

Early Peace Research

The failure of the variety of peace, socialist and liberal internationalist movements to prevent the outbreak of the First World War motivated many people to develop a 'science' of peace which would provide a firmer basis for preventing future wars. Prominent here were the early empirical studies of war and conflict conducted in the interwar years by researchers such as Pitrim Sorokin, Lewis Fry Richardson and Philip Quincy Wright. Other important pioneer like Mary Parker Follet's works in the field of organizational behaviour and labour management relations also drawn upon to enrich conflict resolution theory. Advocating a mutual gains approach to negotiation, associated with what was called integrative bargaining, as against the traditional concession/convergence approach associated with distributive bargaining, she anticipated much of the later problem-solving agenda. Whereas distributive bargaining assumes concealment, inflated initial demands and Zero-Sum contexts, the integrative bargaining advocated in the mutual gains approach tries to redefine the negotiation as a shared problem to be solved.

One of the earliest conflict resolution writers Kenneth Boulding along with Anatol Rapoport and Herbert Kelman initiate the Journal of Conflict Resolution (JCR) in 1957, and set up the Centre for Research on Conflict Resolution in 1959. One of Boulding most influential ideas was with the concept of power. In everyday usage, the term 'Power' is ambiguous. On the one hand, it means power to command, order, enforce – coercive or hard power. On the other, it means the power to induce cooperation, to legitimize, to inspire – persuasive or soft power. Hard power has been important in violent conflict, but soft power may be more important in conflicts managed peacefully. Boulding (1989) calls the former threat power ('do what I want or I will do

what you don't want'). Following earlier theory of management and labour negotiations, he distinguishes between two forms of soft power: exchange power, associated with bargaining and the compromising approach and integrative power associated with persuasion and transformative long-term problem-solving.

Herbert. C. Kelman, a leading Social Psychologist and Conflicts Resolution Scholar at Harvard University had specialized in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Kelman's long-standing series of Arab-Israeli interactive Problem-Solving Workshop (1974-91) had an important influence on the eventual conclusion of the Oslo Accords in 1993. Harvard has continued to be at the forefront of the study of negotiation and conflict resolution. Principled negotiation approach was developed at Harvard. The programs on negotiation has had a fundamental impact on the study of negotiation in international conflict, introducing the win-win, problem-solving and mutual gain vocabulary of conflict resolution through the works of Roger Fisher and William Ury. This has been popularized through their best-selling title 'Getting to Yes' (1981) and more recently through the quarterly Negotiation Journal.

Individuals who have contributed strategically to the development of the theory and practice of conflict resolution includes Mahatma Gandhi among the precursors; Kenneth Boulding, Johan Galtung and John Burton among the founders; and Herbert Kelman, Roger Fisher, William Ury, John Paul Lederach, Edward Azar, Raimo Vayrynen, Kumar Rupesinghe and Elise Boulding among those who carried the subject forward thereafter.

Debates among Theorists on the Alternatives or Approaches to Conflict

It is helpful to distinguish Conflict Management, Conflict Resolution and Conflict Transformation as three separate schools while at the same time recognizing the

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significant areas of overlap between them. All three not only articulate varying approaches to conflict intervention, but also reflect different conceptualization of conflict.

Conflict Management theorists see violent conflicts as an ineradicable consequence of differences of values and interests within and between communities. The propensity to violence arises from existing institutions and historical relationships, as well as from the established distribution of power. Resolving such conflicts is viewed as unrealistic: the best that can be done is to manage and contain them, and occasionally to reach a historic compromise in which violence may be laid aside and normal politics resumed. Conflict management is the art of appropriate intervention to achieve political settlements, particularly by those powerful actors having the power and resources to bring pressure on the conflicting parties in order to induce them to settle. For Miall, it is also the art of designing appropriate institutions to guide the inevitable conflict into appropriate channels. In the words of Bloomfield and Reilly:

Conflict Management is the positive and constructive handling of difference and divergence. Rather than advocating methods for removing conflict, (it) addresses the more realistic question of managing conflict: how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to bring opposing sides together in a cooperative system for the constructive management of difference.

Conflict Resolution, defined in various ways over the years, is distinguished from a general category of conflict management-any attempt to curtail, contain, or resolve conflict. It is understood to be a field of study situated within peace research, and based on the works of Conflict Resolutionaries like John Burton, Edward Azar and others who noted that protracted violent conflict resisted the international community's attempts to control it and were looking for alternative means of resolving rather than merely settling disputes. Conflict Resolution, like peace research, evolved as a critique of

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realism in international relations. In realism, states are in conflict over the proportion of resources they control and, therefore, the power they wield in international community.

The Conflict Resolution theorists' critique of realism is directed specially to its settlement strategies seen in the practices of mediation, negotiation and arbitration. These settlements are always Zero-Sum, that is, where one State gains the other loses, and focus, exclusively, in divergent interest. From a conflict resolution perspective the best we can hope from realist approaches to violent conflict is containment and control. As such conflict resolution offers an alternative paradigm, another set of assumptions and practices from which practitioners derive a different set of methodologies for dealing with- in this case ' resolving'- conflicts.

Critics of Conflict Resolution

However, in the past few years the field of conflict resolution theory and its working method especially its problem-solving approach are being reviewed by a new generation of Critical Theorists who assume that Conflict Resolution has originated and rests on unchallenged assumptions of social order, thus perpetuating those structures that had originated the conflict in first place. In the views of these scholars the resistance to imagine and produce different structures (at an institutional and relational level) means that instead of looking for radical resolutions, and almost fearing the change that these would demand, conflict resolution is "stuck" with adhoc answers that reinforce this unchallenged order.

Fetherston and Parking comment on their paper "*Transformation of Violent Conflict: Contributions from Social Theory*" that conflict analysis and conflict management (the descriptive and prescriptive facets of Conflict Resolution) have serious "Inadequacies and they consists of a "minimal grasp of the field reality" of violent

conflict” thus they set to bridge the gap between abstract models of conflict management and the everydayness and “groundedness” of field reality.”

According to A.B. Fetherston, the most obvious shortcoming of the problem-solving approach is that it tends to focus on negotiable issues postponing the question of relationship and structural change to a later moment. It is liable to critique in that it can be seen as producing “negative peace” that is to say “absence of war” neglecting aspects of justice and resource distribution. It is an approach that has been forcefully criticized by Betts Fetherston. She says: “Problem-Solving Theory focuses on existing frameworks of institutions, social relations and social meaning which is often taken for granted, with the goal of sustaining this order to make it work efficiently.

Critical Theory starts by problematising this given framework or social order with the aim of considering its origins and how it might be changed, clarifying possible alternatives, and providing insights into ways of transforming it.” She states in her essay: *From Conflict Resolution to Transformative Peacebuilding: Reflection from Croatia* that “understandings of war implied in the definitions, researches and methodologies of conflict settlement and resolution lack connection to everydayness of the war zone. These kinds of description of war and its aftermath fail to catch its complexity and deep effects on social space and meaning. What she wishes for is that the conflict resolution sets to analyze networks of institutions, structures and social meanings in order to untangle the culture of violence, based on domination, which pervades the State system and affects everybody’s ways of life in a kind of self-feeding way. Conflict Resolution should aim to do not only at the site of war but in all localities

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which, broadly speaking, perpetuate a culture of violence and contribute to the re-emergence of war.

Nevertheless, she says, Conflict Resolution assumes that we can know, rationally and objectively, about violent conflict and thus master it and solve it. She goes further to suggest that “the modern project privileges the rational knowing subject and in doing so a world of “Other” is both generated and silenced.” “Rational” is legitimized at the same time that everything else, labeled “irrational”, is othered, delegitimized, and set outside the bounds of the discourse.”

According to Marta Martinelli Quille, Fetherston’s criticism is born out of her consideration that is practice of problem solving workshop, which she sees as derived from John Burton’s analysis of conflict and further elaborated of his analysis especially by Loreleigh Keashly and Ronald Fisher, essentially consist of an objections process while the parties distance themselves from the real situation to grant them conflict as an ‘academic environment’ they should be able then to see their own “problematic communication pattern and learn more appropriate ones... ultimately application of consultation or problem-solving leads to a resolution because the participants have been (corrected) (however, subtly) and armed with this new enlightened perspective, can together seek appropriate resolution.” In Fetherston’s opinion the outcome of the problem-solving exercise is to make participants re-perceive their war experience as irrational thus rendering their “ experiences and practices as illegitimate and irrelevant” and her conclusion is that one potential outcome is to delegitimize the particular practices of survival and resistance.

Social critical theorist Vivianne Jabri offers another Critical Practices in 1996 in her work *Discourses on Violence* where “she emphasizes the importance of transformative counter-discourses on challenges the dominance of public space

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exclusionist hegemonic discourses which legitimize violence and war.” She suggests that the meeting of self and other relational and structural, personal and contractual allows for the creation of new meaning which challenge the dominant discursive and institutional frameworks. All the above can be qualified as the lack of holistic thinking in CR literature, which one can agree with Jabri, have helped to “legitimize negotiation and mediation as technical and bureaucratic enterprises.”

Apart from the Critical theorists, Third or Fourth World or Indigenous Perspective scholars such as, Akum Longchari and Babu Ayindo, in their essay “*From Cold War to Hot peace? The Politics of Conflict Resolution, 2002*” made a critical analysis of Western model of Conflict Resolution. They argued that Western model of conflict resolution abets the process of globalism. What appears as the evolution of a culture of peace, inspired by a “Universalised” Conflict Resolution Theory is shy about visiting the root causes of most conflict in the so called third and fourth world. Not only is current conflict resolution theory and practice generally ahistorical but it also tends to take for granted Indigenous culture, knowledge system and realities. In their words, “We are witnessing people’s basic challenges of survival either being term into problems of ethnicism (or tribalism) or communication. They opine that there is a cultural invasion of the third and fourth world by the universalized Western culture. In their analysis, Conflict Resolution hardly focuses on the collective aspirations of self – determination and values because liberal democracy main focus is on individual needs and convenience. To a large degree peace building has followed the patterns of State building and this is predicated in ideal of violence.

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In essence what has been missing is an imaginative approach that takes it as its starting points, the problematising of the given frameworks of institution and social

relation. Conflict Transformation, in this sense would provide the answer in that it would mean more than a shift in power relations and it aim at obtaining sustained structural and attitudinal changes which in turn would determine the creation of new institution. Therefore, we need to start looking for what Elise and Kenneth Boulding call “signals of peace” or what Jim Wallis calls “Signs of Transformation.”

Conflict Transformation

Conflict Transformation can be understood in several different ways. The normative understanding stresses the need to create constructive, nonviolent solutions to violent conflicts or threats. In the best of the cases, Conflict Transformation can encourage the establishment of cooperative and just societies. This approach is most explicitly represented by John Paul Lederach who calls for a transformative practice in which unpeaceful relations are restructured over a long term by education, advocacy (nonviolent activism), and mediation. The ultimate purpose of Conflict Transformation is not only social change but also political, economic, and cultural change. Indeed, peace studies and Conflict Transformation should be informed by such principles as human rights, justice, freedom, recognition of identities and democracy.

An important difference is whether Conflict Transformation is supposed to have a specific end-state or whether it is an open-ended process. Both versions of Conflict Transformation reject the idea that the purpose of conflict resolution is the restoration of the status quo ante as it gave rise to war in the first place. Therefore, Conflict transformation aims at the promotion of a more peaceful reality embodying new social

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relations, institutions, and visions. In that sense, Conflict Transformation and education have a strategic element: the goal of peace is sought through the redefinition and restructuring of a conflict situation. The normative approach to Conflict Transformation runs the risk of becoming a movement for the general improvement of society rather than just mitigating and redefining the conflict. If the normative view adopted is too long term, the focus on the mitigation of violence and its effects may have to take a back seat. Therefore, for Vayrynen, one needs an intermediate approach between 'technical' conflict resolution and the 'normative' transformation of conflict which he calls 'social' transformation of violent conflicts. In fact, Lederach's ideas are not far removed from such an approach.

The idea of Conflict Transformation stresses the dynamic and discontinuous nature of conflict unlike Contingency Theory which treats its basic features as linear and constant. It also recognises that for many conflicts there is no easy and obvious solution, especially if their asymmetries are embedded in national and international inequities. Therefore it is often more realistic to try to mitigate the violent aspects of the conflict by limited external interventions without trying to solve it once and for all. In the best of the cases, the redefinition of issues, actors, rules, and interests may transform the nature of conflict so that resolution becomes possible. Keashley and Fisher's Contingency Theory of conflict resolution stresses the need to match intervention strategies with the key characteristics of the conflict. It also emphasizes the importance of correct timing of intervention to de-escalate tensions. Finally, the Contingency Theory pays attention to the close interaction between objective and subjective features of conflict and notes that the impact of subjective factors tends to increase with the escalation of conflict.

Without going further into the debate, let us explore some of the important models of the Conflict Transformation suggested by various scholars and practitioners

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and make a critical analysis and assessment of their applicability to the Naga situation. The focus is to come out with certain workable and applicable approach keeping in mind the root cause of the conflict, history, socio-economic, cultural aspects of the people, identity issue, human rights, freedom, emancipation, justice, fairness and democracy. These root causes are common to all movements around the world though nature of aspirations and demands are different.

Some Important Models of Conflict Transformation

Mahatma Gandhi's main approach to conflict resolution is through Non-violence and Satyagraha as the way of struggle. Gandhi consistently demanded non-violence of himself, as the way, and as the long-term goal. He rejects both direct and structural violence, since that would go against the whole idea of non-violence. Non-violence as a form of struggle against both kinds of violence, and an equally strong admonition not to use them in the struggle. The objective of Satyagraha was to fight oppressive social structures such as caste system, which were the basis for the perpetuation of a highly unequal society. A Satyagrahi tries to fight injustice, not to sweep it under the carpet. Like A.J. Muste, for Gandhi also, there is no way to peace; peace is the way; to be taken now. Modern conflict resolution theory owes much to his doctrines of struggle to overcome injustice while remaining faithful to pacifist values. Buddhism has also had an important influence on the theory and practice of conflict resolution.

Conflict resolution scholars such as Johan Galtung and Adam Curle have applied insights from Buddhism in their thinking about the transformation of violent conflict into peaceful social relations. Although Gandhi was not a Buddhist, Galtung claimed that "his thought and action in rejecting the caste system were so utterly Buddhist that I (he) wonder(s) whether this is not an at least equally correct label".

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However, Mahatma Gandhi, a leading proponent and practitioner of non-violence, has been criticized by the scholars and practitioners of Indigenous Perspective because like current conflict resolution, many a time a noble peace and its espousal of non-violent means do not seem to address the right questions. In Mazruian terms “the prophet of non-violence, Mahatma Gandhi, helped to facilitate India entry into the global structure of power and war”. Satyagraha had failed to evolve a sustainable and peaceful post revolution agenda. It would seem that Gandhi took it for granted that peace and justice for all would prevail within a State system [predicated on violence?].

Mazruian questions, whether this was not a betrayal of non-violence. Indeed many other successful revolutions [peace and non-peaceful] conducted within the parameters of the nation-state have only led people to further misery and subjugation. When the post-independent State of India was challenged, it used the very same instrument of force, the very same the British used in suppressing liberation movements in British India – to suppress genuine democratic peoples movements. The Third or Fourth World’s Perspective concluded by saying that third and fourth worlds, conflict resolution and peace building must, ipso facto, begin with natural justice and human rights. Otherwise we might experience peace, but it will be hot, very hot peace. They hope for creating a culture of Justpeace.

In his book (Making Peace 1971) , Adam Curle defines human relationship as peaceful and un-peaceful and as balanced and un-balanced. By un-balanced relations Curle means all those relations where one part has the power to impose conditions on the other. And where this power is used by the advantaged party to exploit the disadvantaged one. Un-balance relations are not necessarily un-peaceful as he points out in the case of parents and children and local/national governments. Nevertheless, Curle notes that exploitative imbalance is particularly prevalent forms of un-peaceful relationship. It can

be readdressed by an increase in awareness on the exploited part which can lead in turn into a “[r] evolution of the underdog” generated by raised expectations; the confrontation that characterizes a growth in awareness of the un-peaceful relations marks the process towards a redistribution of power and a more equal relationship.

In *True Justice* (1981), Curle elaborates on the previous concepts of peace making and further adds that it consists “of manifesting the truth and applying it to the disordered relationships, relationship that are disorders specifically because they are not nurtured by the truth.” Peace-making should also consider as its ultimate goal the achievement of reconciliation but accept in the process, also the existence of immediate goals such as the resolution of the conflict and the removal of injustices. In *In The Middle* (1987) Curle attempts in systematizing the practice of mediation. In 1995 Curle published his works *Another Way: Positive Response to Contemporary Violence*. The book is divided into two fundamental parts (a third one representing a case study), one dealing with the roots and manifestations of modern violence and the second with contemporary peace making. It is especially in this second part best elucidated by the following case study that Curle departs from his idea of the third party as fundamentally interposing between two entities to move their relations towards one of agreement, and he introduces the idea of working at the grass- root level to build peace from below.

The idea of citizen peace-making is further developed in a previous article, entitled “*New Challenges for Citizen Peace- Making*” (1994) where he in fact uses words of disillusionment with the practices suggested by Conflict Resolution. “Since Conflict Resolution by outside bodies and individuals has so far proved ineffective it is essential to consider the peace-making potential of the conflicting communities themselves.”

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Like Curle, Lederach believes in the positive action a mediator can perform to help the parties overcome communication problems and bargaining difficulties. Contrary to Curle, though he refers to third party as an “*Insider Partial*”, someone from within the conflict context, thus knowledgeable about it and familiar to the parties and nevertheless trusted enough by the contendants, so that, he/she can act as an intermediary. His observation stems from his experience in Latin America where more value was placed on the idea of “Confianza” (trust) than on impartiality and distance from the conflict setting.

Like Curle, Lederach seems to believe that much of the modern conflict is due to an un-balanced distribution of the resources and similar to Curle his work is permeated by attention to developmental issues. Lederach’s works also shows a more explicit concern with the impact that the cultural assumption of the third party can have on the people that are the reference of the intermediary action. He has developed two models of training in Latin America: Prescriptive and Elective. Lederach’s approach to training is different from conflict resolution theory in that it is explicitly attentive to valuation of local capacities and resources. Lederach’s most important contribution to the field of conflict resolution theory lies in his elaboration of the concepts of “Empowerment”. In his works *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (1997), he suggests that conflict resolution moves from a prescription of answer and modalities to focus attention on empowering the resources, modalities and mechanisms for building peace that exists within the context.

Lederach maintains that there are three approaches to peace building:

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- a) *The top-level approach is constructed around high-level leaders and intermediaries;*
- b) *The middle-range approach is constructed around authoritative figures that do not officially represent any parties to the conflict but are generally highly respected as individuals or are formally engaged in the fields of education, health, agriculture, business or humanitarian organization; and*
- c) *Finally the grass-root approach is constructed around people who are involved in local communities, members of indigenous NGOs, health officials and refugees' camp leaders.*

In essence Lederach's contribution rest in stressing the necessities of dealing with all the above-identified actors in a conflict setting. In particular, he highlights the fact that Conflict Resolution theory has been lacking a systematized approach to middle-level actors he sees as providing a strategic, valuable link between the top and grass-root level in favour of external intervention oriented at top-level. However, according to the Indigenous Perspective researchers such as, Akum Longchari and Babu Ayindo, when Lederach talks of a "Middle-out" approach he is basically affirming the ideology of the civil society. In other words, he would like to see changes happen but within the realm of the existing nation-state. In this regard, statist diplomacy and alternative dispute resolution methods are heading towards the same destination: a situation of social order and not necessarily of Justpeace. To this we may agree with Ho-Won Jeong that, contrary to realist assumptions of a world order, idealist perspectives emphasized that peace can be achieved only through cooperation among nations designed to promote human well-being. The Indigenous Perspective Researchers are also equally critical to the NGOs because they serve the interest of mainly Western Governments.

These researchers further pointed out that, Lederach model of "Middle - out" is not clear on the criteria of categorizing "leadership in population" though it echoes Marxist analysis of society. In most Indigenous societies like Nagas in Nagalim {lim-

land} pyramidal categorization would not accurately represent the structure, power relation or leadership or the ontological worldview of the nation. There are many societies where power and leadership are devolved. According to S.D. Nandi, community approach to dispute settlement perhaps, found its best expression in pre-modern Naga villages. The highest forum to adjudicate dispute within a village was the village council headed by its chief. He was assisted by clan chiefs and some important family heads. Complaints of serious nature were referred to it. The chief, on receiving the complaints, fixed a date for hearing. The disputants were asked to present themselves along with their supporters before the council on the date of hearing. The council heard both the parties, examined witnesses and assessed the evidence. A decision was arrived at in keeping with the “general feeling” of the village community. In arriving at a decision customs, conventions, traditions, social norms and values were kept in view. Any decision of the village council was binding on disputing parties and any dissent was punished.

Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham, and Tom Woodhouse call for a Broad Approach to Conflict Resolution or Conflict Transformation. It would be wise to include not only mediation between the parties but also efforts to address the wider context in which international actors, domestic constituencies, and intra-party relationships sustain violent conflicts. The implication of this broadening of scope and applicability of conflict-resolution approaches has been to see the need for a complementary range of third-party interventions. They should be multi-track instead of just track I (governmental) or track II (NGOs, Churches, Civil societies, etc.), and address both elites and the grass roots.

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In line with the necessity of a broad view, conflict resolution should concern itself not only with the issue that divide the main parties, but also with the social, psychological, and political changes that are necessary to address root causes, the intra-party conflicts that may inhibit acceptance of a settlement, the context that affects the incentives of the parties, and the social and institutional capacity that determines whether a settlement can be made acceptable and workable. In other words, a multi-track approach is necessary, relying on interventions by different actors at different levels.

In other words, the contingency model relaxes the omnipotence of the method and contextualizes the choice between different means of intervention. While the model's link with Conflict Transformation is helpful, its view on the stages of conflict is simplified. The model assumes that all conflicts proceed from discussion through polarization and segregation to destruction. This model is also based on the assumption of linearity which does not hold in practice as conflict often moves back and forth between cycles and may well return to violence.

For Kevin Clements best approaches to conflict resolution and transformation includes the following promise and the essential ingredients.

- 1. Conflict resolution and transformation aim to channel the energy generated by conflict in constructive and non-violent ways rather than destructive and violent directions. Its aim is not to eliminate conflict but to utilize conflictual processes for generative and positive change. In this way, conflict transformation works to develop resilient personal and social systems where security is enhanced by the quality of community relationships.*
- 2. Conflict transformation occurs when violence ceases and/or is expressed in non-violent ways, and when the original structural sources of the conflict (economic, social, political, military, and cultural) are changed in some ways. The propensity for violence is diminished by democratization, demilitarization, de-*

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alignment, socio-economic development, and expansion of human rights, humanitarian law, and socio-cultural openness.

3. *Conflict can be transformed by normal socio-political processes by the parties acting alone, by expert third-party interventions and parties acting together, or by judicious advocacy and political intervention. There needs to be multi-track involvement if good conflict transformation is sought.*
4. *Conflict transformation can take place at any stage of the escalatory cycle. If the conflict turns violent, its transformation may depend on some kind of crisis management or intervention. Later, it may require conciliation, mediation, negotiation, arbitration, and collaborative problem-solving processes. In the end, any lasting conflict transformation involves processes of resolution, reconstruction, and reconciliation.*

At its best, argues Clements, conflict transformation is about personal and collective empowerment. It underlines the consciousness of the possibilities that lie in seemingly impossible and desperate situations. It is about generating options where there seem to be none, about radical dialogical engagement with those who seem to be enemies. It is about conquering threat-based systems of governance with institutions that rest on persuasion and consensuality. It is about generating socio-economic and political situations conducive to realizing the full potentialities of the human spirit. And more importantly, it explains how negative processes might be transformed into positive ones.

Vayrynen argues for a conflict theory based on the idea of transformation rather than settlement, stressing that it is too important to understand how conflicts are transformed in dynamic terms. His approach is primarily analytical and theoretical, but is also suggestive of types of intervention that peace builders should be considering. His four types of intervention that peace builders should be considering are:

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- i) *Actor transformation – internal changes in parties, or the appearance of new parties;*
- ii) *Issue transformation – altering the agenda of conflict issue;*
- iii) *Rule transformation- changes in the norms and rules in governing and conflict; and,*
- iv) *Structural transformation- the entire structure of relationship and power distribution in the conflict is transformed.*

Rupesinghe (1995, 1998) argues for a comprehensive, eclectic approach to conflict transformation that embraces multi-tract intervention.

Conceptualising the “three worlds and conflict model”, Jayne Seminare Docherty sees human beings as existing, simultaneously, in three distinct yet overlapping worlds- the Symbolic, the Social World and the Material World. He argues that imbalances in human relationships in these three worlds lead to violent conflict. According to Jayne Docherty, “all conflicts involve material, social and symbolic elements and all conflicts must be addressed in all these worlds or dimensions.” The symbolic world refers to the worldview that individuals inhabit and speak from. This means that individuals from different symbolic worlds might use the same words and same language, but the meaning and reference might be very different. In such situations, attempts at communication become extremely complex and exacerbate. For instance, to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) the word “autonomy” meant a separate homeland, while the Sri Lankan government defined “autonomy” as falling short of the carving out of a separate state. Traditionally, conflict resolution practitioners have tended to overlook the importance of the symbolic world with disastrous consequences for peacebuilding.

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efforts. It is particularly important to recognise the existence of the symbolic world, which plays an active role in the sustenance of violent conflict.

Critiquing the traditional approaches to negotiation and conflict management which focus essentially on interests-tangible and compromisable as a failure in transforming identity-based conflict, Rothman suggest an ARIA framework, designed to address cases in which normal negotiation is premature and its process serves to ripen the situation so the groundwork is laid for successful conflict management with special reference to Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He argues that interactive dialogue must precede problem solving or negotiation, and should accomplish several important goals: the parties must learn to appreciate the gains of reaching an agreement; they must begin to look at their conflict in common terms, articulating shared concerns and aspirations; all sides must appreciate the advantage of reaching an agreement that the others find fair and acceptable; and finally, the parties must feel comfortable with the climate for negotiations that will result in mutual gains. In short the essential goals and motivations of all parties locked in identity conflict must be fully articulated and at least be accepted in principle prior to problem-solving. The ultimate goal of the ARIA framework is to foster harmony and resonance from adversaries' full and honest expression of the deeply felt human motivations that lie beneath their conflict.