

Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution

**Edited by Dennis J. D. Sandole,
Sean Byrne, Ingrid Sandole-
Staroste and Jessica Senehi**

Foreword by Dean G. Pruitt

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2 Encountering nationalism

The contribution of peace studies and conflict resolution

Harry Anastasiou

The historical record: nationalism in the literature

Since its advent, the phenomenon of nationalism has elicited a diverse array of responses that have defied consensus. Over the years people have viewed and experienced nationalism from very different perspectives. Nationalism's founding fathers, Johann Gottfried Herder and Giuseppe Mazzini, saw nationalism as a divinely ordained, historical force of liberation, destined to lead humanity to universal justice and global peace (Alter 1994). Others interpreted it as a functional, sociocultural phenomenon that unifies people, sustains the cohesion of the national community, defines and clarifies collective values and generates loyalty to the larger whole (Smith 1993). Recently, nationalism is viewed as a legitimate moral and political force securing the rights and independence of people from the onslaught of globalization.

In contrast, others have seen and experienced nationalism as erosive of the human spirit. They have viewed nationalism as an intolerant and destructive historical force; a phenomenon that deeply divides nations and societies; an approach to politics that fosters a culture of collective narcissism and exclusivist notions of belonging; an approach to national and international politics that is power-driven and self-serving, escalating conflicts precipitating both civil and international wars; and as a worldview accommodating the use of force or violence as a premium instrument of national politics, tolerating the loss of human life as a legitimate necessity (Alter 1994). Furthermore, nationalism is viewed as a sinister force contributing to the globalization of conflict, while rendering globalization a conflict-proliferating process.

Traditionally, the nationalism literature has been polarized. However, a more astute approach may suggest that advocates and critics of nationalism reflect two sides of the same coin. Nationalism may thus be understood as a powerful historical phenomenon that is defined by *the unprecedented moral absolutization of the nation, its freedom, its interest, its community, its identity, and its power, in combination with the derivative presumption that its supreme moral status furnishes thereby "the right" to employ all means, including adversarial and lethal means, in the nation's defense, sustenance, advancement, expanding powers, and alleged "destined" historical realization.* Acknowledging such a linkage may help explain the frequently perplexing question of why nationalism has been so appealing and ennobling and simultaneously incredibly dangerous and violent. Specifically the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s and generally the numerous conflicts that erupted following the collapse of the Soviet Union drew fresh attention to this likely relationship within the nationalist mind between ethno-national moral values and violent actions.

Nationalism as a worldview: the power of assumptions

The emerging field of study that is directly concerned with peace and conflict phenomena furnishes numerous theoretical and practical approaches, including Conflict Analysis and Resolution (CAR), in which, as a prerequisite for resolution, inquiry focuses on understanding the structural dynamics of conflict; Conflict Resolution (CR), in which the emphasis is on perspectives, processes, and structures that empower and facilitate the resolution of conflict; and Peace Studies (PS), in which the focus is on understanding and fostering the structural dynamics of peace, in the form of peacebuilding, peace sustenance, and institutionalizing peace in light of elaborations of what constitutes a society and culture of peace.

In attending to the dynamics of protracted conflict, and particularly nationalist conflict, one of the strengths of CAR, CR, and PS lies in their capacity to deconstruct the disputants' visions of the world, policies, and actions, disclosing conflict patterns that bind the rivals to their adversarial relationship, and envision the possibility of peace in light of which to forge proactive perspectives, strategies, and instruments of action.

A suggested hypothesis for understanding why they have tended to be intractable is that, in addition to the objective complexities that have historically permeated them, ethno-nationalist conflicts have been driven by well-configured, all-encompassing, and largely assumed worldviews that intimately associate a set of presumed supreme, ethno-national values and the right to employ force or violence in their name.

The power of perception in conflict-habituated societies has been a central theme in CAR as well as in political psychology (Jervis 1976). However, less work has been done on how unspoken, fundamental assumptions of nationalism determine adversarial perceptions and derivative actions, even beyond the partisan selection of facts that underpin them and the stereotypes that generalize and sustain them.

Having preceded and outlived the ideological polarizations of the Cold War, nationalism has been identified as one of the most powerful and influential forces since the advent of modernity (Alter 1994; Barash and Webel 2002). The power that the idea of *the nation* has had and continues to have over people is perhaps best understood as a derivative of the extraordinary and exaggerated qualities that the nationalist mind elaborates and projects onto the entity referred to as *the nation*. Irrespective of whether they see nationalism as a positive or a negative force, scholars generally acknowledge that in nationalism the nation is placed on the highest pedestal, and viewed as the supreme agency of meaning, collective identity, and moral justification (Alter 1994). One of the powerful ways in which nationalism becomes historically instated is through its presumption that the nation is sacred – an attribute that many liken to a kind of secular equivalent of the church. Smith (1993), an advocate of nationalism, speaks of the nation as being a religion surrogate. This is a stunning assertion, as the characterization may apply equally to nationalisms that have incorporated traditional religion as part of their mental edifice of values (e.g. Serbian, Greek, Hindu, Islamic, Irish Protestant, and Irish Catholic nationalisms) as well as to secular nationalisms that purport to have expunged traditional religion from their mental edifice of values (e.g. Turkish, French, Egyptian, and Syrian nationalisms).

Historically, the attribution of sacredness to the idea of *the nation* has been ritualized in the images of national leaders, in ethnocentric public ceremonies, in master narratives of national heroics and invincibility, in extraordinary achievements and events underscored by a presumed history of national glory, greatness, binding destiny, and even divine election (Smith 1993). Centered on a constructed, aggrandized notion of *the nation*, nationalist

historiography projects a glorified image of the nation into a superlative, primal past, transposed by necessity into a compelling, duty-bound present, and an infinite, grandiose future. It cultivates a monocentric, narcissistic concept of the nation's life-world, a teleological perception of the nation's history and an asymmetrical distribution of positive values and rightness identifying the "good" with one's own nation and the "bad" with that of "the other," particularly of "the enemy other" (Rüsen 2004). In so doing, nationalist historiography presents the nation as an inerrant, eternal political entity, concealing its historical follies and the crucial fact that the nationalist concept of the nation and its objectified derivative, the nation-state, was a historical product of the nineteenth century (Alter 1994).

Thus understood, the nationalist approach to nationhood places the nation in an untouchable "moral realm," beyond question, reproach, and accountability. Sadly, the concept of national sovereignty and self-determination, abstractly asserted as the cornerstone of world order and stability, has in practice been framed and conditioned by nationalism through the presumption that in the final analysis the "right" to pursue policies, devise strategies, and take actions unilaterally supersedes the requirement for bi- or multilateral deliberations (Barash and Webel 2002). From this perspective, the nationalist mind views even international law as subsidiary and secondary to the status of the nation.

Under these conditions, the prospect for international and/or interethnic dialogue, negotiation, or relationship-building becomes highly restrictive, circumstantial, and transient. As attested by the two World Wars, innumerable intra- and interstate wars, anti-colonial revolutions, Cold War proxy wars, the ethnic conflicts that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, and more recently the Iraq war, the nationalist approach to ethno-national politics has proven to be disastrous in both the intrastate and international arenas.

Conflict resolution theories and practice: encountering nationalism

In the face of nationalist politics, the challenge for PS and CAR scholars as well as for CR facilitators and third party mediators is to conduct analyses, elaborate perspectives, design and structure dialogue and/or negotiation processes, and develop strategies and incentives that sustain focus on the disputants' existential concerns while dissociating these concerns from the respective nationalist frameworks and their absolutist terms of reference in which adversarial perceptions and approaches are embedded. Helpful in pursuing this course of action is Burton's human needs theory followed and reinforced by Fisher and Ury's distinction between "positions" and "interests" (Burton 1990; Fisher and Ury 1991). In this distinction, "positions" refers to the particular unilateral approaches, demands, and finalities that rivals cultivate and aim for in their respective version of what the solution to the conflict ought to be. "Interests" on the other hand refers to the set of existential and mostly legitimated human needs that the positions of each side presumably serve to protect, enhance, and secure.

During the periods preceding and following nationalist conflict, the overall political process becomes forged in a manner that structurally links legitimate human needs and interests to nationalist positions. In other words, vital needs such as security, economic wellbeing, cultural identity, and community become structurally intertwined with nationalist positions derived from notions of moral and/or cultural superiority, unilateral projections of power and grandiosity, a sense of historical destiny and/or divine mission, self-serving justice, and a "we do as we see fit" narcissism, all of which inevitably function

belligerently in relation to “the other.” Legitimate human needs thus become absorbed by, and integrated into, the framework of supra-factual assumptions of the absolute and uncompromising value of the nation, and all its derivative implications.

An example from current world affairs, such as US–Iranian relations, suffices to illustrate this matter. Iranian nationalism views its unwavering insistence on its nuclear program as primarily a matter of national pride, national right, national interest, and national security, which in the nationalist mind are non-negotiable. Iran sees the growth of its nuclear capacity not merely as an energy issue, or a legal right issue, but as a national prestige and prerogative issue, under which economic and national defense concerns are subsumed. Moreover, Iranian nationalism views nuclear power as a means of defending the Muslim religion of which the Iranian nation-state, together with its allies and sympathizers, is the guardian and protector. In its Islamic fundamentalist mode, Iranian nationalism configures all these elements in a manner that inevitably presents the nation of Iran as a moral force, compelled by a moral imperative. In this, the Iranian nation and its state are the ultimate value and reference in terms of which any and all actions may become justified, including the unleashing of force and violence against its enemies, if need be. In Iranian nationalism, the Iranian nation is the embodiment and guardian of all that Allah requires. Hence the arch-enemy of Iran, namely the US, is referred to by Iranian fundamentalist nationalists as “the Great Satan.”

Conversely, American nationalism, particularly in its neoconservative brand, views US national interest and national security in terms of its narcissistic will and its unrivaled strength as *the superpower nation*. Here too, the invariable status of the nation becomes the supreme arbiter and reference of values, truth and meaning. From the perspective of American nationalism, a nuclear Iran is absolutely unacceptable, not merely from the military vantage point or a legal perspective, but more significantly from the “moral” standpoint. As it is typical of all nationalisms, American nationalism perceives its own *nation not only* in terms of its military superiority but also, if not more so, in terms of its presumed moral superiority, which also includes its democratic legacy as well as the Judeo-Christian heritage. Seen as a moral force, the nation and all that is deemed to be its interests inevitably assume a non-negotiable status. Nuclear power in the hands of any enemy nation is thus immoral, by definition. And conversely, nuclear power in America’s hands is viewed as a powerful, strategic instrument in the service of what is good and moral. America’s possession of nuclear weapons, including that of its allies, is thereby viewed as morally justified. As the ultimate embodiment of moral truth, the American nation is thus compelled to use all means at its disposal to subdue enemies such as Iran, because the enemies of the nation are the enemies of what is right and moral. In the perspective of neoconservative, American nationalism, Iran, particularly vis-à-vis its nuclear program – civilian or military, it doesn’t really matter – can only belong to the “Axis of Evil.” And evil must be fought by all means, including the employment of the most powerful weapons available.

Clearly, as long as the above approaches persist, the outcome will be merely a stubborn political impasse, incubating very dangerous consequences, not only for the US and Iran but for the Middle East and the world. Political exchanges vis-à-vis nationalist positions rather than human needs-based interests rarely succeed, because they tend to eclipse and obscure even the legitimate needs they purport to be striving to secure. This is precisely because in positional bargaining the disputants merely assert their unilateral, a priori version of the problem and its solution (Fisher and Ury 1991). And in doing so the relationship to the other is driven at best into a stubborn deadlock and at worst into a vexing, conflict-prone interaction, often spilling over into violence.

In contrast to the above mutually incapacitating perspectives, a proactive, constructive approach to US–Iranian relations that differentiates positions from interests has the potential of initiating a process carrying a two-pronged orientation. That orientation would be to address US concerns about security, terrorism, energy, and regional stability in the Middle East, all of which are legitimate concerns, in a perspective, however, that frees and decouples these concerns from the nationalist presumptions of the “moral superiority” of one’s own national position and the “evil” status of the other that inevitably fossilize US–Iranian relations into intransigent and irreconcilable positions. Similarly, Iranian concerns about security, economic wellbeing, cultural identity, and international isolation, all of which are legitimate concerns, would be addressed in dissociation from the belligerent and absolutist, nationalist positions that frame them. Along such a path, Iran’s nuclear issue, in the context of the Arab–Israeli conflict as well as the problem of nuclear power in the Middle East in general, has a far better chance of a future resolution. (The Iraq Study Group’s recommendations for US dialogue with Iran and Syria approximate CR principles and directives.) The challenge in such an approach is to affect mutual behavioral change via diplomacy, dialogue, acknowledgments, negotiations and relationship-building instead of resorting to regime change and/or regime defiance via threats, coercion, and firepower and/or various forms of covert violence.

By integrating legitimate human needs into its adversarial and exclusivist framework, nationalism, with its array of unexamined assumptions, always tends to alienate the other while eclipsing the legitimacy of any genuine human needs it purports to defend. In contrast to the adversarial narcissism of nationalist communication, *dialogue* as a mediated process of open-ended and uncoerced communication has been asserted and pursued by CAR, PS, and CR theorists and practitioners as a vital path for belligerents to address, understand, and tackle their conflicts. In his work *On Dialogue*, Bohm (2004) notes that any genuine dialogue across lines of conflict induces a tacit suspension of assumptions that opens up new horizons of meaning and interpretation, as the dialogue process inadvertently and/or deliberately fuses perspectives, expands knowledge, synthesizes hitherto scattered and disjointed facts, and conjoins through interaction and exchanges the life-worlds of the parties concerned. Thus understood, dialogue introduces the capacity to free the communicative process from the underlying assumptions of competing nationalist perspectives, creating thereby the conditions for the emergence of new truths, facts, and frameworks as products of mutual, communicative engagement. The dialogic mode of communication is in this sense exceedingly conducive to bringing forward and differentiating legitimate human needs from stalemating positions rooted in nationalist assumptions – a differentiation that is imperative for resolving conflict and securing peace.

By dissociating authentic needs and interests from nationalist frameworks, CAR, PS, and CR bring forward mutuality, reciprocity, parity, and equality as principles of engagement, thus creating the possibility of considering and tackling each side’s legitimate needs and interests within a single perspective, seeking creative resolutions that conjoin and integrate the respective legitimate human needs and interests of the disputants (Fisher and Ury 1991).

The use of force or violence with “moral justification”

In regard to peace and conflict issues, the most problematic aspect of nationalism at both the national and international levels has been its extraordinary capacity to link moral

reasoning and the use of force or violence. In a unique manner, nationalism has historically grounded the right to use force or violence in the moral rationale that the nation is the ultimate collective value and the imperative basis for community, identity, security, and wellbeing (Howard 1994). This configuration of belief and action has made nationalism the greatest legitimizer of the use of force or violence throughout modern and much of post-modern history.

Employing force or violence in the name of *the nation* has been historically manifested in a variety of ways. These have included the founding of nation-states (*Risorgimento* nationalism); the forceful defense of established nation-states from internal and/or external enemies (even Hitler elaborated this argument); the securing of national interests around the globe through conquest and colonization (giving rise to modern imperialism as a by-product of nationalism, not the other way around); the launching of anti-colonial revolutions for the purpose of establishing one's own exclusive, ethno-national state; the pursuit of forceful secession from an existing state for the purpose of establishing one's own ethno-national state (Bosnian Serbs, Turkish Cypriots, Kurds of Turkey); and the justifications for civil wars based on competing models of national values, identity and interest, again in the name of the nation (Spanish and Greek civil wars). Close scrutiny of political history reveals that, from its very birth to its fully developed, institutionalized political cultures in the twentieth century and beyond, nationalism has forged a close association between the idea of the nation as a supreme value and the right to employ force or violence as its legitimate means (Alter 1994). This may explain why, in nationalism, actions that are normally viewed as perverse become moral, actions that are burdened with guilt become honorable, and actions that are death-dealing become heroic (Hedges 2002). As Howard (1994) reminds us, from its historical inception, nationalism has fashioned a close association between the nation, war and violence. The most prominent semiotics of nationalism – ranging from national anthems and national flags to monuments and historiographies – disclose symbols and narratives of war, revolution, heroics, and the shedding of blood as supreme references of national identity, glory, and honor.

As a result of the extraordinary capacity of nationalism to “morally” legitimize force or violence in the name of the nation, nationalist-minded leaders and followers tend to develop high levels of tolerance for the use of lethal means in dealing with conflicts, particularly in confronting identifiable historical “enemies” of the nation. What is even more striking is that nationalists are inclined toward a high level of tolerance for the loss of human life not only among the enemy community but also among their own national community. As nationalism presumes the nation to be sacred, the taking and offering of human life to its service at critical moments in history is viewed not only as legitimate but as a “moral duty.” Hence, according to the nationalist mind, though momentarily inconvenient, the offering and taking of human life for the sake of the nation is ultimately neither a problematic nor a tragic phenomenon but one of “supreme duty” and altruistic “ultimate sacrifice.”

The apogee of this tenet of nationalism is none other than the terrible phenomenon of ethnic cleansing. Conventional thinking assumes that ethnic cleansing has to do with cleansing a territory of people perceived by the perpetrators to be the “illegitimate other.” But, in the first order, ethnic cleansing has to do with a blood ritual by which the perpetrating ethno-national community purifies its collective self by ridding its society (and hence territory), of people it considers as ethno-national impurities living in its midst.

Deconstructing the nationalist justification for using force and violence

Even though it has not yet addressed the phenomenon of nationalism directly and explicitly, the field of CAR, PS, and CR has struggled to develop alternative, non-violent ways of understanding and addressing conflict essentially against the backdrop of the historical legacy of twentieth-century nationalist strife and violence. Nevertheless, CAR as well as CR dialogue and rapprochement processes have demonstrated the capacity to disclose and deconstruct the belligerent and fundamentally alienating relationships that protracted nationalist conflict instates in the culture, perceptions, psyche, and politics of the rival sides.

A key element in CR rapprochement processes and dialogue in both symmetrical and asymmetrical conflicts is the focusing of attention on *the human dimension of conflict*. By prioritizing the phenomenon of human suffering resulting from conflict, and helping bring forward within a single perspective the pain and loss of all sides in the conflict, CAR, PS, and CR approaches implicitly question and tacitly erode the "moral" justifications for the use of force or violence against the enemy "other" that the nationalisms of the belligerent sides so "naturally" elaborate. Whether Germans or French, Greeks or Turks, Palestinians or Israelis, Irish Protestants or Catholics, past and present rivals that have engaged each other in CR processes have discovered that their own groups' pain and suffering was no different from the pain and suffering of their enemy, and that while they have been enemies they have, in effect, shared a human tragedy.

This type of conscientization underscores one of the basic principles of conflict transformation, namely getting rival groups to a point of mutually acknowledging, either implicitly or explicitly, the injury they had inflicted on one another in the course of their conflict. Herein lies the significance of sharing experience-based narratives across ethno-national lines as a means of conflict transformation. Such engagements inevitably initiate a process of potential de-alienation, as each side is put in a position to behold in a new light both the enemy's and its own actions and plight throughout the course of the conflict. The process carries the potential first step toward deconstructing the nationalist, stereotypical enemy images, superseding them with a sobering realism that the conflict was essentially a confusing and alienating admixture of events and phenomena. Sustained over time, the process eventually reveals that each side has been both victim and perpetrator, bringing to full disclosure that in the conflict-conditioned relationship each side's heroes have sadly been the other side's villains.

As CAR, PS, and CR theories and practice create the conditions for each of the belligerent sides to encounter the suffering of the other, the "moral" rationale for the use of violence that nationalism readily furnishes becomes implicitly, and in many cases explicitly, debunked. Lederach's four principles of "truth," "mercy," "justice," and "peace" as directives for engaging belligerents in conflict transforming processes illustrate this (Lederach 2002). CAR and PS perspectives and CR engagements bring forward the crucial fact that the nature of violence and its impact on society is the same irrespective of the moral rationalizations that nationalism attaches to it. Despite shortcomings, reconciliation processes such as those that took place in the aftermath of World War II in Europe, or in the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in South Africa, and the citizen peace movement in Cyprus, for example, have constructively induced a humanizing process of conflict transformation. Such a process has always tended to occur at the very juncture when traditional belligerents mastered the courage to confront the demoralizing and dehumanizing nature of violence irrespective of the agent that induced it and the original rationale that "legitimized" it.

Facilitated CR dialogue processes and more so reconciliation processes help parties to encounter what keen observers have identified as the universal laws of violence, namely "sameness," "reciprocity," "continuity," "reproduction," and "self-justification" (Ellul 1969). CAR, PS, and CR theories and practice assist belligerents in striving beyond the state of unilateral self-victimization and partisan, "moral" justification for one's own use of violence, by helping them reach the difficult but necessary fact that there is no such thing as "good" violence and "bad" violence, as nationalism presumes. Conflict-transcending processes finally reveal that the idea that "our" violence is "good" and "legitimate," and that the enemy's violence is "bad" and "illegitimate," is a subjective construct incubated under alienating conflict conditions that the nationalist worldview normalizes and sanctifies. This particular outcome that CAR, PS, and CR yield in both theory and practice constitutes one of the most significant contributions toward the demythologization of militancy and predisposition for militancy that nationalism so readily instates and sustains in the societies it affects.

Viewed from a CAR, PS, and CR perspective, the inclination of nationalism to reserve the right to morally justify the use of force or violence compels a renewed assessment of Just War Theory (JWT). JWT reflects the age-long struggle to set some kind of moral constraints and limitations to both the choice for war and the conduct of war. However, nationalism easily usurps this moral aperture of JWT by assuming that as the supreme arbiter of collective values and justification, the nation (in its embodiment either as an existing state or a state to be) has the inalienable "moral right" (even beyond the legal right or legal prohibition) to resort to the use of force or violence whenever it deems it necessary; and, further, that this moral right is a permanent principle derived from the nation's sovereignty. For nationalists, every war that is presumed necessary for the nation is a priori a "just war." From this perspective, nationalist leaders and public opinion have been easily able to rationalize even wars of choice by framing and promoting them as wars of moral and practical necessity.

Contrary to the moral rationalizations of nationalism, CAR, PS, and CR reveal that even under the constraints of objective circumstances, if war is inevitably and practically the last resort, one is essentially confronted with none or with the most tragic of options, and not with a moral reason for war and violence. Further, in taking the subjective human factor into account, CAR, PS, and CR divulge that any unavoidability of violent conflict is directly associated with conditions that render human beings unwilling and/or incapable of generating creative, non-lethal, conflict-transcending political options. If by reason of subjective and/or objective conditions there is indeed no choice but to act out of sheer necessity, it essentially means that there is no freedom – that is, there is no freedom of choice. Therefore, far from being moral, the condition of irrevocable necessity underscores not the apogee of moral choice, as nationalism has it, but the fundamental disempowerment from making a moral choice. In this sense, the perspectives and approaches of CAR, PS, and CR bring under critical scrutiny the prevalent rationalization of nationalism that, when the nation has no choice but to turn to force or violence, its actions somehow become morally justified. On the contrary, they suggest that, when war is unavoidable by reason of overwhelming necessity, one is confronted with the supreme point of tragedy not of morality. The absence of choice does not make war and violence less immoral and devastating, but more tragic and enslaving! And this is precisely the profundity of human alienation that must be reckoned with when confronted with the use of force/violence as inevitable. When no choice is within reach, the turn to force or violence is not the most morally excusable but the most lamentable of human conditions.

CAR, PS, and CR theories and practice and the rapprochement processes they initiate in any effective conflict transformation disclose explicitly or tacitly, especially in hindsight, the awesome fact that in protracted violent engagements the moral universe and the moral values it encompasses is neither defended nor instated but is in fact dismantled and shattered. By bringing into a single perspective the injury, scourge, and death that rival sides suffer as well as inflict on each other, CAR, PS and CR processes bring to full visibility the crucial fact that in nationalist engagements each violent action erodes and eventually negates its moral justification (e.g. South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commissions). As Hedges (2002) notes, in nationalist conflicts one encounters the collapse and the inversion of the moral universe. Moreover, CAR, PS and CR practice reveal that in the course of the conflict, the practical judgments that each of the belligerent sides is compelled to make, and the kinds of action that each is compelled to take, become increasingly constituted as irrevocable moral dilemmas rather than clear moral choices, as the "realist theory" of nationalism claims.

Reframing values and reevaluating actions

By providing the means and perspectives for deconstructing nationalist conflict and hence nationalist morality, CAR, PS and CR theories and practice subsequently prod the redefinition of moral values regarding peace and conflict thereby compelling a reexamination of the political actions, group interests, security, and identity concerns associated with them. A fundamental principle underlying much of CAR, PS and CR theory and practice is finding ways and means to orient political dialogue, policies, actions, strategies, and institution-building away from adversarial values and beliefs and begin reframing them in relation to conflict-preventive, conflict-resolving and peace-enhancing values and directives (Barash and Webel 2002; Lederach 2002). This principle is rooted not in a utopian world but in the reality-based fact that in doing so, dialogue, policies, actions, strategies, and institution-building will be restructured and redirected in a manner that increases the chances for constructive, practical outcomes.

The value of human life relative to the nation

The demythologization of nationalism's concept of *the nation* as the supreme seat of values and morality goes hand in hand with the demythologization of force or violence in the name of the nation. Moreover, the demythologization of violence or force as a means of addressing ethno-national conflict restores the fundamental sense that human life and life-enhancing relationships are higher in value than nationalism's demand of unconditional loyalty to the nation and its associated claim that the nation is the ultimate ground and guarantor of security and wellbeing.

By questioning such nationalist values, CAR, PS, and CR challenge, facilitate, and assist in reframing national loyalty, security, and national interest in terms of the priority of human life and life-enhancing values and objectives, which as such are inseparable from the value of peace. In this light, CAR, PS, and CR open up the possibility, if not the imperative, of redefining national interest in terms of conciliatory and peace-enhancing politics, whereby interethnic and international relations are premised on equitable and sustainable socio-political and economic development, intergroup and intersocietal integration, stability, wellbeing, and human rights.

Freeing the value of justice and democracy from nationalism

From its historical advent to the present, nationalism has claimed that the pursuit of justice and democracy for the national community is best served by the nation's capacity to unilaterally and self-determinately employ power, even force or violence. The approach that nationalism takes to democracy as primarily and exclusively an intra-ethnic and intranational polity has led to the idea that the use of force or violence in the interest of the nation coincides with the idea that the use of force or violence is consistent with the interest of and/or defense of democracy. The most recent, spectacular illustration of this has been the attempt by American and other neoconservatives to infuse democracy into Iraq and the broader Middle East through the might of the US army – an approach that has precipitated chaos, unrest, and instability in Iraq and beyond. The nationalist interpretation of democracy as a polity that may legitimize the use of force or violence for its pursuit, defense, and expansion is the main historical reason why countries that have been deemed democracies have had no better record in participating and engaging in war and violence than countries that have been deemed non-democracies.

Contrary to the prevalent above-mentioned assumptions that nationalism makes, CAR, PS, and CR approaches disclose and demonstrate that historically the unilateral pursuit of power, particularly hard power, constricts and even undermines the causes of justice and democracy not only for others but also for one's own national community. The values, perspectives, and knowledge elaborated and generated by CAR, PS, and CR forcefully suggest that justice and democracy become amplified and accessible to the mutual benefit of the communities concerned to the degree that they are pursued via peace-seeking perspectives and values, and accompanied and worked out through peace-promoting strategies, actions, and institution-building. Dissociating the pursuit of justice and democracy from the nationalist framework of narcissistic values, assumptions, and beliefs, and associating justice and democracy with peace-promoting values and objectives creates new possibilities for reframing power relations as well as for expanding and securing justice and democracy. There exists a structural linkage between the building of peaceful relationships and the opening up of justice and democracy.

Particularly at the interstate level, the European experiment has strongly confirmed the findings and principle of CAR, PS, and CR (Rifkin 2004). The prioritization of peace, cooperation, conciliatory politics, and the joint management of economic integration over and above nationalism is precisely what led to the emergent stabilizing influence of the EU in post-war Europe. Although the continuing existence of specific democratic deficits within Europe is generally acknowledged, within the EU framework and institutions the privileges and liabilities of power asymmetries have been minimized, democracy has been deepened and expanded at the intersocietal and interstate levels, the rule of law has been both embedded in and raised above nation-states, and human rights have been strengthened as an intra-, inter- and transnational regime.

Nationalism either defies justice and democracy in the name of the nation or constricts democracy to an exclusively intranational/intra-ethnic polity. By contrast, the reframing of democracy and justice in terms of peace values and directives, as CAR, PS, and CR recommend, frees democracy and justice from the strictly ethno-national, psycho-political, and territorial constraints of nationalism. In so doing, the concept of democracy can be elevated, developed, and expanded to an interethnic and international polity as well. Belgium and Switzerland are polyethnic democracies at the national and subnational levels, whereas the EU functions as a democracy at the inter- and transnational levels.

Expanding community

This antithesis between the nationalist approach to democracy and justice and the peace-grounded approach to democracy and justice carries far-reaching implications for the conceptualization and practice of community. Being ethnocentric and intranational, the nationalist perception of community gravitates toward the polarization of ethnic groups within and between societies by its exclusivist notion of identity and the hard psychopolitical and territorial boundaries it strives to establish between the ethno-national "in-group" and the "out-group." It brings forward the fact that nationalism's narcissistically constricted concept of national right, democracy, and justice is accompanied by an equally constricted view of community and identity. CAR, PS, and CR scholars have amply demonstrated that nationalism's restrictive and mono-ethnic view of community becomes obsessively esoteric and intolerant, particularly under conditions of conflict escalation, tearing apart communities that have been historically, hence naturally, ethnically mixed (Lederach 2002). Nationalists vehemently resist or reject any sense of belonging beyond or complementary to their own ethno-national, ingroup community.

In sharp contrast to this, by directing thought and action toward extending and institutionalizing peace-grounded justice and democracy further than one's ethno-national community, CAR, PS, and CR values, perspectives, and approaches chart a path for expanding the category of community and identity on two complementary levels: intranationally by forging domestic inclusiveness of subnational identity groups, as well as internationally by forging functional and democratic interstate relations. Developing a culture of peace implies a richer and more sophisticated sense of belonging that sees one's immediate community and identity as conjoined to, tolerant of, overlapping with, complementary to, and relationally implicated in other ethno-national communities. This perspective becomes especially significant for the interest of peace. Globalization processes pose the unavoidable challenge that, among other types of identity groups, ethno-national groups will be increasingly compelled to come to terms with whether their sense of community, identity and belonging will extend, reach out, and contribute to the stability and wellbeing of an emergent global community, or remain nationalistically self-engaged with narcissistically defined national interests.

The evolving perspectives and cumulative knowledge of CAR, PS, and CR point to the crucial realization that the security and identity of one's immediate community is best sought and pursued by enriching, complementing, and extending the concept of community to encompass "the other," at least in part. At the levels of both civil society and formal politics, cross-ethnic and cross-national relationship-building, polyethnic and multinational institution-building, multilateral decision- and policymaking, joint ventures in sustainable development, economic integration through convivial polities, cross-border projects, and cross-ethnic and cross-national cultural projects, exchanges, and engagements are but a few of the perspectives and instruments conducive to enhancing sustainable positive peace.

It is noteworthy that, as the EU has actively pursued many of these paths to peace-building, the European concept of liberty has evolved to mean, among other things, having direct access to and the capacity for participation in multiple communities (Rifkin 2004). This is not to suggest that there are no tensions between identity groups or currents of xenophobia in the EU, but rather that, under conditions of peace and wellbeing, identity formation and sense of community have broadened to encompass multicultural and international configurations (Rüsen 2004). The EU's last challenge in expanding its

peace-founded notion of community is Turkey, a largely Muslim country. In an era of rising tension between the West and Islamic societies, accepting or rejecting Turkey as a future member of the EU will be the historical litmus test of the European experiment in post-nationalist peace and democracy.

Revisiting history

As a fruit and a condition of peace, the enhancement, enrichment, and broadening of identity formation and sense of community accompanies and reinforces the possibility of transcending the largely narcissistic and adversarial nationalist constructs of history and the legacy of heroes and villains it sustains and recycles. Nationalist historiographies with their master narratives of ethno-national grandiosity and absoluteness, with their glorification of revolutions, wars, and heroics, and their asymmetrical distribution of all the “good” to one’s own ethno-national community and all the “bad” to the otherness of others, make way for more balanced, reality-based, representative and hence regenerative perspectives of the past.

Contrary to nationalist values and valuations of history, diagnosing the past in terms of CAR and PS criteria, and assessing historical choices in terms of peace-seeking options and possibilities – rather than some presumed, binding ethno-centric teleology – enriches and opens up the understanding of history. Such an approach liberates from the cul-de-sacs of negative past choices, and provides intellectual and cultural resources for envisioning and charting a more humane future in interethnic, intersocietal and international relations. CAR, PS, and CR approaches compel a revisitation of history through polycentric notions of the past, mediated syntheses of different perspectives, an integrated discernment of the positive and negative history of both one’s own community and that of others, and empathic approaches of mourning and forgiveness over past conflicts (Rüsen 2004). Revisiting history in this manner entails the democratization of historical memory and the rehumanization of interethnic and international relationships vis-à-vis a renewed understanding of the past. Especially in an era of globalization, pursuing such an approach to the different national (including ethnic, cultural, and religious) perspectives of stakeholders within or between societies, especially in light of their existential historical experiences, furnishes the conditions for substantive dialogue and political engagements that are conducive to multicultural and multinational wellbeing, peace, and symbiosis.

Reframing liberty

CAR, PS, and CR theories and practice, and the success stories in conflict transformation and peacebuilding that reflect their principles, reveal new realities that go beyond hitherto conventional thinking. The most fundamental of these are that justice, democracy, and peace are inseparable and intertwined values and practices in any viable and sustainable pursuit of national and international politics, of national and international socio-economic development, and of national and international multicultural symbiosis.

Finally, CAR, PS, and CR approaches and the validation of success stories bring to the fore the unconventional truth that liberty is not a function of nations as absolute entities with absolute rights and sacral attributes – as nationalism would have it. Rather liberty is an essential and ever-evolving function of people, identity groups, societies, and governments to the measure they are capable of building and strengthening *peace-bound, multilevel, communal relationships* on both the intra- and international planes. In this sense, CAR, PS,

and CR lead to a reframing of liberty as a *peace-founded relationship*, not as an abstract principle of justification for resorting to all and any means of action, as nationalism has taught us. The field of CAR, PS, and CR is gradually bringing to crystallization the crucial new realization that it is only as intra- and intersocietal relationships and as interethnic and international relationships become peace-engendering, hence emancipating, that human rights, liberties, democracy, and justice become secured and amplified.

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