the impact of conflict transformation work on "conflict writ large". We have been confronted with the limitations of our power for good and are struggling to find ways to overcome them: by increasing the scale of our work, for instance, or improving our "theories of change" and consequent strategies. Major efforts have been made to develop theory about how things really work, and to do so on the basis of practice as well as study.[1] All this is valuable. Yet it is localised fire-fighting that does not address the cause of the widespread and seemingly unstoppable outbreak of fires. I am convinced that if we are to make a substantial difference to conflict writ large we must pay more attention to conflict writ much larger: that is, to the global phenomenon of militarism and the model of power from which it arises. This in turn will require us to strengthen our own practice.

I am an activist, as well as a professional practitioner and theoretician. From this combined perspective, in this essay I go beyond reflection on the state of the art of conflict transformation to a broader reflection on power as exercised within the world at large. I begin with a section of analysis of radically different approaches to power and their manifestations. In the next section I consider how to strengthen the power of conflict transformation at the local and national level. And in the penultimate section I discuss the global transformation of conflict and power, ending with a set of challenges for the future. The nature and impact of violent and nonviolent power, and the need to address or transcend power asymmetries, are constant themes. Another is comparison between the power of nonviolence and that of militarism. I argue that if we are to achieve our goals we need to choose between them.

2.
An Analysis of Power

2.1
Two Approaches to Power: Domination and Cooperation

As Riane Eisler (1990) argues, hierarchical systems are based on the principle of domination, as against cooperation. These two principles of power are present (or potentially so) in all power relations, including gender relations (Francis 2004a; Cockburn 2007; Weiss 2004). I believe they are founded in two radically different world views that inform all human relationships and are

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1   Extensive programmes to this aim are run, for example, by CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (see www.cdainc.com/cdawww/publication.php) and the Applied Conflict Transformation initiative of Responding to Conflict (see www.respond.org/pages/acts).

profoundly relevant to our consideration of conflict: its motivations, the ways in which it is conducted and our responses to it.

On the one hand there is a view of life that is based on the notion of a contest for survival – 'eat or be eaten'; on the other there is an orientation that is grounded in a deep sense of interdependence (Francis 2010, 73). The former world view frames life's goals in terms of one's own success, with a clear distinction between 'us' on the one hand and 'them' on the other. This view drives the quest for domination, "power over". It seeks and exploits asymmetries of power. The world view based on interdependence is orientated towards general wellbeing. It promotes an inclusive and cooperative attitude to relationships in which power is 'pooled' and becomes "power with", so that the question of symmetry or asymmetry is transcended.

To set out this dichotomy is not to say that any one of us is only and always guided by one of these two orientations: rather that people and systems usually tend more to one than the other and that in given circumstances there is a fundamental choice to be made, both morally and practically, over which is to be preferred and prioritised. For example, in 'modern' societies the domination model produces adversarial systems for legal justice and politics. But there are also contexts in which justice is sought through community processes and public affairs that are participatory and consensual.

It is often assumed that war, which epitomises the dominatory approach to relationships, is an institution that goes back to the earliest days of humankind, but that is not so. There is a long history of warless societies (Kelly 2000). Anthropologist Brian Ferguson (2003), reviewing a vast body of evidence, concludes that war, as a relatively recent phenomenon in the evolution of our species, can be associated with the development of larger and more bounded human groupings and hierarchical social patterns. Patriarchy is, as its name indicates, a hierarchical system. It underlies and is interwoven with other hierarchies, both social and political. The association between war and masculinity is a profound influence for the glorification of war. By the same token, creating different concepts of strength and power and different symbols of them can transform our understanding of both gender and war. (For a fuller discussion of the relationship between gender and power in conflict transformation, see my contribution to the first Berghof Handbook (Francis 2004b), or that of Cilja Harders in this volume.)

2.2
Power to Transform Conflict and Build Peace

Conflict transformation and "true peacebuilding" (Francis 2010, 75) are founded in the "interdependence approach" to life. Given that no path in human relationships is smooth or uncomplicated, and that even the legitimate needs of one group can compete with those of another, conflict is inevitable. The model of power that is implicit in conflict transformation is cooperative. This is reflected in its processes and in its goal, which is the good of all – not the victory of some at the expense of others. For conflict to be resolved, its parties must work together to find ways in which the needs of all can be satisfied so that the conflict itself is transformed or transcended (though "satisfaction" must be understood as a relative rather than

absolute term, since no human needs are ever fully satisfied; see Francis 2010, 46). It is the very interdependence of the parties that enables them to prevent each others' needs from being met and so to trigger active conflict. Resolving that conflict together transforms a relationship of mutual damage into one of mutual cooperation.

The processes and goals of conflict transformation reflect its fundamental values, which also place it firmly on the interdependence side of the equation. The values in question are those of respect for persons and their needs, expressed in parity of esteem and constructive, nonviolent processes. Armed violence is contrary to the basic needs of those it is aimed at and is therefore incompatible with the common good, even when it is seen to serve the greed of some or address the grievances of others (Berdal/Malone 2000).

The 'peace' to which 'dominators' aspire is stable hegemony: power and prosperity for 'one's own' (whether that be family, clan, company or nation). The wellbeing of others, when it comes into the picture, does so very much as a function of the desire for good reputation and acknowledged status. Conflict is a disturbance to the status quo and therefore should be kept under control. The means of coercion must remain in one's own hands. The planet is a resource to be exploited and, if necessary, fought over.

Within the conflict transformation framework, the goal of peacebuilding must be a society, whether global or local, that is characterised by inclusive, just relationships, mutual care, and shared responsibility and power. In such a society, conflicts, in themselves inevitable, will be approached and handled constructively. Institutions will be created for this purpose and a constructive conflict culture will be established. Political and economic equity of participation will ensure that conflict does not become toxic or explosive. This has long been the vision of conflict transformation. In addition, it is becoming increasingly evident and urgent that the principles of respect and care that characterise positive peace must be applied to all our dealings and every aspect of life on our planet, since it is the sphere, both literally and metaphorically, of our interdependence.

Both the value of inclusiveness and the need for efficacy in conflict transformation require participation at every level of society, in order to create a peace process (and consequently a peace) that is grounded in shared power and will work to meet the needs of all. Democracy, meaning active participation in the power and responsibility for public affairs, is both a key element in positive peace and the means for its achievement. Power at the top needs to be upheld and guided by power from below.

3.
Building Power to Transform Conflict

3.1
Successes, Limitations and Dilemmas

As I suggested in the introduction, there is currently much agonising going on about the impact of conflict transformation. Fortunately we have experienced successes, of all kinds and at many levels. We know that life can be transformed when people put the principles of conflict transformation into practice, whether the change is local and immediate or slower and more far-reaching [see also Louis Kriesberg in this volume]. We know that even when there is apparent failure or reversal of progress, changes within individuals and communities can prepare them for new action in the unfolding situation and that they have become resources for peace.

Yet at the same time we have to acknowledge that some of the big conflicts into which we have put great effort over many years (in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for instance) have not been transformed. In some cases they have appeared to recede but erupted again. In others, violent conflict that has continued for decades, despite many sustained efforts to end it, has at last been 'resolved' (as in Sri Lanka) with the crushing of one side by another in a final onslaught of violence. The dynamics of war, in which killing creates ever-greater hatred and resistance; the ready supply of weapons in a world where death is big business; the driving desire for victory (or continued fighting; see Kaldor 2010) rather than accommodation – all these make violent conflict exceedingly hard to transform and all too easy to revert to.

Global and regional interests are liable to cut across all our efforts. In Sri Lanka the rising power and interests of China had an impact, through its supply of weapons to the Colombo government. In the former Soviet state of Georgia, the USA's support for a West-leaning leader led him to believe he could take on Russia in a violent attempt to assert control in South Ossetia, triggering Russia's violent response. In the wake of the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and under acute pressure and intervention from the USA to crack down on militants within its borders, Pakistan has been torn apart by terrorist attacks and fighting between insurgents and government forces. In the Middle East, because of US interests in the region, Israel has the military power to continue its occupation of the West Bank and its isolation of Gaza. And this seemingly endless violent conflict in turn blocks efforts to build peace and democracy in the region.

Even bellicose governments may favour attempts to prevent or resolve violent conflict elsewhere, when doing so coincides with what they perceive to be their nation's interests. The goal in such cases is to 'pacify' or stabilise the situation and avoid disruption rather than looking further to positive peace. The notion of peacebuilding has been further co-opted into the pacification agenda (Francis 2010, 72) by being focused on the mopping-up operations and 'nation-building' that are meant to complete the business of hegemonic wars.

The view of some governments that civilian peacebuilding can be regarded as an adjunct to a military offensive, presents a dilemma for conflict transformation practitioners. It is clear that

educating politicians is an important aspect of transformative work. Once a war has taken place a disaster has been created that cries out for remedy and, for everybody's sake, chaos needs to give way to system. It would be tragic if conflict transformation were co-opted into this model of 'peacebuilding'. But at present even the most ambitious and concerted projects to address violent conflicts seem puny in relation to their scale, the depth and complexity of their dynamics, and the intensity of the animosities and ambitions we hope to transform.

And while peace workers struggle to have the impact they long for, increasing amounts of resources are being dedicated to logical frameworks and monitoring and evaluation. Constant reflection is needed on the rationale for projects and programmes and on the quality of their implementation [see also Cheyanne Scharbatke-Church in this volume]; but in such volatile and complex situations, outcomes can never be guaranteed, beyond the most immediate, and impact will rarely be clearly traceable or attributable.

T.S. Eliot's wise injunction was to "… take no thought of the harvest, / But only of proper sowing".[2] Proper sowing presupposes a sound understanding and careful consideration of what will be proper in a given context. To maximise the chances that work set in train will flourish, detailed contextual information is needed, along with sound analysis, a well-grounded and apposite theory of change, specific, realistic goals, and the best possible quality of implementation. But that is as far as peace workers' control extends. They must recognise that outcomes will depend on complex and, therefore, unpredictable dynamics within the wider context, in which the values of conflict transformation are unlikely to be dominant.

Here, as elsewhere, I refer to Johan Galtung's (1990, 292) definition of violence ("avoidable insults to basic human needs") and his positing of three different manifestations of it: direct, structural and cultural. As I have suggested, I believe that while the structures and culture of global militarism (which constitute the context for all violent conflict) remain unchanged, attempts to address specific conflicts directly, while still necessary, will be unlikely to succeed to a degree that matches peacebuilders' aspirations. If attempts to prevent violence and transform conflict are to be more effective in specific situations, more attention will need to be focused on the global phenomenon of militarism.

The dilemma is that while that phenomenon persists, within the prevailing model of power as domination, it is necessary to cope with domination's effects. How is that to be done without responding in kind and thereby replicating and reinforcing that which we wish to change? Unless we can address more seriously the interface between the two power paradigms, finding constructive ways of responding to aggressive and controlling behaviours that are contrary to peace, we shall not be able to change the culture and practices of pacification.

I believe that an urgent and concerted focus is needed from our field on two things that have thus far been neglected. One is identifying and building the power of nonviolence, as a means to address oppressive power relations and actual or threatened violence. The other is exposing and transforming the global culture and systems of war and establishing those of peace. These two are interlinked, in that it is not possible to build the power of nonviolence without building belief in it. Habitual reliance on armed violence and trust in its efficacy discourage such belief.

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2   In his poem, *The Rock.*

3.2
Challenging Belief in the Power of Armed Conflict

Armies are widely seen as the proper and effective means of addressing violence: resisting invasion, quelling intercommunal violence or insurrection, protecting the vulnerable against arbitrary attack and removing tyrants. But the realities of war (or armed counter-insurgency) do not match the myth of its efficacy. Though it can prevent people from doing things by killing or injuring them and persuade them through fear to do things they would not wish to do, violence cannot compel them to do something they choose not to do. Nor can it make them think differently. It cannot, therefore, be transformative of the actors in a conflict. Often it fails to prevent or crush the violence of others, only adding to it. Indeed, violent attempts to counter violence often provide the context in which atrocities happen.

Wars not only involve massive losses on both sides: they continue as long as the protagonists choose to fight or until one side is annihilated. Even when one side appears to be victorious, a deadly remnant of opposition often remains and regroups. Sometimes wars are ended politically, when they have reached a 'mutually hurting stalemate' or the good offices of outsiders help broker a deal. But in whatever way they end or continue, it is at a terrible price. Even when there are 'winners', all are losers.[3]

The pacification approach to conflict tends to confuse peace with security. And this is not human security that comes from the assured availability of all the things that human beings need in order to survive and flourish – food, water, shelter, dignity, laughter, freedom of expression and the chance to share in power and responsibility. This is the very specific and limited security of being safe from violence and the assumption is usually that it will be provided by some form of armed violence.

Safety from violence is of course a vital human need, but making it the only or central focus of efforts for security is counter-productive, even in its own terms. Trying to achieve it by threatening or carrying out more violence is liable to perpetuate and intensify the dynamic of violence. At the same time, the attention and resources are focused overwhelmingly on military capabilities of different kinds and there is a failure to address the misery and resentment that often provide the trigger for violence, or to support the education and other transformative work that could channel energies in constructive directions. In circumstances where war results or continues, misery and hatred are usually compounded.

In recent years the belief in the power of arms or armed systems to bring safety has been all too well illustrated by the 'war on terror'. It springs from the idea that survival needs trump all others; but the complexity of human motivations is not fully represented in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943). We have daily evidence that many would die for a cause or die for comrades and that suicide bombers are encouraged, not deterred, by wars supposedly designed to make

3   Projects looking into the cost to all sides of recent wars are the Human Cost of War Project on Iraq at MIT's Center for International Studies, at http://web.mit.edu/humancostiraq/; Oxfam's The Cost of War: Afghan Experiences of Conflict (1978-2009) study at www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences, and the International Committee of the Red Cross' *Summary Report* on Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Haiti, Lebanon, Liberia and the Philippines at www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteengo.nsf/htmlall/research-report-240609/$File/Summary-Report.pdf.

others safe from them. Whether in war or civilian life, in a great variety of situations, people are willing to risk their lives for the sake of others. This willingness is a source of power that may be used for violent *and nonviolent* struggle alike.

3.3
Developing Nonviolent Power for Peace[4]

Nothing can guarantee to secure the safety of all people in every circumstance. Human beings, even in the most favourable circumstances that good will and good fortune can provide, will always be vulnerable: to disease, accident, natural disaster and each other. The best we can hope for is to create relative safety for each other and to find meaning and happiness in the lives we have. Our chances of doing so are likely to be maximised by adherence to the simple moral principle of kindness: treating fellow human beings on the basis of kinship, that is as people like ourselves. Nonviolence gives us the option of replacing the morally corrosive and practically ineffectual power of violence with another kind of power, in seeking to address unkindness and cruelty when they occur.

The work that we do to transform violence by nonviolent means in specific conflicts, already important in itself, will also contribute to the wider goal of displacing war as a means to meet human needs. Gandhi (1945) argued that any nonviolent campaign should be accompanied by a "constructive programme", in which a campaign's goals are lived out in the present, albeit on a small scale, demonstrating their actuality and promise. Our much needed, if currently limited, conflict transformation work is the constructive programme for coexistence and the nonviolent conduct of conflict. It can inspire new thinking and behaviour. Even the small scale work of conflict transformers can be breathtakingly impressive and capture the imagination of those who learn about it (as all those of us who have seen the Wajir video will know).[5] And from these brave and transformative experiments we are able to build our knowledge of what works for nonviolent change. That will differ from one circumstance to another, so I will arrange my discussion of nonviolent power under a series of different headings.

3.3.1 Deterring and Resisting Invasion
Deterring and resisting invasion are nowhere near the current repertoire of conflict transformation but have traditionally constituted the most immediate and universal goal of war-preparedness. I have chosen them for my first heading because they are fundamental to the justification of militarism and therefore cannot be left out of the equation.

Here as elsewhere, the reputation of militarism is inflated and relative power is, as ever, a key factor. Where military power is asymmetrical it will be difficult for a weaker country to prevent invasion by a stronger one (though as we have seen all too recently, this does not mean

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4   See also Véronique Dudouet in this volume.
5   See www.respond.org/ for this remarkable film of practical peacebuilding by women, tribal leaders and young people in Northern Kenya.

that the invaders will be able to quell ongoing resistance). The desire for military equality or ascendancy drives the arms race among the big military powers and persuades poor countries to spend money on arms to the detriment of social and economic development.

World War II is often cited as the one that above all others 'proves' war to be an essential force for good. But it is hard to view as good outcomes the Holocaust (carried out during that war), the shattering of nation upon nation, the killing of an estimated 50 million people, the beginning of the Cold War, and the start of the nuclear arms race. Furthermore, Hitler could have won. Victory and defeat in war have military (or accidental) causes, not moral ones.

If we apply the principles of 'conflict prevention' to World War II, we see that if the terms on which the First World War was ended had been designed to allow for Germany's reconstruction and to bring it back into the fold, rather than humiliating it and reducing it to a state of extreme impoverishment, it is unlikely that Hitler would have come to power in the first place. Had his rise been resisted by a popular movement, backed by international solidarity, it could still have been prevented. At any point he could have been resisted and removed in Germany by the kind of people power that brought down the Soviet empire. Despite the brave resistance of the few, that kind of power was not mobilised.

Nonviolence and appeasement have nothing to do with each other. Nonviolence is assertiveness, not collusion: standing up for good in the face of those who would deny it. We do not yet take civilian-based defence seriously enough as a system to deter invasion and resist occupation, but the idea of civilian-based defence has been well elaborated (e.g. Sharp with Jenkins 1990; Randle 1994), and elements of it were practised during the Second World War (Haestrup 1978; Sémelin 1993; Ackerman/Duvall 2000, chapter 5; Sharp 2005, chapters 9 & 10). However far away it seems from the current military view of things, a well developed capacity for civilian resistance would be cheaper than military preparations, less provocative of pre-emptive attack, more humane, and more productive of peace and wellbeing for all concerned. Nonviolent defence is based on the forms of collective action that have been used to expand and defend democracy, while war is its antithesis. One of the greatest strengths of nonviolence is that it is based on personal responsibility exercised for the common good.

In civilian defence, if their country is invaded the people will respond in a variety of ways to disempower the invaders, who will be incapable of running the country unless its citizens report for work as usual and hand over vital information. Careful preparation for such a scenario and wide commitment to collective non-cooperation will render a country so inhospitable and unmanageable that controlling it will be impossible. The people will ignore or disobey direct orders and organise concerted activities that contravene them, whether in spirit or to the letter. They will have chosen in advance what areas of production will continue in order to meet the immediate needs of the people. They will weaken the will of their occupiers to carry out any hostile duties, either by eroding the 'us–them' divide by friendly behaviour or by isolating the occupiers and demoralising them. (I confess I am idealist enough to prefer the former option.) Given thorough, well-publicised preparedness, a system of civilian defence involving the populace at large is likely to deter aggression in much the same way that an army might. Moreover, such a

deterrent system, being patently non-aggressive, will not stand in the way of the most powerful guarantee of all against invasion, which is the creation of positive relationships in the spirit of true conflict prevention and an understanding that violence will never be used to 'resolve' conflicts that do arise.

Where a country relied on such a system, it is reasonable to envisage solidarity from resisters on the side of any potential invader. There are war resisters in almost every country on earth who would already refuse orders and could form the nucleus of a movement for resistance to military action, in parallel with the development of civilian defence systems.

Sometimes soldiers' participation in war may have resulted from kidnap or some other form of coercion. They are war's victims as well as its perpetrators and many would walk away from war if they could. Helping people to resist conscription is important work and deserves far greater attention.[6] When fighting is underway, though in theory they can refuse orders, lay down their arms and go home, in practice it is very difficult – or lethal – for them to do so. However, faced with mobilised and disciplined nonviolence they may find it very difficult to carry out orders.

3.3.2 Nonviolent Responses to Intercommunal Violence and Civil War

By "intercommunal violence" I mean violent episodes between different categories of people in a society. Violent action by the state to quell such violence is likely to add to the death toll and intensify the dynamic and 'normality' of violence, thus setting the scene for future outbreaks.

The first step in a nonviolent response is refusal to participate. This alone can take great courage since, at times of social and political polarisation, "those who are not with us are against us". Civilians can also take a public stand as whistle-blowers, speaking out against incipient violence. Going further and offering protection to people under attack takes even more bravery, but it happens (as it did for instance in Nazi Germany, in Idi Amin's Uganda and in different parts of the former Yugoslavia during the wars of dissolution there) when citizens offer safe haven in their own homes or intervene in the midst of violence to stop it or organise a protective or monitoring presence.

Citizens can witness to their belief in nonviolence and human rights, individually and in coordination with others, acting as catalysts to change the public mood. They can mobilise a "peace constituency": visible and vocal public support for an end to violence and the peaceful resolution of conflict. This happened in Orissa, India, where in response to an outbreak of intercommunal violence in late August 2008 a Peacemakers Campaign was mobilised to enlist the support of millions of people, regardless of caste, creed, colour, religion, age or sex, committed to fostering love, peace and nonviolence in their society. In addition, twelve NGOs came together to make collective plans for future work to address the underlying causes of the conflict.

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6   Here we should honour the work of War Resisters International, see www.wri-irg.org. See also Clark et al. 2009.

Nonviolent activists can also become bridge-builders and peace brokers, helping to establish dialogue where communication has broken down and sometimes working with external actors in international efforts to end violence and resolve conflict. This happened in Kenya, where Concerned Citizens for Peace was launched within a day of the outbreak of post-election violence in 2007/8. Under this umbrella the country's peacebuilding community worked intensively to save their country from descent into chaos and hosted the official mediation process of the UN Secretary-General (Wachira with Arendshorst/Charles 2010).

To prevent new outbreaks of violence in the future, citizen activists can create local peace committees – like those established in South Africa in the transition from apartheid – as a vehicle for early intervention when conflicts arise to enable constructive exchange and address underlying tensions. If resolution of conflict is to be achieved where a community under attack is relatively weak, it will need the nonviolent solidarity of people from other communities to address that vulnerability and support them in negotiations.

All of these activities are open to people of any age or status, male or female, being independent of physical strength or access to weapons. Indeed, in violent circumstances, being perceived as unthreatening may well be an advantage, both for gaining the trust of others and being less likely to 'provoke' attack. Women are sometimes able to act as intermediaries or to protest in circumstances where it would be almost impossible for men to do so. In Naga society for instance, women have played such roles repeatedly and to great effect.[7] While it is frustrating to women to be endlessly intervening in male clashes and violence against women is an all too frequent manifestation of war's violence, the assignment to women of peacemaking roles coincides with a key insight of nonviolence: that vulnerability can touch and disarm.

In civil war (or lower level intercommunal violence that involves the state), one 'community', whether defined in terms of ethnic, tribal or religious identity or political ideology, is challenging the power of the state. The challengers are likely to start from a position of relative weakness but aim to build their power, in part at least by military means.

Whatever their views of the relative merits of the warring sides, people who are committed to nonviolence will not be involved in fighting, though in some circumstances they may share a common cause with the 'freedom fighters'. This was the case in the early days of 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland, and in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. Later, as in both of these cases, nonviolent activists may act as intermediaries at the political level or as bridge-builders between communities; and they may mobilise a peace constituency to press both or all sides to negotiate an end to the violence – for instance through public demonstrations and political lobbying. As with other forms of intercommunal conflict, there are also more extraordinary acts of personal bravery in situations of 'live' violence, where individuals go into the thick of things to try to change the violent dynamic and bring it to a halt.

7   See www.indiatogether.org/2005/nov/pce-nagaland.htm.

3.3.3 "Responsibility to Protect" – Preventing and Confronting Extreme Violence

Another set of circumstances relates to extreme onslaughts of one-sided violence, in whatever context. In essence, we are talking here of extreme cases of the intercommunal violence and civil conflict already discussed and the protective responses that can be taken. The concept of the "responsibility to protect" has been much debated.[8] Recent argument has taken us back to the notion of prevention (Moix/Keck 2008), which is self-evidently the most desirable form of protection. However, where such episodes occur, the fact that they would have been better prevented cannot release those who have the power to stop them from doing so.

What form is that power to take? Again, armed intervention will add to the violence and may not end it. Shooting into crowds may disperse them but it also kills people, and does so in a random way. And in situations of widespread and persistent violence, where there is no peace to be kept, 'peacekeepers' either remain marginal (as in Darfur) or are liable to become embroiled in the violence. This has happened with the UN peacekeeping mission in DRC, where, in the East, it has found itself supporting the national army against the Rwandan Hutu rebels of the *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR) and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army. The humanitarian situation "remains of deep concern".[9] Moreover, UN troops have themselves, among "numerous military factions", been involved in the massive incidence of rapes against women, which have been used as "a means of intimidating local populations".[10]

Soldiers may be used to police a cessation in violence once it has been achieved, but then that policing could be undertaken by civilian personnel, with the nonviolent support of organised citizens. How can nonviolent protection be taken to the institutional level? One encouragement has been the growing deployment, whether by international or regional bodies, of civilian personnel to monitor and protect human rights (as OSCE monitors did to considerable effect in Kosovo, even at a fraction of their agreed numerical strength, before the NATO attacks). Civilian police have also been sent to assist the achievement of stability in other countries. Having people trained, in substantial numbers, for such service abroad, well resourced and ready to go, would give a real chance for serious experiments in nonviolent protection and peacekeeping.

In the meantime, pioneering work is being undertaken by NGOs such as Peace Brigades International[11] and Nonviolent Peaceforce.[12] The former was established to provide nonviolent accompaniment for people at risk, particularly those who are attempting to resist and challenge the violence that is going on around them. Nonviolent Peaceforce was formed more recently, with the goal of promoting the creation of a large-scale, international force of people who are trained and ready for peacekeeping duties in different parts of the world.[13]

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8   For an explanation of the concept see for instance www.responsibilitytoprotect.org and Pleydell 2006; Francis 2006.
9   See "UN Peacekeeping Mission under Review", 13 April 2010; at www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/central/UN-Peacekeeping-Mission-in-DRC-Under-Review-90776304.html.
10 See "Sexual Violence in Democratic Republic of Congo Exacerbates National AIDS Epidemic", 11 February 2010; at www.mediaglobal.org/article/2010-02-11/sexual-violence-in-democratic-republic-of-congo-exacerbates-national-aids-epidemic.
11 See www.peacebrigades.org.
12 See www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org.
13 At the time of writing it has teams in Sri Lanka and Mindanao in the Philippines and is seeking funds for a project in South Sudan.

These current efforts lack the scale necessary for greater efficacy in acute situations. As a consequence, they lack credibility as a model for the future displacement of the military. However, given the necessary resources and political backing, such organisations, and eventually national and international equivalents, could do much to address the vulnerability of populations and to protect civilians at times of crisis. In the meantime it will be important to support the continuation of current efforts and learn from them, as well as working with the military on how, progressively, to demilitarise their own peacekeeping work. They are often keen to learn how to deal with confrontation constructively and to advertise their role in doing so,[14] and this is one way to bring about change from within the current system.

3.3.4 Nonviolent Struggle Against Structural Violence and Tyranny

The factors that often give rise to overtly violent behaviour – discrimination, social and economic exclusion and political oppression – already constitute violence, in Galtung's sense of "insults to basic human needs". Such structural violence calls for action, both for its own sake and to prevent potential violent reaction to it. It cannot yet be 'resolved' because oppressive structures, often maintained by direct violence, constitute an asymmetry of power that puts conflict resolution on a distant horizon, since those in power feel no need to change.

Armed resistance, which can drag on for years, constitutes a new affliction for oppressed civilians, who are caught in the cross-fire between governments and rebels. And it is by nature an assault on the values that motivate liberation movements when they are driven by grievance rather than greed (Berdal/Malone 2000): war is brutalising and traumatic for all concerned. It also corrupts, so that the struggle for liberation may become a means of controlling or expanding fiefdoms, exerting power and gaining wealth.

If the "hidden" or "latent" conflict (Francis 2002, 49) of oppression or injustice is to be addressed and not to result in the greater suffering of chronic social violence, insurgency or civil war, nonviolent mobilisation will be needed to increase the relative power of those who are seeking change. They will need to build the numbers, determination and coordination necessary to confront the 'powers that be'. Their persuasive and inspirational powers will need to operate among their existing spheres of support and beyond, winning friends among the ranks of those who have opposed them (Francis 2002, 125). Solidarity – mutual support, practical and emotional, and a sense of interdependence – will be essential. They will need to prepare for the times when violence is likely to be used against them, considering their strategies for minimising provocation and seeking outreach, learning to confront their own fear and determining the length and limits of the risks they are willing to take. Their power will lie in their courageous exercise of autonomy, along with numbers, solidarity and persistence.

Nonviolent "people power" has been mobilised to enormous effect in recent decades, ending the dictatorship in the Philippines, the apartheid regime in South Africa[15] and, most astonishingly, the Soviet Empire. It is time that this knowledge changed our thinking about power and risk. It comes from the power and participation of populations, which can enable governments to work

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14 See for example *CCTS Review* no 32, October 2006, at www.c-r.org/ccts.
15 Despite the crushing of earlier nonviolent action in the time of Chief Albert Luthuli, it was the capacity of the African National Congress (ANC) and its followers in the townships to make the country ungovernable through a variety of forms of non-cooperation that eventually proved decisive.

or, when necessary, render them impotent. Like other forms of conflict transformation, it requires active engagement at all levels of social and political life. Power is power only if it is exercised.

The courage to face extreme danger, when that is what is required, like the bravery of soldiers under fire, defies the imagination. Yet such courage has been demonstrated in every age and place. It can be fuelled by hope and vision, and sometimes by desperation. Like other forms of power, to reach its full potential it requires preparation to consolidate and channel it. This can come through training, the sharing of fears and resources, the solidarity of others or inner processes to come to terms with possible outcomes. (Structures for organisation are both important and problematic in the creation of movements and require their own research.)

Maximising outreach to those who are likely to mete out violence, where that is possible, will tend to soften or deflect their response to nonviolent action. Though there are many instances in which protesters have been killed by government forces, "the risks of casualties resulting from nonviolent action also tend to be lower than those from actions involving violence" (Miller 2006, 64). As we have seen, being vulnerable and unthreatening can offer its own protection. The refusal of armies to attack unarmed compatriots often constitutes a turning point in nonviolent regime change. This could, for example, be observed in Serbia, precipitating Slobodan Milosevic's downfall in 2000. If "people power" can achieve so much in spite of the lack of resources devoted to it, whether in terms of training, organisational support or concerted solidarity, how much could it achieve if it were taken as seriously as war now is?

Like any other action of a confrontational kind, nonviolent insurrection can be crushed. The defeat may be temporary or lasting; but no power lasts forever and the memory of dramatic moments of courage and resistance will not be forgotten but remain an inspiration. The images of the resistance in Tiananmen Square are a rallying point for human rights activists to this day, both in China and elsewhere. The space in people's thinking that was opened by the street demonstrations led by Buddhist monks in Burma/Myanmar, in 2007, will not be completely closed, even though those demonstrations too were crushed. That such a regime was shaken was an achievement in itself and marked its vulnerability. And the public consciousness of the potential role of civil society was raised again by the fact that when a severe cyclone followed hard on the heels of the uprising and its defeat, it was civil society organisations that were most effective in offering help to desperate victims and their status in society was greatly enhanced.

While local action is crucial in overcoming tyranny and provides the foundation for peacebuilding, incentives and sanctions, as applied by external governments, can support it. One has to look carefully, though: while they are widely regarded as having played a positive role in ending apartheid in South Africa, in Saddam Hussein's Iraq they caused countless deaths among the very young, the sick and other vulnerable groups, and shored up tyranny rather than weakening it. Incentives have been found to be, on the whole, more effective than sanctions (Griffiths with Barnes 2008): less liable to create resistance and foster resentment, more likely to persuade and to encourage positive future relationships. If sanctions are to be used, it is important that they should be supportive of local activists whose goals are just, and that their effects will not constitute "avoidable insults to basic human needs".

3.4
Building an Integrated Approach to Power

As outlined above, the power to confront violence and injustice plays a key role in the type of action traditionally subsumed under the rubric of "nonviolent action": insisting on doing forbidden things, standing firm in the face of intimidation, refusing to obey orders. In this sense it can be seen as the 'hard power' equivalent in the repertoire of conflict transformation, at the interface with the dominating paradigm. At the same time it is, at its best, founded in respect for the other, a determination not to do harm and the constant will to enter into dialogue (Francis 2002, 45). Metaphorically speaking,[16] it holds up one hand, palm out, to say "Stop" while at the same time proffering the other as a sign of the will for friendship. This is crucial. When its function is to confront, nonviolent action can take on a macho flavour. The excitement and adrenalin of confrontation is seductive and liable to distort thought and action, contributing to the dynamics of aggression and increasing danger rather than transformative power.

I have long argued for the inclusion of nonviolent assertiveness in the repertoire of conflict transformation. Now I want to argue that the 'softer' skills of conflict transformation (particularly those associated with conflict resolution processes) have much to contribute to the exercise of nonviolent power. Empathy for others, for instance, even where there are grounds for anger and resentment, can identify their needs and so reveal openings in their psychological armour – not in order to wound but to reach the person behind the armour and so to touch and change them. Empathy can also encourage activists to reveal their own vulnerability and benefit from its power to reduce hostility and open others to their humanity and needs. In my experience of dialogue between opposing groups, I have seen the extraordinary energy for change that can be generated in such open encounters.

The skills of negotiation are sometimes assumed to be different from those of mediation, but they overlap in important ways [see also Ronald J. Fisher in this volume]. To have a 'feel' for what others need gives those who wish to negotiate with them the power to do so in a way that, by respecting them as fellow human beings, will maximise the chances of success. The power to offer something is as important as the power to make demands. To be an attentive and active listener is vital in either case, as is quiet, empathic assertiveness and the skill of saying difficult things in ways that are as easy as possible to hear. When we come to the business of public campaigns, with their slogans, placards, interviews and press releases, and even their acts of civil disobedience, gentleness and courtesy of demeanour will win more minds and hearts than shouting and insults ever will.

Equally important is the capacity to negotiate respectfully, realistically and yet with principle, and to resolve the conflicts that constantly arise, within one's own group as well as with others. This capacity is vital in building and sustaining movements for change, which is something we need to take far more seriously, helping to enable them to stay on track and maximise their impact. In an increasingly risk-averse climate, and with donors' needs and fears to take into

16 This is a metaphor I borrow from my colleague Shelley Anderson, who established the Women Peacemakers Programme of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

account, we need to think hard about how we can contribute to movement building. Movements are the key to transformation in many situations, providing, in the most energetic, focused and influential form, the "more people" so often talked about.[17]

Fundamental to the strength and coherence of movements are clearly agreed and articulated values and principles, and an ethos to match, with the power to cut through competing ideologies and create not only the intellectual framework but also the emotional experience of unified commitment. A common vision is even more uplifting, though harder to achieve: something to work towards and develop, if possible, in the movement process. Choosing a direction and setting an agenda for change is already a vital exercise of power.

The "key people" in movements are those who are able to bring others together and are gifted in both thinking strategically and responding intuitively to opportunities and threats. The current 'tick-box', technical approach to addressing conflict (and everything else; see Fisher/Zimina 2009) misses a great deal of the point. The application of logic and instruments of accountability is important, but it is not enough. Situations can change more often than we can strategise and what looks good on paper may not in the event have much bearing on events on the ground.

Accepting uncertainty and risk can be vital in liberating us to use our power to the full, rather than limiting its exercise to safe contexts in which it has little chance of making a real difference. None of us can control outcomes, let alone the impact of what we do. We have a duty of care, but alongside it sits the need for inspiration and the will to seize the moment at times of opportunity or urgency. If we are to be creative, as we must, then we shall have to let go of our longing for control. That does not mean that we no longer stand against things that hurt people and contradict our values; rather that we learn to discern the energies within events that will put wind in our sails.

4.
Global Transformation

4.1
Addressing Domination and Power Asymmetry in International Affairs

As I suggested at the end of *section 2*, democratic participation is the precondition for peace. At present, the primary unit for democracy is the state, or union of states. These are potentially units of cooperation, both internal and external. However, many states came into being through war and have long been defined by their monopoly of violence. Their history and ethos are therefore strongly influenced by the domination model of power.

When they plan wars, governments do not usually consult their populations directly, or allow for much genuine debate among their representatives. Such discussion as is allowed takes place

17   On the notions of "more people" and "key people" (below), see Anderson/Olson 2003, 47-49.

in circumstances of less-than-full information, and under pressure to be 'with us or against us'.[18] In the short term, war's prevention would require populations to mobilise more effectively against it (especially earlier) when it is threatened. The longer-term goal would be for the identity of a state to be grounded in the idea of interdependence, rather than self-interest and control. For this to be possible, a deep change would be needed in the thinking of electorates and their chosen representatives.

In such a re-conceptualisation, a state would be defined not as a military unit for the defence and promotion of the national interest but as a collective devoted to the care of its own people and to constructive, just and cooperative engagement with others: a participant in a genuine international community. 'Foreign policy' (as the British describe it) would become policy for international cooperation rather than the pursuit of national interest and hegemony, generating unequivocal commitment to the implementation of decisions reached through just, inclusive processes, aimed at consensus. Bilateral and regional relationships would open the way to wider ones, rather than being used to gain advantage or secure control.

True peacebuilding requires that power should be vested in international institutions that are globally respected, independent of vested interests and devoted to the common good. This will involve establishing universal respect for such institutions, and processes that are principled and democratic, focused on the common good and giving equal voice to all, regardless of military power and wealth.

We have a long way to go. The current attitude of the big state powers to such institutions is conditional and instrumental. Their full participation is needed (including financially) but at present they are unwilling to play their role unconditionally or to give away their power of dominance. And it is violent power that has given them their place at the top. Thus, we have a situation in which it is those who threaten others with their nuclear arsenals who control the Security Council; in which the US and UK could lead the march to war in Iraq without UN support; in which Israel, because of its US backing, can ignore one Security Council resolution after another; and in which the US can refuse to accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

There are 'rogue states' (so named by the big rogues) that also disregard international opinion, even when it represents a wide constituency and is focused on the security of all. Unfortunately, the inconsistency of the big powers, in allowing themselves what they deny to others (as for instance in case of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; see Johnson 2010), makes their admonishments not only useless but provocative. In this framework of asymmetry, all alike – the relatively strong and the relatively weak – are working to the domination model of power, which perpetuates the asymmetry, and the response of those on the receiving end of domination is often either submission or counter-violence.

While bullying behaviour on the part of mighty nations is still something that awaits transformation, it will be necessary to build the praxis of nonviolent assertiveness in international relations. New praxis is also needed on the exercise of collective power for the common good.

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18   As demonstrated in the proceedings of the UK Iraq enquiry, see www.iraqinquiry.org.uk/.

This may include the maintenance of collectively 'owned' (resourced and controlled) capacities for nonviolent intervention in support of local peacemaking.

Specifically, I propose that attention should be given to the following questions: first, can the nation state be reconceptualised as a unit of global cooperation? If so, what could contribute to such a transformation? And second, what current evidence is there of the capacity of civilians to protect others nonviolently, both as primary actors where they live and as external support for such primary actors? What does this suggest about the possibilities for building nonviolent peace forces?

4.2
Global Peacebuilding

To transform global relationships and enable true cooperation, it will be necessary to resolve old conflicts and 'deal with the past': a large agenda. Colonial and neo-colonial actions and attitudes will be hard to forget. Establishing just, respectful relationships will require serious work to address the current fault lines created by the undue power of those with big economies, powerful armies and weapons of mass destruction, which encourage antisocial behaviour by big powers and 'rogue states' alike. It will involve practical solidarity with those who suffer from economic and political marginalisation and the destruction wreaked by wars, through a radical redistribution of wealth and resources. Those who have consumed the most and done the greatest per-capita damage to the environment will need to take the lead in repairing it and compensating those most acutely affected, investing in green technology and sharing their knowledge freely with others.

As with any process for moving from war to peace, DDR – disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration – will be vital at the global level, to signal the end of hostilities and remove the threat of future violence. Given the will, it is perfectly possible for the nuclear weapons states that are signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to get rid of their own nuclear armaments, in line with their neglected treaty obligations. This would make it much more likely that they could bring into the non-nuclear fold those nuclear weapons states that are not signatories, as well as countries like Iran whose threatened acquisition of nuclear weapons causes such concern.

Although nuclear disarmament would do no more than remove one immense threat to humanity and our planet, the momentum it creates would encourage disarmament of other kinds, which in turn will put the spotlight on the deadly trade in arms and indeed the whole military-industrial complex (Eisenhower 2006), which remains as powerful and malevolent as ever. Building sustainable, inclusive economies is a requirement of positive peace, and the positive qualities of courage, teamwork, commitment, leadership and engineering ability that are often associated with the military are sorely needed by humanity, as it faces challenges that are multiple and immense.

Such practical, transformative work of demilitarisation would contribute to a deep-seated shift in the nature of relationships, so that the power to dominate is no longer relevant and each is able to contribute cooperatively in the pursuit of common agendas. Rethinking gender and creating relationships of equality and cooperation between women and men will be essential to the major cultural and systemic shift that all this will require. I believe strongly that the liberation of women, who are now subjugated, to be the people they want to be will go hand in

hand with the liberation of men from the functions of control and domination.

I suggest the following questions for further research: first, what structures and processes can enable disparate movements to unite effectively around a common cause, in order to form a global peace constituency and generate the will for the above shifts? Second, how can theory on demilitarisation in specific geographical contexts be applied globally and what strategies would such application suggest for global demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration/economic conversion? And third, how can the antagonistic aspects of current international relationships be transformed, to the benefit of all?

5.
Looking Forward:
A Movement of Movements

Though what I am proposing amounts to a bid for conflict transformation on the grandest scale imaginable, I believe this to be the only realistic course. If we want to have an impact on conflict writ large, we must close the gap between our theoretical belief in nonviolent power and our currently inadequate practice in pursuing it. We must also close the gap between our approach to local peacebuilding, which is characterised by unequivocal advocacy of nonviolence, and our silence or ambivalence in relation to the violence of international actors, particularly when it takes place under the peacebuilding rubric.

I have argued in this chapter that the values and expertise for transforming conflict and building peace now need to be extended to the global context, in order to displace the habitual recourse to armed violence and the assumptions and systems that perpetuate it. That will involve a paradigm shift from contest and control to cooperation and interdependence. Nonviolent forms of power have shown their potential. They need to be fully developed for this transition to be possible, and nothing less than a sustained, cogent and global peace constituency will be sufficient to bring it about.

To achieve that, we need also to bridge the gap between professionalism and activism, taking our own power as citizens seriously and becoming part of a global movement for the abolition of war and the transformation of the mind-set it represents. We have the power and the responsibility to add our time, weight and knowledge to movements in our home countries. They need us, and the experience of working with them will enrich our work elsewhere. We must also use our influence directly at the political level to help change policy there. Many of our organisations already have the necessary connections and increasingly are using them. More must join them and the goal must become more ambitious, so that rather than being co-opted into power agendas that contradict our values, we begin to change the values and agendas of governments. The current level of global threats to peace, justice and survival is high, and rising. Our interdependence is clearer than ever. We need a rapid shift in culture and systems to reflect this reality.

6.
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