CHAPTER TWO

POSITIONING MYSELF IN THE THEORETICAL FIELD: NONVIOLENCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

INTRODUCTION: RESPECT

My work as a 'trainer', a facilitator of workshops designed to explore nonviolent approaches to conflict, is not only based on certain values and assumptions; it is carried out within a conceptual framework. I wish to explain those approaches and that framework in this theoretical chapter. First, however, I should say something about respect.

I made respect the focal concept for my research, because, as I shall outline in this chapter, it seems to be a value which in different ways underlies both 'nonviolence' and 'conflict resolution'. But its possible meanings are many and varied - which is why I felt I needed to explore them, and since I made this word (and what lay behind it) my focus, I should explain what I mean by it - or rather what I meant at the beginning of my research. One of the difficulties I have had in writing this chapter has been knowing what to include in it, here at the beginning of my thesis, and what to keep for the end and my conclusions. I have decided that in order to make myself intelligible for the reader, I have to include most of what I have to say about my theoretical understandings, position and contribution here, in one chapter. It is therefore necessarily a chapter which spans and brings together ideas which have developed during my research, gradually taking shape and making sense of themselves for me, through practice and reflection, conversation and reading.

When I began, I found respect difficult to define, even for myself, let alone in a way that would, as I thought, have some meaning and validity in the eyes of others. What follows is an edited version of a piece I wrote in the spring of 1994.

'Essentially, I meant by respect the recognition and honouring of the being of others, both as - and for - being distinct, separate and individual, and as - and for - their part in the rest of being, their place in the scheme of things, their participation in the web of interdependence. Gerard

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Manley Hopkins, whose poetry and ideas have been important for me, celebrated constantly in his writing the unique identity and interior patterning of every being (1953: 51):

> 'Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
> Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
> Selves - goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,
> Crying *what I do is me* : for that I came.'
>
> (In 'As kingfishers catch fire')

For Hopkins, in all the profusion and variety of individuality, one energy and principal of life and beauty is at work (1953: 30):

> 'He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
> Praise him.'
>
> (In 'Pied Beauty')

Although I would not use Hopkins' theological terminology, in his celebration of life, his reverence for it, both in its individual expressions and in its wholeness, he speaks for me. Translating this valuing (indeed, reverential) response to life into principled commitment and behaviour can be fraught with difficulty and challenge. In some circumstances it survives, at best, as a distant memory to cling to, in the face of contrary emotions and apparent practical impossibilities.

If respect involves the affirmation of both individuality and interbeing, it also, for me, at the human level, involves the affirmation of equality, however hard that equality may be to define. 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.' So runs the UN declaration; but what does it mean? In many ways individuals are clearly unequal - in size, ability, status for instance - and some are enslaved from the moment of their birth, their fundamental rights denied. So in what does this 'equality' consist? I believe this is a matter of both instinct and philosophy: a recognition that we are all in one boat; members of one human race, products of one evolutionary process and sharing one ecological niche, one place in the universe. We share both our dreams and our mortality, our capacity to decide and our ultimate helplessness. We need each other's solidarity, both practically and psychologically. Antoine de Saint-Exupery (whom I

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quote despite his gendered language, because he still moves me) writing of his rescue from death in the desert, addresses (rhetorically) his desert rescuer (1995: 102):

> 'as for you, our saviour, Bedouin of Libya ....I will never be able to remember your face. You are Man, and you appear to me with the face of all men together. You have never set eyes on us, yet you have recognised us. You are our beloved brother. And I in my turn will recognise you in all men.'

It is this sense of being bound together and of an underlying common identity which for me implies some fundamental, existential equality, and the mutual recognition which goes with it.

The most fundamental form of respect, is then, as I see it, a response to humanity itself: the recognition that any other human being has an equal place in the scheme of things and the same fundamental needs as oneself - respect for what is common. A secondary kind of respect is accorded to what is particular: particular attributes; special innate characteristics, or learned skills.

This secondary kind of respect may be given or withheld on account of acquired or inherited attributes such as wealth, status or political power. For me, though I may admire and celebrate the gifts and achievements of individuals and societies, respect has a moral basis. While I wish to affirm the principle of essential human dignity or respect-worthiness, and respect that for itself, I wish to give additional, secondary respect to those who live in accordance with such unconditional, primary respect: those who behave respectfully. Our own individual honour depends on our honouring of the bond of shared humanity, which provides the best grounds for self-respect.

Without self-respect we are unlikely to find it easy (if indeed possible) to respect others. This creates a potential vicious circle, which it seems to me can be broken only by the experience of that basic, unconditional respect or regard which constitutes a kind of bottom line for human behaviour - to be maintained in the face of all kinds of provocations and disappointments, in spite of all kinds of unrespectworthiness. A society which embodied such unconditional respect for humanity would constitute, for me, a civilised society.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

The balance between individual and collective identities and loyalties, and the abuse of both, constitute a key issue for respect which has been recurrent in my work. Western individualism often promotes personal freedom at the expense of social need. Collectivist societies often preserve social stability and cultural continuity at the expense of individual freedom. Both individualist and collectivist cultures can be highly discriminatory. Equality of regard is foreign to most cultures, in practice if not in theory - often in both. For instance, women are often respected by men, if at all, not as equals but as a kind of subspecies. Class and caste systems are near universal. People with disabilities are marginalised. Those with minority sexual preferences are described as sinful and often persecuted. Most societies are thoroughly hierarchical in attitudes and structures. Challenging these social norms is very threatening and can cause great offence. How, if at all, it can be done respectfully, has been one of the recurring questions in my research.

The many forms of discrimination outlined above may be understood as a kind of violence. Direct physical assault is but one form of violence, which also has structural and cultural dimensions (see later: Galtung 1990) and can be experienced as, for instance, hunger, exclusion or fear. My understanding of violence, based on the thinking of Freire (1972) and of Hildegard and Jean Goss-Mayr (Goss-Mayr 1990), is that it can be defined as whatever is done, by neglect or design, that harms or oppresses others, denies their true nature, or prevents them from fulfilling their potential as human beings. Violence to human beings, thus broadly defined, coincides in meaning with Freire's 'dehumanisation' (1972: 20):

> 'Dehumanisation, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human.'

When violence is understood in this sense of whatever dehumanises, respect may be seen as the opposite of violence: as the recognition of the true nature and potential of others, the acknowledgement of their reality and needs, the will to make space for them and honour them. While violence can often be equated with injustice, and is the moral opposite of care, respect, by the same token, involves both care and justice: justice as a concept, value and goal; care as an impulse and practice, born of imagination and empathy - seen by Carol Gilligan (Gilligan 1982) and other feminist writers since (for instance in Head 1995), as the female counterpart of justice. The principle of justice and the impulse of care both call for action. Respect is a practical as well

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as attitudinal matter, and needs the promptings of emotion - even when these are mediated through the reason and will.' In John Shotter's words (1993: 148), 'Behind every thought there is an affective-volitional tendency."

These, then, were the ideas about respect with which I embarked on my research. They have not, I think, been radically altered -rather confirmed; but they have been challenged and enriched in many ways which will be described and reflected on in coming chapters. In the meantime I will move on to a discussion of the theoretical framework within which I work.

TWO FIELDS: BOTH-AND.

(Note: I will use the term Conflict Resolution as a generic one, and not to denote my position in relation to various issues within the field. I shall use the abbreviation CR. Since nonviolence is often thought of as passive, whereas I understand it to be the contrary, I shall usually refer to it as Active Nonviolence, abbreviated as ANV.)

When I first began to read about CR, I found myself constantly fighting with the literature. It seemed to embody endless contradictions and arguments which all seemed partial - that is, seemed to miss half the picture. Then I read a book by Norbert Ropers and in it I found these words (1995: 79):

> 'A great part of the specialist discussion about the methods of conflict regulation ironically follows the pattern which the adherents of win-win solutions like to criticize, namely the 'either-or' pattern of argument. This cognitive tool undoubtedly has its merits. In view of the immense complexity of ethnopolitical conflicts, however, some investigation of the 'both-and' paradigm might be just as promising.'

This expressed, more mildly, the feelings which had been growing in me. I want to take a both-and approach. In particular, I wish to extend the idea of complementarity to bring together two very different approaches to conflict, amounting to two different fields. Nonviolence and Conflict Resolution have, in my experience, largely disregarded each other. The tradition of Nonviolence, from Gandhi on, has constituted a radical counter-culture, while the more recently developed, less radical, field of Conflict Resolution represents an attempt to find ways of dealing

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with things as they are. It is my contention that neither approach is adequate in itself: that they need each other, and that it is possible to bring the two ways of thinking together in a coherent whole and to benefit from their combined insights and areas of expertise.

Nonviolence and conflict resolution are both concerned with action to overcome violence and to establish what Adam Curle (1971), describes as 'peaceful relationships'; but whereas ANV lays emphasis on overcoming the primary violence of injustice, by nonviolent means, CR concentrates on minimising or ending what is often the secondary violence of armed or otherwise hurtful confrontation. Both ANV and CR represent an inclusive approach: one which sees the well-being of all parties as the desired goal. During the time covered by my research, I have aimed to combine the approaches of the two largely separate schools of the more radical and 'nonrespectable' Nonviolence and the more acceptable and academically established Conflict Resolution.

The thinking outlined below draws heavily on the theories of others, named and unnamed, absorbed in many different ways, and has been used and developed in my practice, in response to the apparent needs of those with whom I have worked. As far as I am aware, ANV has not been developed as an academic field in its own right. Its thinking, while underpinned by a few key texts from key people, has been developed and transmitted largely through a movement, and movements: through action, praxis. My own understanding of ANV has been acquired over thirty-five years, almost entirely by word of mouth and in action: through meeting with those who have given their life's energy to trying to promote and live it, and through my attempts, in small ways, to do so myself. I shall outline what seem to me to be the key elements of ANV as I have learned it, moving on to a discussion of CR, outlining the ideas and issues which seem to me significant and which contribute to the theoretical base I have developed for and through my work. I shall try to demonstrate that the concepts and approach of ANV are complementary to those of CR, and explain how I have combined the two fields of thinking in my own theory and practice.

My theoretical frame has been developed through conversation with colleagues and workshop participants - conversations about experience, about ideas, about books - and through my own reading and reflection. My reading has been characterised more by the intensity of my engagement with it than by its volume (though I have in these four years made my way through

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piles of articles and chapters); but through my work, through meetings, conferences, committees and seminars, I feel I have achieved a fair view of the main contours of the CR field, and some of its thorny patches.

The CR field itself is still, relatively speaking, in its infancy, and draws on many fields. According to John Burton and Frank Dukes, writing in 1990 about the management and resolution of conflict,

> 'we do not yet have a 'library' - that is, a recognised literature and category of references based on agreed definitions of the field.....Conflict resolution is....concerned with almost all branches of knowledge.'

Much has been written since then. The CR literature is rapidly developing; but the kind of 'holistic' approach which Burton and Dukes advocate would preclude any very clear boundaries for the field, since conflict is a feature of almost any aspect of human life. I am not attempting a comprehensive review of what could be regarded as the literature of CR; still less of ANV. The references I make will be brought in because of their formative importance for me, because they are illustrative of a particular idea under discussion, or because they exemplify well what I see as an important element in CR (or ANV) thinking. Different theoreticians categorise and relate issues in different ways. What I aim to do is to indicate the theoretical components and viewpoints which so far constitute my working base and which will therefore, I hope, be reflected in - and provide some points of reference for - the reading of the accounts of my workshops and later reflections on the theory and practice of my work as a trainer.

ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE

History and character

The work and writing of Mahatma Gandhi constituted the foundation of the approach to life and politics known as nonviolence. Through his action in the early anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, in the first two decades of this century, and his subsequent leadership, in the nineteen twenties and thirties, of the struggle to free India of British rule, he demonstrated and developed

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

a cogent, coherent approach - philosophy, strategy and tactics - for responding to violence and injustice, and acting to establish what he considered to be wholesome patterns of independent living. To do this he drew on the insights he found in his own Hindu background, and in the Bible accounts of the life and teaching of Jesus. He, in turn, became the inspiration for the work of Martin Luther King Jnr. in his leadership of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA, from the time of the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955 until his assassination in 1968.

Gandhi and King remain the two most visible giants of the nonviolence movement, but their ideas and example were taken up and developed by individuals and organisations across the world. Some of these organisations pre-dated the rise to prominence of either of them. For instance, King turned for help in training his followers to the US branch of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), which had its beginnings in the UK in 1914 (and which, much later, I served for eight years as President). In fact the US FOR had pioneered the application of nonviolence to race relations, and had co-sponsored a kind of Freedom Ride in 1947, which they called a 'Journey of Reconciliation' (Raines, 1983).

Two individuals who played a key role in the development and dissemination of nonviolence, were Jean and Hildegard Goss-Mayr, to whose influence I frequently refer. My knowledge of Gandhian and Christian based nonviolence (and my use of the term Active Nonviolence) I owe chiefly to the opportunities I had to work with them. One of their books, 'The Gospel and the Struggle for Peace', which has been translated into several languages, summarises the content of their teaching and the analytical models they use (Goss-Mayr, 1990). Their workshop materials were developed during their time as IFOR field officers in Latin America, and their pedagogical and political approach is heavily influenced by the work of Paulo Freire, embracing his notion of 'conscientisation' (Freire 1972) - the fundamental means for liberation from oppression. The Goss-Mayrs played a crucial role in the preparation of the mass nonviolent action which was decisive in the removal of President Marcos from power in the Philippines. This mass nonviolent action in Manila became a model for nonviolent 'people power' in the largely nonviolent actions which were to change the face of politics in Bangladesh, Nepal, and the whole of Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union in the years which followed.

The world of Active Nonviolence is a world of struggle, of protest, of action for change: change in power relations, in structures, in culture, in politics, and in the methods of struggle itself. From

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

this perspective, conflict is seen largely in terms of justice, or the lack of it, and active nonviolence as the way to achieve it without at the same time denying it to others and negating the values on which the concept of justice is based. In nonviolence theory, to engage in conflict is not only in itself positive - it is a human obligation. According to Gandhi (1980: 81), 'No man could be actively nonviolent and not rise against social injustice no matter where it occurred.' For him, socialism was 'a beautiful word', embodying a vision of a new reality, in which 'the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level' (1980: 75). He saw the world as divided into haves and have-nots, powerful and disempowered; a division which needed to be replaced by equality and unity. Violence could not achieve this goal, since 'permanent good can never be the outcome of untruth and violence.' There is 'the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree.'

For Gandhi, the overcoming of division in society meant that the oppressors had to be included in the 'permanent good'. His thinking is mirrored very closely by Freire's:

> 'This, then, is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well.'

In this way they would become 'restorers of the humanity of both' (Freire, 1972, p. 21). Martin Luther King, likewise, included white people in his dream for the future, proposing that he and his followers should act with enough love to 'transform an enemy into a friend' (King, 1969). At the same time the Civil Rights movement constituted a deliberate engagement in conflict on the part and on the side of black people in the United States, and against discrimination and segregation. When challenged with creating conflict, King replied that the conflict already existed; what he and others were doing was to bring it into the open, so that it could be 'seen and dealt with' (King, 1963: 85).

The discourse of nonviolence is often revolutionary. Peace News, the UK nonviolence newspaper, carries the slogan, 'For nonviolent revolution'; and in Freire's model of nonviolent liberation, those who engage the oppressed in 'critical and liberating dialogue' are the 'revolutionary leadership' (Freire, 1972: 41, 44). The practitioners of nonviolence are (with, arguably, the exception of that leadership), almost by definition, 'ordinary people' - especially

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

those pressed down upon by those in power -taking action on their own behalf: the 'blacks' and 'coloureds' in South Africa, taking action against apartheid; ordinary Indians struggling for home rule; the 'Negroes' in the Southern States insisting on their civil rights; Chilean peasants oppressed by landowners and employers.

Religion has constituted an important and explicit resource in the nonviolence movement: a movement which is at the same time political and practical. In an undated book entitled 'Non-Violence: weapon of the brave', Gandhi wrote (p. 15), 'I believe myself to be an idealist and also a practical man.' Gandhi's approach, based on the twin concepts of 'satyagraha', 'truth-force', and 'ahimsa', 'non-harm', was rooted in Indian tradition, which, according to Suman Khanna's fascinating discussion, is both deeply spiritual and intensely practical. In her words (Khanna 1985: 2), 'ethical thinking of a practical type has been there in India since the Vedas'. (Gandhi's emphasis on truth, at face value potentially disturbing, is more concerned with honesty and integrity than with absolute knowledge - which, he claims, is the property of God alone. See Bose, 1972.)

Gandhi's close colleague, Abdul Ghaffar Khan - who led the traditionally vengeful and warlike Pathans in a nonviolent movement which reached eighty thousand in number - was a devout Moslem, and his followers called themselves the Khudai Khidmatgar, of 'Servants of God'.

Martin Luther King's base was in the Southern churches, and his inspiration came from his Christian faith, illuminated by Gandhi. The nonviolence movement in Latin America has been built on Catholic base communities, sometimes with a mix of indigenous 'Indian' beliefs. In Vietnam, opposition to the civil (partly) war was led by Buddhist monks. More recent demonstrations of nonviolent 'people power' have been inspired and strengthened by the religious convictions and inner preparations of their leaders and groups: in the Philippines, in South Africa, in Eastern Europe and in the Baltic States - where although the masses of demonstrators were (with the exception of Poland) for the most part not religious, the churches often played a catalytic role and provided an umbrella for meeting and joint action.

When I was planning recently, with a Ghanaian colleague, for a conflict resolution training for African women, I asked her about the inclusion of a spiritual element in the workshop. Her response was that to exclude a spiritual element would be an impossibility: that for African

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

women life was a spiritual matter. In the secularised West, it is easy to forget that most of the world's people are still religious, and find their meanings in life, and their capacity to cope with it, within religious frameworks and value systems. Although there are many adherents of nonviolence who are not religious, and the Gene Sharpe (1973) approach to nonviolence would claim to be less idealistic and more hard-headed, in the words of the Goss-Mayrs, 'The nonviolent struggle is essentially carried out at the level of conscience' (1990: 27). Nonviolence is not simply a set of tools and tactics; not even a discrete field of human activity: it aims to be a way of life, inner as well as outer, through which the individual becomes capable of nonviolent action in particular circumstances.

In Active Nonviolence, then, both goals and methods are determined according to strong and unequivocal values, often religiously based, centring on respect for life and human potential, and on personal and social responsibility. Peace and justice are linked inextricably, and power is a central concept, understood both morally and practically. Engagement in conflict is an obligation in situations of injustice, and the focus of ANV is on the empowerment of one side in relation to and in opposition to another, while at the same time the adversary is to be included in the social good which is sought.

Workshop notes on ANV

The following are notes on ANV which I have written as a basis for discussion in workshops. I introduce them here as a way of summarising what I mean by the term. I present them as 'one person's understanding, based on her own reflections on the thoughts, writings and experiences of many.' I should acknowledge, however, in particular, how closely I draw on the thoughts and words of Jean and Hildegard Goss-Mayr. I can still hear, in both of their voices, the phrase 'absolute respect for the human person'. I can hear it in the voices of others whom they have influenced. Here is my text.

'**Nonviolence can be defined as a philosophy, an approach to life, and to personal, social and international relationships. It is also the word used to describe the actions or behaviour based on this approach. Nonviolence is active, not passive, seeing individuals as responsible for themselves and for each other.**

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

Commitment to nonviolence presupposes a belief - not necessarily religious - in the positive potential of the human condition, and of human beings individually and collectively: a belief that each contains the potential for good and has a conscience which can be touched; that the humanity of each demands respect, even when their behaviour does not; that respect, for self and others, holds the greatest power for positive change, whereas violence, in any form, leads to destruction and more violence.

The philosophy of nonviolence is based on the understanding that the outcome of an action will reflect the nature of that action; that in fact the action is itself an outcome. When people act, or react, violently, they perpetuate violence and violate themselves as well as the other. When they behave nonviolently, their actions already constitute, in however small a part, the makings of a new relationship or direction. Respect, therefore, in nonviolence, governs both the goals of action and the processes by which those goals are to be achieved.

To struggle to overcome violence is to risk harm. While in violent combat the harm is inflicted on the adversary, in nonviolence it is accepted, if necessary, by the nonviolent actors as a consequence of their commitment, in order to break the cycle of violence.

The aim of nonviolent struggle is to overcome violence and injustice rather than to win victory over an adversary, and to achieve an outcome which meets the fundamental needs of all concerned, so opening the way for long-term reconciliation.'

From these notes the central role of respect in my understanding of ANV will be clear.

Conscientisation, mobilisation and confrontation

ANV's major focus is on what Johan Galtung (1990) defines as the 'structural violence' of systems of injustice and the 'cultural violence' that justifies and promotes it. Its task is to overcome these injustices, first (according to the Freirian approach of the Goss-Mayrs) by the awakening of self-respect in those subjected to them, and an articulation of the nature of their condition. This process of awakening and understanding is described by Paulo Freire as 'conscientization', in which those involved

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

> 'simultaneously reflecting on themselves and on the world, increase the scope of their perception.....[and] begin to direct their observations towards previously inconspicuous phenomena'.

As a result of this new awareness,

> 'That which had existed objectively but had not been perceived in its deeper implications (if indeed it was perceived at all) begins to 'stand out', assuming the character of a problem and therefore of challenge.'
>
> (Freire, 1972: 56, 57).

This is the beginning of the process of 'empowerment', which makes possible the next step of organisation or mobilisation for action to change it.

The first step in mobilisation is group formation. This involves the clarification of values, the search for shared understanding through joint analysis of the existing situation, and the articulation of aspirations and goals. Through these processes trust and commitment are fostered, and the capacity for cohesion and joint action in the face of pressure and attack. Next comes the task of devising a strategy for the accomplishment of agreed goals, and determining the methods that are to be used. In ANV, dialogue comes first and last; but dialogue when power relations are very unequal is unlikely to be possible with the directly opposing party. Those who benefit from superior power exercised in the form of oppression and exploitation do not readily enter into dialogue with a view to relinquishing the benefits of this relationship; so that a change in power relations is needed before the process of dialogue can begin. This change can be brought about through the addition of support - numerical, moral, political, financial - and an increase in leverage or pressure.

Communication, while dialogue is refused by those in power, will need to be directed towards potential friends, with a view to building support. As the movement grows, various forms of public action may be used to confront those in power and bring the injustice in question into the realm of public debate, building moral pressure for change. Direct action to apply pressure to the opposition may also be used. Gene Sharpe, in 'The Politics of Nonviolent Action' (Sharpe, 1973), lists one hundred and ninety-seven forms of nonviolent action. In practice the forms are infinite, limited only by the imagination of those devising them. The overall purpose of such a campaign

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

is to bring about a situation in which the relative power of the campaigning group is such that it becomes worthwhile in the adversary's eyes to enter into dialogue with them, with a view to resolving the conflict which has been brought into the open.

Touching the conscience of those in power is by no means ruled out. King wanted to turn his enemies into friends. But change is seen to be more likely to take place if attempts at dialogue are accompanied by the moral and political pressure of public or international opinion, together with sheer force of numbers and whatever practical (often economic) pressure can be applied, for instance through strikes and boycotts. Given its interest in this kind of power, as well as moral force (Gandhi's 'satyagraha'), ANV could be argued to encompass forms of coercion in its methods; but commitment to nonviolent means of struggle should imply that no means will be used which inflict lasting human damage. It is accepted, however, that the response to nonviolent confrontation may be violent and deadly.

In the light of the many bloody conflicts which have taken place in the last decade, in the name of justice and liberation from oppression, framings which categorise societies in terms of 'goodies' and 'baddies', or easy talk of fighting for rights must give cause for concern. However, ANV's tendency to frame conflicts in terms of oppressors and oppressed, making strong moral judgements, is accompanied by a commitment to respecting and including all members of society in its goals. This should, in theory, protect against the replacement of one perceived injustice by another. The nonviolence of its methods should reduce the likelihood of producing a blood bath. But ANV requires subtlety, self-challenge and great care in its application. To use nonviolent methods in an unjust cause could be seen (according to ANV's own logic) as a form of violence. ANV's proponents have always aimed to be realists as well as idealists: hence the attention to coercion as well as persuasion. Weighing the risks of action with the costs of the current injustice is an important aspect of such realism.

Constructive Programme

Gandhi was not only concerned with the removal of oppressive laws and regimes: he was insistent that a parallel programme of social and economic development should accompany the struggle for liberty. (Narayan, 1968). Ghaffar Khan, his Moslem colleague, required that his

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

followers should do two hours of social work every day. To protest against something was not enough; it was vital to know what you wanted instead and to work for it (Powers, Rogers and Vogele, 1997). Thus the idea of empowerment which ANV promotes embraces not only the possibility of acting for political change, but responsibility for positive action at the community level. This, as I see it, is important in helping avoid the construction of ethnic identity in largely antagonistic terms.

I hope that this discussion of what are, in my understanding, key elements and aspects of ANV, will indicate to the reader the concepts and approach that I brought with me to the field of CR, and which I have tried to incorporate into my work in that field. I will now move on to a review of CR itself.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

History and character

Conflict Resolution, under a variety of titles, is a burgeoning field for researchers and practitioners, receiving much recognition (as well provoking some scepticism and challenge). In her study of 'Conflict and Culture', in her full and cogent review of key literature and concepts, Michele LeBaron Duryea (1992) defines Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as 'an emerging field embodying the principle of interest-based negotiation in generating consensus' (p. 10); one which came to prominence in the 1970s as a response to the perceived inadequacies of the legal system in the United States. However, she quotes Scimmeca as tracing the broader field of conflict resolution to 'four movements that began in the mid-1960's and early 1970's:

> '(1) New developments in organizational relations [challenging the hierarchical, 'top-down' approach]; (2) the introduction of the 'problem-solving workshop' in international relations; (3) a redirection of religious figures from activist work in peace-related endeavours to an emphasis upon 'peacemaking'; and (4) the criticism of lawyers and the court system by the general public that resulted in what is known as alternative dispute resolution (ADR).'

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

This is clearly written from a North American perspective. A high proportion of the CR literature - and of CR practitioners - is of North American provenance. At the same time, the picture fits my own experience. I come from a 'peace movement background', and I learned some of my skills as a facilitator in the ADR world as a neighbourhood mediator. The work I do is probably most closely related - and sometimes overlaps with the world of the 'problem-solving workshop'. (International relations, I would note here, have been quite largely overtaken by inter-ethnic and intra-state relations as the theatre of conflict.) I personally have little knowledge of the theory of organisational relations, but the work of Friedrich Glasl, to which I refer later is an example of its relevance. Scimmeca's third category of 'religious figures' probably represents US more than European realities. In Europe that would often be 'post-religious'. The move from 'activism' to 'peacemaking' is one I recognise, and corresponds to a move from ANV to CR. (Maybe we just get more tired and less hopeful as we get older, and decide to 'make do and mend' rather than seek radical change. Maybe, too, we get more of a vested interest in the status quo.) Broadly speaking, then, Scimmeca's categories correspond to my experience of the field.

In the sections which follow, I will discuss what I see as vital aspects of CR, starting with fundamental attitudes and assumptions; then moving on to particular areas of understanding and processes: the ideas they embody, together with some of the questions which they raise. To do this I shall follow the imaginary path of a conflict, starting with the dynamics of conflict, moving on through processes for dialogue and negotiation, and on towards settlement, reconciliation, and the establishment and maintenance of peace.

CR's approach to violence and conflict

The role of respect (as indeed of values generally) in the field of CR is, generally speaking, implicit rather than explicit. Although CR proponents are slow to take anything approaching an absolute moral position on violence, choosing a more pragmatic discourse, it is the proliferation of *violent* conflicts across the world which appears to have given rise to the burgeoning of CR as applied at the interethnic and international level. It is not unusual within the CR literature to take, theoretically, a neutral, or even positive view of conflict as such, and to see violence as the problem to be overcome. Developing constructive ways of handling conflict will help to

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

minimise violence. Norbert Ropers (Francis and Ropers, 1996), writing of the need to develop society's capacity for constructive conflict handling, coins the phrase 'civilised conflict culture'. Chris Mitchell, in his chapter on 'Recognising Conflict' (Woodhouse 1991), draws on Galtung's concept of 'structural violence' (Galtung 1990): political and economic mechanisms which disregard the needs of so many in different societies and across the world, causing deprivation, suffering and death - the violence of 'injustice' and 'oppression' in the discourse of ANV. Mitchell discusses the notion that structural violence can be identified objectively. He argues that this view could be described as normative, in that those (including, notably, Curle 1971) who hold it 'are not afraid to make judgements about the existence or non-existence of conflicts according to their own criteria. However, the major contribution of this normative approach to conflict research is that it helps to underline a sometimes neglected moral dimension in the field.' (Mitchell 1991: 225). At the same time Mitchell points out that such judgements must, in the end, depend upon the subjective application of chosen criteria.

In spite of the distinction made at times by CR writers between conflict and violence, in the CR literature generally conflict and violence are very often confused, and 'conflict' becomes the enemy - as in as in the quotation above and in the term 'conflict prevention'. This must surely signify a high valuing of stability, and a fear of the violence which conflict all too often produces. Whereas conflict may be a response to structural violence, most political leaders who incite their followers to fight do so in the name of justice. James H. Laue (1990: 257), while stating that conflict 'can be a very helpful and useful part of society', goes on to say that

> 'violence could be defined as a form of severely escalated conflict. Virtually all forms of violence are pathological; indeed violence generally hurts weaker parties more than it does stronger parties.'

On the whole then, despite the assertions of a few that conflict may be necessary if structural violence is to be addressed, CR is far less enthusiastic about conflict than is ANV; and in contrast to ANV, which is typically adjudicating and morally partisan, CR proponents adopt a 'non-judgmental, non-partisan and, above all, non-coercive' approach (Mitchell and Banks, 1991: ix). Avoiding moral hierarchies and partisan viewpoints, CR emphases impartial, third party roles and an equal focus on the needs, aspirations and interests of all sides. Although CR is by no means value-free, it can be seen as relativist in character, while ANV makes strong moral

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

demands on its adherents and strong moral judgements about the rights and wrongs of a given situation. Perhaps CR could be seen as representing the 'care' side of Gilligan's care-justice dichotomy (see above), attending to needs and relationships, while ANV emphasises justice and adjudication. Whereas there are situations where 'world opinion' would be clear that injustice was crying out for action, there are probably many more situations where the question of justice could be seen in many different ways, from outside as well as inside. In a world riven by hideously violent conflicts waged in the name of justice - conflicts in which any vestiges of justice, care and the basic necessities of life have been destroyed - CR's nonjudgemental approach has clear attractions.

CR's response to oppressive power relations

ANV emphasises engagement in conflict in order to reach a point where dialogue is possible. The attention it gives to the subsequent processes for resolving the conflict is minimal. CR, conversely, concentrates on resolution and pays little practical attention to issues of justice and power relations. I say 'practical attention' because many references are made to these issues, and concerns expressed - as referred to above. Adam Curle (1971), who in some ways embraces both ANV and CR in his analysis and approach, defines oppressive power asymmetries as 'latent conflict' and outlines a process of education and confrontation through which negotiation can be made possible and 'sustainable peace' achieved. John Paul Lederach (1995), takes up these ideas. In his opening theoretical chapter, outlining his 'framework for peace', which includes justice, Lederach endorses the need for nonviolent activism and points to the danger that CR, in the way it is often formulated, can encourage the idea that conflict is to be avoided or minimised. He espouses the term 'conflict transformation' as including constructive engagement with conflict at different stages and in different roles. In the event, however, the chapters which follow are about 'conflict resolution'; in particular, mediation. Similarly Chris Mitchell, in the article referred to above, basically accepts Curle's thinking on the 'developmental sequence of human conflicts', but offers no theory on how that development can take place in such a way as to empower the oppressed or be rendered less rather than more violent, and concentrating on intermediary roles.

CR and conflict dynamics

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

While CR has little practical to say about the empowerment of weaker parties and constructive engagement in conflict, it has produced useful theory on the dynamics of conflict or, perhaps more exactly, the dynamics of hostility. (ANV, surprisingly perhaps, has little to say on this subject - in descriptive rather than prescriptive terms - though much hands-on experience and training in techniques for coping with specific behaviours in 'hot' conflict.) Ronald J. Fisher (1993) outlines a sequence of escalatory stages which begins with discussion (an optimistic viewpoint? In my experience conflicts often begin with an absence of discussion when it could be most productive) and goes on to polarisation, segregation and destruction. The aim of any de-escalatory process is to control the violence, control the hostility, acknowledge the basic needs of the parties, improve the relationship between them, and reach a settlement which meets their various interests. The point of understanding the dynamics of conflict is to see more clearly what needs to be done to intervene in destructive processes and turn them around.

John Paul Lederach's seven stage description of conflict escalation/ de-escalation (Mennonite Conciliation Service 1992: 35) follows a similar pattern. Starting from the ideal, from discussions in which despite disagreement the parties agree that they share a problem, Lederach identifies the next stage as one in which energies are diverted into personal antagonism. The third stage sees a proliferation of issues, so that the conflict instead of being about a particular problem becomes a general conflict between the parties. At the fourth stage the parties are talking only *about* each other, no longer *to* each other, at the fifth there is a tit-for-tat escalation of hostile acts and by the sixth the parties have reached a state of general hostility or antagonism. By the last stage the parties have become more or less completely polarised, so that cross-party friendship or non-partisanship is no longer possible.

These stages seem to me to describe well some of the aspects of conflict escalation. I am doubtful about the value of depicting them as consecutive. It seems to me that they often happen concurrently, or in random order, according to chance as much as any 'law'. Chris Mitchell's notion of conflict cycles, despite the relative inscrutability (for me) of his diagram, seems to make a lot of sense (Mitchell 1981: 67). He sees behaviour as the trigger for hardening attitudes and their effects, which in turn give rise to more substantive issues and more negative behaviours. Over time these cycles escalate in their degree of hostility and in the level of coercion employed by the parties.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

Friedrich Glasl (1997) delineates nine steps of escalation, depicted as a downward staircase, each of whose steps, once taken, is difficult to reverse. These steps are elaborated under the following headings: hardening, debate, actions, images and coalitions, face-losing, threatening strategies, limited blows, fragmentation and 'together into disaster'. This last phrase, together with the extremely well articulated and recognisable descriptions of the different psychological and behavioural aspects of the different stages, points to the irrational and counter-productive ways in which conflicts evolve; which to me suggests that the management and resolution of conflict will require attention not only to practical issues, but also to psychological needs and processes.

Psychological and political approaches.

Whereas Glasl is writing about organisational management, I am convinced that the same dynamics would be present at different levels of conflict in the socio-political sphere. One of the debates within CR concerns the applicability of approaches espoused within contexts contained within the rule of law - approaches often brought together under the title of Alternative Dispute Resolution - to conflicts which have exceeded the bounds of such containment. For instance, Nadim Rouhana (1995: 260), questions whether 'the assumption that bringing adversaries together will reduce stereotypes, change perceptions of the enemy, and build personal relationships' can be applied to political conflicts.

> 'Even if such contacts, dialogues, and interactions bring about the desired goals, it remains to be demonstrated that interpersonal relationships in and of themselves have anything to contribute to the reduction of international conflict'; and 'By focusing intervention on psychological dimensions and on intrapersonal and interpersonal problems, third parties impose a level of analysis that ignores power structures, inequalities, and the parties' human and political needs. Reducing conflicts between groups, communities, and nations to a psychological level is not only futile but also potentially politically damaging for participants, particularly in the midst of violent conflicts.'

While I agree that it is essential to recognise the impact of power relations - social, political, economic, legal and military - and of practical interests and needs, it seems to me that the psychological aspects of conflict must be important; even, or perhaps most especially, at the

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

highest levels of leadership, where the pressures of protracted violent conflict are most acutely felt. Adam Curle (1986: 52) says that unofficial political mediation

> 'is intended to break down the barriers of suspicion, unreasonable fear, exaggerated hostility, misunderstanding and ignorance that keep protagonists at a greater distance than is warranted by the practical or material grounds of their quarrel. Only when this has to some extent occurred will there be an adequate chance of satisfactory negotiations.'

Since all interactions and decisions in relation to conflict are made by human beings, at whatever level, it seems unlikely that the personal needs, fears and ambitions of those decision-makers would not play an important part in the continuation or resolution of the conflict.

As Norbert Ropers points out, interethnic conflicts often develop over a very long time and the 'process involves a variety of subjective and objective factors all influencing on another' (Ropers 1995: 21). Feelings about ethnic identity are used and fomented by leaders as a means of increasing their own political power. Ronald Fisher (1990) outlines Ralph White's exploration of the dynamics of the Cold War, in which he draws attention to the paradox that while everybody wants peace and hates war, war preparations continue, for other psychological reasons. White therefore proposes the application of 'realistic empathy' in negotiations: hard analysis of political and other interests combined with psychological insight.

It would seem unrealistic to think that conflict at the political level could be resolved without some solution being found to the political issues at stake. Theories and training menus which confine themselves to intra and interpersonal awareness and skills are therefore, in my view, quite inadequate as a response to large-scale inter-group and political level conflicts. But should political or psychological aspects of conflict transformation come first? It seems to me that they are, as it were, interleaved and mutually reinforcing: a little lowering of emotional tension, reduction in prejudice etc. may make possible some degree of communication on issues of substance; a little communication and progress on issues of substance will lower emotional tension, reduce prejudice - and so on.

Needs theory and problem-solving

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

'Problem-solving', as an approach to overcoming conflict, embodies what could be regarded as the key tenets of CR: that 'resolution' presupposes the inclusion of both/ all sides in any agreement, and that the parties to the conflict should participate together in the search for a mutually acceptable settlement. The process of dialogue which such a search requires can take many forms. One is the so-called 'problem-solving workshop, in which middle-level leaders from the different sides are brought together in a process facilitated by outsiders to the conflict - typically practitioner academics (Mitchell, 1996). Jay Rothman, writing about Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, claims that the
problem-solving approach

> 'engenders a new possibility for shared motivations as key elements in the conflict dynamic that must be addressed ..... It enables parties to see that adversaries, like the self, are deeply motivated by shared, human concerns and that, unless these are fulfilled, violence will be perpetuated.' (Rothman 1992: 62)

Rothman's work and thinking are based on the 'human needs' theory of John Burton, which has become a central theme in CR literature. According to Burton and others, conflicts cannot be properly resolved - that is, agreements satisfactory to all sides (and therefore durable) cannot be found, unless the underlying, universal, human needs of the parties are identified and met: needs such as security, identity, recognition and participation (or, according to Galtung (1990), the needs of survival, well-being, identity and meaning, and freedom). These needs, it is argued, are 'nonreducible' and therefore non-negotiable. Positions need to be replaced by a focus on interests if negotiations are to be productive; but whereas less essential interests can be matters of compromise, the human needs from which they spring cannot. Rothman argues that a

> 'clear sense can be made.... that a needs-based approach, focusing on the 'human dimension' of such conflicts, should precede the interest-based approach in many contexts. To solve protracted social conflicts, parties must feel they will gain greater fulfilment of their needs'. (Rothman 1992: 45)

I am interested in Rothman's use of the comparative 'greater'. I have for some time felt that there was false logic at work in the idea that these basic human needs, being irreducible, were therefore non-negotiable. In a sense, of course, they are: people cannot be argued out of them. Equally no-one's need for security or recognition - or anything else - is ever met in an absolute way: that is part of the human condition. We have to put up with *relative* security, a *degree* of

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

participation, and so on. What I believe is necessary in negotiation is that the fundamental human needs at stake are recognised (not necessarily explicitly) and receive what is felt to be an adequate response in any proposed solution: in other words, the process itself should meet those human needs. Security, both physical and psychological, as well as political, will be a necessary key to the willingness of parties to participate in talks. It may require secrecy, it will require a safe place and assurances about the nature of the process itself. Parties will not wish to relinquish control of the nature and degree of their participation. Recognition, including recognition of identity and what it means, will necessarily be part of the process; and participation is the corner stone of processes for co-operative problem solving. For me what all this amounts to is respect at all levels, both in the process and in any agreement for the resolution of the conflict: respect for the humanity of all concerned, in all its aspects, practical and psychological.

Manfred Max-Neef, contributing to discussion of 'The new Economic Agenda supports the notion of universal human needs and gives his own list (1985: 147):

> 'These fundamental needs are in our opinion the same for every human being in every culture and in any period of history. They are the needs for permanence or subsistence; for protection; for affection or love; for understanding; for participation; the need for leisure; for creation; for identity; and for freedom.'

He categorises these needs as 'those of having and those of being', which 'not only can but must be met simultaneously.' (He suggests that in the West we have concentrated on having at the expense of being.) While arguments about lists and categories of needs are potentially endless, I find these two categories, and the idea that they are of equal importance, useful. What seems to matter is that those trying to help in the search for solutions to conflicts should understand and try to address the deeper values and emotions related to these needs, which underlie and motivate the demands parties make; recognising that whereas needs may be universal the ways in which they are met will, as Max-Neef points out, differ according to culture, and that 'being' needs are as important as material ones.

Max-Neef's insistence on 'being' or psychological needs is supported by James Scott's powerful work, 'Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts'. Scott lays his emphasis on the psychological aspects of oppression (1990: 111, 112):

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

> 'Just as traditional Marxist analysis might be said to privilege the appropriation of surplus value as the social site of exploitation and resistance, our analysis here privileges the social experience of indignities, control, submission, humiliation, forced deference, and punishment.......Resistance, then, originates not simply from material appropriation but from the pattern of personal humiliations that characterise that exploitation.'

'Dignity' and 'indignities' are words Scott uses repeatedly. The process of co-operative problem solving advocated in CR respects the dignity of all parties, reframing the conflict in terms of a joint attempt to find a way forward, in place of continuing assault. Thus it becomes possible for the conflict to be viewed inclusively and seen as a shared problem, rather than in terms of opposition. (Rothman 1992 op. cit.)

This idea of finding and new way of viewing a conflict can be described as reframing. For my workshops, as a written handout which I reproduce in my Workshop Content chapter, I list some of the reframings which the problem-solving process requires of the parties to a conflict. They are all, one way or another, current in the CR literature. The first is the one just referred to: reframing the conflict as a shared problem. Others follow from that: shifting their attention from past iniquities to future needs; letting go of fixed positions and focusing instead on their interests and how they can be met; deciding that a solution is possible, rather than impossible, and regarding themselves not only as victims, but also as having the capacity to make choices.

The overarching reframing to be made is to see the conflict in question as a problem to be solved co-operatively, rather than a battle to be won. The ability to reframe attitudes to conflict in these ways, and the will to discover and honour the human needs which underlie the behaviours and demands of protagonists, seem crucial to any constructive approach to conflict. But is it asking too much of the parties to expect them to set enmity on one side? It would seem from the experience of practitioners (for instance in Oslo, preparing for the Palestinian-Israeli Peace Settlement) that such dialogue is possible (though bringing constituencies on board then becomes a problem). Such processes do not, however, address the question of power imbalance.

Power relations and problem solving

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

Enabling parties to a conflict to let go of their self-image and public position as victims, and take on a role as choice-makers is, in my experience, a crucial if difficult one; but it does presuppose a previous adjustment in power relations if one party has been at a severe disadvantage, and indeed victimised.

In so far as CR addresses the question of power disparities, it is with reference to the role of third party intervention, rather than the empowerment of the oppressed or weaker party. Where the third party undertakes a facilitative mediator role, in the Alternative Dispute Resolution tradition, the only way she or he can address power imbalance is by seeking to maintain a process in which the weaker voice is heard, and any settlement is agreed rather than imposed. The Alternative Dispute Resolution movement was, in the words of Norbert Ropers (1995: 55), 'inspired by the civil rights campaigns and other social movements which aimed at the elimination of social injustices and a reduction in imbalances of power.' Yet the mediatory processes and services it developed did not include methods to adjust major power imbalances in such a way as to make mediation on major conflicts of interest a realistic proposition where relative power parity did not exist.

Facilitators of problem-solving workshops, like mediators, try to contain power imbalances within the workshop process, working on the principle of 'parity of standing and esteem' (Mark Hoffman, 1997) for all participants. This may be possible with the kind of middle level leadership usually involved in such workshops, who have the freedom that comes with relative powerlessness. If, however, this parity within the process is too many miles distant from external realities - from popular attitudes and the dispositions of power holders - the chances of any immediate applicability of understandings reached in the workshop will be slim. If one party will not be seriously affected by the continuation of the conflict, or the potential actions of their adversaries, the power holders in that party will have little incentive to listen to proposals from lower down which take the needs of their weaker adversaries seriously. This leads me once more to the conclusion that CR processes can bear fruit only when the necessary degree of power parity is already present.

Power mediation; settlement and resolution

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

The only other approach sometimes included in the discourse of CR, to addressing unequal power relations between parties in conflict, is that of 'power mediation': the intervention of a powerful third party, to 'bring the parties to the table,' acting as a lever on behalf of the weaker side, or in favour of a certain outcome. However, since that outcome will be an agreement judged by the third party to be either equitable or in line with its own interests, the 'empowerment' offered by power mediation is the empowerment of the mediator. The recent example often used is the Dayton Agreement imposed by the USA on negotiators from what was Yugoslavia. In the world of realpolitik, such a 'solution' may seem appropriate, if less than ideal. It may seem the only way to bring an end to continuing bloodshed. Yet at the same time it seems to me that, from a wider and longer perspective, it must represent a continuation of the problem, rather than a step in its solution. It is replicating and perpetuating the kind of power relations which have bedevilled societies for so long, and which have such a disastrous track record in terms of human misery. It is part of the pattern of domination (Eisler 1990), whose governing principle is that might is right, ignoring or overriding human dignity and need - if nothing else, the need of participation, the need to have choice about one's own destiny. There is a real danger that such imposed solutions will break down, or require such enforcement as to contradict any idea of what would normally be called peace. There is also a danger that new conflicts will grow in the future from the seeds of past suffering and hatred, and the sense of humiliation which comes from having had to dance to someone else's tune. Power mediation is, in my view, part of the methodology of war, not the methodology of peace.

While power mediation can impose settlements: it cannot 'resolve' conflicts. Some consider the concept of resolution as utopian. However, those who stick to the term do so with the conviction that in the end it is the more realistic approach; that a conflict 'settled' without resolution of what lies beneath the surface will in time recur. Some theoreticians opt for the term 'conflict management', with the idea that conflicts never really go away and that what is important and possible is to manage them as constructively, or undestructively, as possible. l concur with the notion that a degree of conflict may characterise the relationship between particular groups (or of course individuals) indefinitely; indeed, that the absence of conflict from any relationship would be unlikely; but that is not the same as to say that a particular conflict or complex of conflicts cannot - or need not - be resolved. To develop what Norbert Ropers refers to as a 'conflict culture' (Francis and Ropers 1996) in which conflicts are constructively handled or 'managed' is part and parcel of developing a 'peace culture'.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

Facilitative mediation

Whereas 'power mediation' provides a route for the imposition of a settlement, facilitative mediation can play a vital role in problem solving approaches. The power of such mediation is one which has to be willingly granted by the parties to the conflict, and it is the power to hold a process, rather than decide on outcomes. It is the mediator's task to help the parties themselves to reach a shared understanding of the situation, to explore different options and to decide what will constitute an acceptable solution.

In problem solving workshops the task of the facilitator(s) is to devise and facilitate a sequence of joint exercises and discussions which will help the different parties to analyse the situation, understand each other's point of view and explore different options for the future. Decision making will not come within the scope of the workshop, since those with the power to make decisions would not normally see it as appropriate to participate in such informal dialogue. Such workshops can therefore be seen as part of the 'pre-negotiation' phase of problem solving, and the facilitators as mediators of a pre-negotiation process.

There is also a role for mediation in preparing the ground for negotiations through separate conversations with the different parties. This can happen as a function of power mediation, but in can also happen at the 'non-official' level, sometimes over a period of years (Curle 1986; Williams and Williams 1994). In these informal preparatory processes, the absence of political profile or affiliation on the part of the mediators, their political powerlessness, is what fits them for their task, rendering them non-threatening and enabling them to be trusted by the different parties, as having no axe to grind or to wield. They must remain strictly impartial in the process. The only advocacy role open to them is that of 'being an advocate for the process of conflict resolution' (Mitchell 1993: 142). Laue also sees enforcement as a necessary third-party role - and here a distinction needs to be made between third party roles in general (which of course can be negative as well as positive) and mediation in particular. A facilitative mediator can have nothing to do with enforcement, though it may be some form of coercive intervention could pave the way for mediation in certain circumstances (Mitchell 1993: 140). Mitchell argues that a variety of different third party actors will be needed to fulfil a variety of intermediary roles and functions,

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

including convenor (initiator, advocate), enskiller (empowerer), guarantor, monitor, and reconciler (Mitchell 1993: 147). It is helpful to make these distinctions, and important not to confuse different and incompatible roles.

Impartiality and advocacy; outsiders and insiders

It is often assumed that constructive third-party roles will always be impartial. I disagree with such a blanket assumption. I believe it is made because theorists do not often distinguish between different phases of conflict, or take questions of justice sufficiently into account. This can easily be understood as a will for 'peace at any price'. If the aspirations of the weaker side are seen as legitimate, they will need somehow to reach a stronger bargaining position for genuine negotiations to take place. Once that shift in power relations has been accomplished, the most productive role for third parties may be to facilitate the achievement of negotiations. It may well be that those who have taken partisan roles up to the stage of open conflict will not be trusted to play an impartial role at the conflict resolution stage, and this needs to be taken into account. Advocacy for non-partisan causes, such as human rights or the protection of the environment, whereas logically it should be regarded as impartial, may appear in its application to disadvantage or favour one side. Again, this needs to be recognised by any intervening person or organisation.

What is striking is the degree to which the CR literature is written from an outsider's point of view, even when the outsider role is framed one of 'empowerment', ie helping insiders to act to improve their own situation. Ropers (1995: 44, 45), listing the functions of third parties in 'conflict regulation' categorises empowering or capacity building functions together with measures to change the conflict environment, under the heading of 'conflict transformation'. (See also Lederach, 1995, as cited above.) Training workshops constitute one such intervention. Their intention is to help those living in a conflict area to play a constructive role in that conflict, usually as bridge-builders at some level; sometimes as negotiators. Sometimes, when participants include members of different parties to a given conflict, these training workshops serve several functions: training in CR ideas and techniques; bridge building between the different parties to the conflict through their joint participation; and (usually towards the end of the workshop) some problem-solving work in relation to the conflict itself.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

There will be many bridge-building roles available to would-be peacemakers who are members of a society in conflict. Mediation is often the first focus of peace-making ambitions; but situations of conflict can carry only a limited number of mediators! Moreover, insiders are often disqualified by membership of one of the conflicting parties. If, however, the underlying desire is to make a contribution to peacemaking more generally, to help reduce enmity, build communication and trust, and encourage constructive thinking and practical co-operation, then the possible forms for that contribution will be many, depending on the nature and needs of the situation, the motivation, capacities, resources and skills of the person or group in question, and their position in society and in relation to the conflict. For instance, one form of bridge-building between religious groups would be to facilitate the formation of an inter-religious council - which might well require some informal mediation, and certainly the use of mediation skills.

Given that conflict often needs to be 'waged' before it can be resolved, and that even in societies which are considered to be peaceful, conflicts of one sort or another, at one stage or another, are always in progress, I consider it important that CR training should include the skills and understandings which will help participants work for change in different ways, and to do so by nonviolent means. Too little attention is paid in CR thinking to the primary role of 'first parties' and the desirability of constructive self-advocacy. Negotiation training is, of course, designed for the parties themselves; but it is surprising how often trainers concentrate on the role of mediators rather than of the actual negotiators (see Lederach reference above). Trainees themselves often come with the preconception that partisan roles are somehow not to be seen as contributing to peace. Those who live in areas of ethnic conflict, however, are likely, de facto, to be members of one of the parties to the conflict, so that even if they wish to be bridge-builders they are unlikely to be seen as non-partisan. Such actors have been referred to as 'semi-partisan' (Francis and Ropers 1996, and Ropers 1997).

In short, I would argue that the primary concern of CR, especially of trainers, should be for the empowerment of those directly affected by a conflict, with outsiders playing a secondary, facilitating role. A preoccupation with the role of third parties seems to me unhealthy, unless at the same time the primary role of the conflicting parties themselves is acknowledged and encouraged. This is a matter both of respect and of pragmatism. CR's emphasis on the role of third-parties and of outsiders constitutes another difference from ANV, with its focus on the

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

empowerment of the primary players. ANV's limitation is to assume an oppressor: oppressed relationship between the parties and to neglect the needs and dynamics of situations where power disparity is not a prime issue.

Levels of action and conflict intervention

In addition to distinguishing between different roles and functions within a conflict, it is helpful to distinguish between different social and political levels of operation. John Paul Lederach's pyramid diagram suggests that it is useful to think in terms of three different levels: the 'grass roots' level, the widest - most numerous - category, forming the base of the pyramid; the middle level of actors with some influence within society, and the top level, small in number, of political decision makers. (Lederach 1994). For outside interveners who wish to promote or facilitate the 'transformation' of a conflict, it makes sense, Lederach argues, to start with the middle level, since those it includes have some opportunity to influence both the grass roots level (too numerous for an outsider to address) and the decision makers (who are themselves too busy and politically constrained to participate in informal processes).

Ropers (1995), citing Lederach, makes his own divisions between what he terms the Realm of States on the one hand and the Realm of Societies on the other, and between, in each case, the micro level and the macro level - the micro level being that of particular activities and the macro level being that of structures and systems. He considers how action at the social level can support efforts at the political level, and gives examples. I believe that if further attention were given - by internal actors and interveners alike - to the possibilities for mutual support, effectiveness in peacemaking could be increased. (I should like to be involved in designing and facilitating workshops for this purpose.) For instance, in Northern Ireland, it might be assumed that bridge-building community relations work somehow prepares the ground for peace; but did it play any role in helping to make possible the recent ceasefire? Could grass-roots work of any kind have done anything to help the talks on their way and prevent the resumption of the bombing? Did it help bring about the resumption of talks? If so, to what degree and how? It would make sense to examine such issues and explore the possibility of increasing strategic leverage and support between peace making efforts at different levels. Ropers (1995) raises this issue, asking how action at the societal level can support measures taken at the political level, and giving examples.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

A similar question could usefully be asked about 'horizontal' relationships: those between different categories of actor at the different levels; whether they could be better co-ordinated, and how they relate to the views and power (potential and actual) of the socially and politically inactive majority.

Reconciliation

If the confrontational stage of a conflict has been concluded, with an agreement reached and, ideally, freely entered into by both sides (or all parties), there is likely to be considerable work still to be done, in order to restore some kind of psychological health to society. (Like most other things, this is likely to be a matter of degree rather than of absolutes.) To process the resentments, hatreds and traumas of the past, at the group or national level as well as among individuals, is an immense and daunting task when severe violence has been inflicted and endured. Without such processing, there is the danger that the bitterness that remains will erupt once more in the future, resulting in a new cycle of violence and counter-violence.

Here the volume of literature dwindles to a trickle. Reconciliation - maybe seen as the province of religion - does not seem to be a particularly popular topic. Maybe it is seen as too much to hope for, an unrealistic goal. My view is that to neglect it is foolish. To be sure, the first and most fundamental prerequisite is a just agreement between the parties: one which meets the needs of all concerned at both the practical and psychological level. Part and parcel of this will be the scrupulous implementation of that agreement, and sound procedures for redress when it breaks down. Ron Kraybill (1996), in his thoughtful discussion of what reconciliation requires, outlines the following sequence of reconciliation requirements (my summary):

1) Physical safety (eg removing people from the site of conflict, inter-positioning of personnel between warring parties, protective presence, monitoring).

2) Social safety: a context in which there is acceptance for the expression of the emotions occasioned by trauma.

3) Truth-telling:

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

a) as naming and knowing the experience of suffering and providing the opportunity for those concerned to tell their own story, so integrating the past with the present and individual experience into the social, in order to make sense of what has happened and what it has led to.

b) as discovering, as far as possible, how or why things happened (in some cases through meeting with the other side).

[I would add here a third item: having the narrator's account heard and respected, if not agreed with, by the other side.]

4) The rediscovery of identity, with a degree of confidence which can allow for the admission of imperfections and diversity.

5) Acknowledgement of interdependence and a return to the acceptance of risk implied by trust.

6) Restorative negotiations, ie negotiations to address present and future needs, so restoring relationships, rather than allocating blame.

7) Apology and forgiveness

I would have put restorative negotiations earlier in the sequence; but in practice, like so many lists, these items indicate steps which need to be taken and retaken, processes which feed each other in interleaved layers. Some easing of tension will need to precede negotiations (as discussed above) and the healing process will not be able to proceed to relative completion until all the issues of the conflict have been dealt with, and all underlying needs met. This may include measures of reparation (whose effect may be largely symbolic, but which satisfy to some degree the need for recognition of wrongs done). Apology and forgiveness are probably hardest of all, both personally and politically. Maybe easier are joint acts of mourning, confession or purification; but where one side can be seen as the clear victim this will hardly do.

Changes within individuals and groups are not entirely dependent on the behaviours and changes of the other side, though they will have an important effect. In externally favourable circumstances, it is possible for a person or group to make such internal progress, in terms of a

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

renewed sense of identity and security as to be less dependent on the other side in order to let go of victimhood and incarceration in the past.

Reconciliation is seen by Hiskias Assefa (1993) as a concept or philosophy which needs to inform our entire approach to conflict and to relationships at all levels: a 'reconciliation politics', which would encourage the building of consensus and look for common ground, seeking not to exclude but to include. Reconciliation in Assefa's understanding means a re-ordering of relationships within society and a new concept of governance: the creation of a social order which is characterised by what Curle (above) described as 'peaceful relationships'. Lederach (1994), Assefa's colleague and fellow Mennonite, describes an exercise in which participants in a training workshop have been asked to explore the concepts of truth and mercy, justice and peace:

> 'In conclusion we put the four concepts on a piece of paper on the wall...... When I asked participants what we should call the place where Truth and Mercy, Justice and Peace meet, one of them immediately said, "That place is reconciliation." What was so striking about this conceptualisation of reconciliation was the idea that it represents a social space. Reconciliation is both a focus and a *locus*, a place where people and things come together.'

If its analytical and practical focus is combined with sensitive attention to relationships between the parties, problem-solving can to help rebuild relationships and constitute the first step on the road to reconciliation. Cultural sensitivity will help enable those involve to determine what is the appropriate balance or ordering of relational and practical elements in mediated processes.

Peace maintenance; violence/ conflict prevention

(Note: What I would call 'violence prevention' is usually referred to as 'conflict prevention': see earlier discussion.)

If peace is to last it will require the maintenance of such practical relationships. The building and maintenance of peace will often require massive efforts to enable the return and resettlement of internally displaced people and refugees; to reconstruct infrastructures and buildings, rebuild economic life and social networks and institutions, politics and legal systems. Also required will

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

be the development of a 'conflict culture' (Francis and Ropers 1996) which will enable constructive engagement with the conflicts which characterise human organisations and relationships, however peaceful. The development of nonviolent forms of conflict management and engagement can be seen as an important contribution to 'conflict prevention'. Such a constructive conflict culture would, in my thinking, need to be built on the foundations of some reasonable attempt at social justice: a society in which Burton's human needs (Burton 1987, 1997) are met, for groups and individuals - including the need for participation (therefore participatory systems and processes), security (therefore the rule of law and a healthy and inclusive economy), and recognition and identity (therefore social space for the expression of different cultures).

Ideas about what constitutes a just society are, it seems, on the borders of CR's territory, overlapping with political and social science, economics and development. In recent years, development agencies, including governmental ones, have been paying increasing attention to the impact of violent conflict - and its remedies - on the possibilities for sustainable development. They have also recognised that conflict often grows in the seedbed of deprivation and exclusion, and seen the role of development programmes in helping remove the causes of physical violence. Milton J. Esman (1995) discusses not only the way in which 'violence can destabilise the environment in which the agencies operate', undermining their efforts, but also the damage that can be done to ethnic relations by the 'ill-considered provision' of foreign aid. These two sides of the conflict-development equation are clearly set out and powerfully illustrated in Mary Anderson's 'Do No Harm' (1996). Anderson argues, in addition - again with telling illustrations - that the way in which development programmes are implemented can have a positive impact on the handling of conflict, as well as (hopefully, given care) not making things worse. In recent work with the relevant department of the UK government, I have discovered that the development of good governance and political participation are understood as part of its work. Encouraging pluralism and the public expression of differing points of view on public policy could certainly be seen as part of the development of a 'civilized conflict culture'.

HARNESSING THE COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN ANV AND CR: A THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

Having reached the post-conflict/ violence prevention stage in my review of CR as an approach, I should like in this section to summarise what I see as the relationship between ANV and CR, and go on to present and reflect on the way I have brought the two together in my work, both for the purposes of training and as part of the wider endeavour to understand conflict and how to handle and transform it. First then, my summary.

Summary of the relationship between ANV and CR as I see it

The relationship seems to me to be both sequential and attitudinal. Both ANV and CR seek to transform conflict, but they concentrate on different stages and aspects of it. ANV can be seen as beginning where conflict begins, with the latent conflict of oppression. It lays much emphasis on structural violence as a cause of conflict, and seeks the empowerment of the oppressed through conscientisation and organisation, providing a framework of values together with a wealth of practical tools to maximise the cohesion and effectiveness of action, offering ways to address the question of power without resort to violence. On this ANV is unequivocal: violence is to be rejected in principle. (The tactics of ANV may be used for practical reasons, but then it is hard for a nonviolent line to be maintained when the going gets rough; and the impact of principled behaviour and the message it conveys will be different.)

Like ANV, CR is practical in its approach. Its theory is about what works; about understanding conflict in order to be able to deal with it. It lacks, or perhaps rather avoids, the overall philosophical base of ANV, and avoids taking up an explicit moral position on violence, while having a clearly implied commitment to its diminution. This CR approach may seem more pragmatic, approach, and in less danger of being judgmental; more likely to meet with a response from those already involved in violent action; also more accepting of human frailty, less morally demanding. (Is that more or less respectful?) The strong philosophy and ethos of ANV, however, may be inspiring and strengthening for those embarking on a nonviolent campaign in potentially very violent circumstances.

Despite the general absence of explicit values from the CR literature, CR seems, as I have suggested, to be based on assumptions which *imply* values: the assumption that violence, in all its manifestations, needs to be reduced; the assumption that the dignity and needs of all parties to

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

conflict should be met; the assumption that solutions should be inclusive. In other words, respect should be afforded to all, both psychologically and practically. As in ANV, power should be seen as the capacity to bring about the well-being of all; as Rothman says (1992), focusing of needs offers a new way of looking at power: one which regards it as a vehicle for people to fulfil their own needs, rather than force other people to do things.

CR, like ANV, promotes processes which in themselves contribute to the diminution of hostility, recognising, as ANV does, that in some senses means and ends are part of each other. ANV concentrates on means for action by the oppressed, offering to those who are seen as weak a way of being more powerful on their own behalf. The fact that CR is becoming a well established academic field and is the business of mainstream nongovernmental organisations (rather than 'fringe', radical ones) presumably both reflects and promotes its acceptance by the establishment 'powers that be'. It may also explain its preoccupation with middle and upper level social and political leadership and with third party roles, particularly those of outside interveners - often, in this action-oriented field, the academics themselves. 'Respect', for me, includes respect for people's day to day realities, including their experience of power relations and their effect. To offer theories of conflict which fail to address (rather than to name) questions of power and justice is often to ignore people's reality. To focus exclusively on third party intervention as the answer is to ignore their need - and capacity - to act on their own behalf. Training is one form of CR intervention which goes some way to addressing this need, but it is still often focused on third party and bridge-building roles, rather than on self-advocacy.

CR seems to do little to address the question of the latent conflict of injustice and oppressive power relations - despite the fact that many of its theoreticians and practitioners come from an ANV background. Nonviolence theory can contribute to the correction of this deficiency. On the other hand ANV, with its tendency to divide the world's population into oppressors and oppressed, seems to miss some of the subtlety, complexity and variety of human relationships and realities, and is perhaps too rigid in the frame and the modes of response it offers. The horrible rash of intra-state conflicts causing untold human suffering across the world at present reflect the multiple sources and forms of violence. In many of these cases, the 'ordinary people' have been set against each other by a powerful few who are motivated by personal ambition, while the grievances occasioned by oppressive patterns, along with the re-awakening of old animosities, may add fuel to the flames.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

In such situations, 'justice' will have conflicting definitions, or be impossible for anyone to deliver. It is often said (I say it myself) that there can be no peace without justice; but justice is not an objective absolute, and in many situations there may, practically if not ideologically speaking, be a trade-off between relative peace - in the commonly understood sense of stability and the absence of physical violence - and relative justice. Those who opt for conflict in the name of justice need
to estimate, as far as possible, the likely cost of that option. ANV insists that the means as well as the ends of struggle must be nonviolent, and that means and ends converge. I would argue that conversely also, goals as well as methods must be just for action to qualify as nonviolent. However, when nonviolent means of struggle are employed, at least the danger of doing lasting damage for an unjust cause will be greatly diminished. Moreover, the inevitable injustices of violent struggle, and the sufferings of those caught in the cross-fire will be minimised, along with the enduring hatred generated by violence. Developing capacities for nonviolent engagement in conflict must therefore constitute an important contribution to violence prevention and reduction.

Given the dangers inherent in the notion of justice, the idea of need, favoured by CR, can be seen as a useful alternative. While ANV concentrates on engagement in conflict, the contribution of CR begins, largely speaking, where ANV loses the thread, directing its attention to getting beyond the stage of open conflict by initiating processes which can enable the needs of all parties to be addressed.

ANV needs the expertise of CR in the handling and processing of conflicts not only when they have reached the stage of open confrontation. Even when action is still at the stage of 'struggle against the oppressor', internal conflicts will arise during the processes of conscientisation and group-building for nonviolent action, and the skills of Conflict Resolution will be extremely useful. Since dialogue is a core component of nonviolence, the communication skills fundamental to Conflict Resolution training will be constantly required; and, given that the purpose of nonviolent struggle is an eventual transformation of the state of injustice to one of true peace, all the other tools of Conflict Resolution will eventually be relevant. The final goal of reconciliation, the restoration of tolerably comfortable and comfortably tolerant human relationships, while excluded by 'realists' as utopian, is in my view vital, if future violence is to

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

be avoided. It is included to some extent in the thinking of both ANV and CR (in the latter case partly under the heading of 'peace-building'), but perhaps needs further attention.

Synthesising ANV and CR in an overall depiction of conflict transformation

In order to draw on the full repertoire of concepts, roles and skills offered by ANV and CR, and to present what I felt to be a satisfactory synthesis of the two overall approaches, clearly and succinctly (and at the same time to make greater sense of it all myself), I developed a diagram, and accompanying text, which related the key concepts and processes of the two fields to what can be seen as stages of conflict, before and after the stage of open confrontation. This diagram had its beginnings when I was starting to work as a freelance facilitator and trainer, and one of my first pieces of work was with an international group of students taking part in a term-long course entitled 'Working with Conflict'. I was brought in half way through, to facilitate a two day slot on 'nonviolent action for change'. I wanted to explain how I saw the relationship between this and the course as whole. I remembered a diagram from a book by Adam Curle (1971), in which he plotted the stages of conflict from the latent conflict of oppression, through the awakening of awareness and confrontation, to negotiation and sustainable peace. I found (and still find) the diagram, for all its simplicity, difficult to follow, but the stages it described offered a framework for my own explanation; so I made my own diagram, which from my point of view was easier to understand, being linear; and it seemed useful to the students.

That rudimentary diagram became, in turn, the basis for the much fuller one I developed with a colleague, Guus Meijer, at a seminar in Nalchik, in the North Caucasus, in response to a request from participants that we should do something to address the question of power. The new, more elaborate diagram we presented under the title 'Power and conflict resolution: the wider picture'. It elicited an enthusiastic response from participants, who nicknamed it 'the snake' and readily located themselves on it, and we went on to explore possibilities for increasing the power of oppressed groups, working on participants' own cases and using the 'models for empowerment' of Jean and Hildegard Goss-Mayr (1990 - see Chapter Four). Since then I have used this diagram in some way in most of my workshops, both for itself, to facilitate discussion of stages of conflict: the challenges they present and the range of responses which can be made - and as a framework for structuring the workshop agenda as a whole.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

The diagram depicts the different potential phases of a conflict, delineating the route by which a group with little or no power, identifying its situation as one of injustice or oppression, may become more powerful, for and through engagement in open conflict, to the extent that they become a 'force to be reckoned with' - taken seriously as negotiation partners in a process of conflict resolution. The diagram is not intended as representing the one and only route into and through conflict, but as one way of representing one possible route. It is a model for working through conflict - transforming it - from the hidden conflict (pre-conflict) stage of 'quiet' oppression, up to and beyond open conflict or confrontation and its subsequent settlement, and through to the rebuilding and maintenance of a social infrastructure which can prevent the emergence of new forms of oppression, and new outbreaks of destructive conflict.

I have been asked (see Chapter Eight) whether the diagram is intended to be descriptive or prescriptive, and I think it can be looked at in both ways. It describes, I believe, the way in which certain things become possible: what needs to have taken place before something else can follow. In that sense it is descriptive. It also describes, broadly, the pattern conflicts often follow. It does not, however, describe all eventualities: for instance, what happens when one side wins outright and uses its victory to humiliate and marginalise - or even liquidate - the losers. It embodies certain value-related assumptions: for example, that oppression is a form of violence (often enforced by physical violence), a condition which calls for change, as well as being inherently unstable. The diagram therefore embodies my wish to present as desirable the transformation of the hidden or latent conflict of oppression into the form of open conflict. It expresses my fundamental assumption that it is not conflict which is destructive or bad, but violence, which takes many forms, and that it is often necessary to bring conflict into the open and engage in it, in order to change things for the better - that is to create relationships and conditions in which different groups are able to flourish.

The most important use I have made of the diagram has been as a 'visual aid' in workshops; usually drawn with felt pens (sometimes in two languages) on very big paper, so that changes can be made to it there and then, in response to the ideas of participants. However, I have a duplicated version for them to take away, and a text to go with it. Here they are.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

'STAGES AND PROCESSES IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

The following diagram describes the stages and processes which will usually need to be passed through, if a situation of oppression, with an extreme imbalance of power, is to be transformed into one of genuine peace. (The words contained in the round or oval shapes describe conflict stages, while those contained in rectangles describe the actions or processes by which new stages are reached.) The 'stages' are not in themselves static: they have their own dynamics; and in practice they may merge with one another. Neither are they likely to follow each other in a clear and orderly sequence. It will often be a case of 'two steps forward and one step back', or even vice versa; and frequently processes need to be repeated, built on, reinforced by other processes, in order to bring about substantial progress.

In addition, large scale conflicts are not simple or single affairs, but usually involve multiplicities of issues, parties and sub-parties. They will in all likelihood also involve conflicts and power struggles within as well as between parties, and the stages of these internal conflicts may well not coincide with the stage the overall conflict has reached. Nonetheless, this simplified diagram may provide a useful framework for thinking about the stages of conflict and shifting power relations.

The diagram begins with a situation in which the oppression is so complete that the conflict is hidden or latent, the oppressed group remaining passive in the face of extreme injustice or structural violence (often maintained by physical violence, or the threat of it). They may remain passive because of tradition, or lack of awareness, or because the power imbalance is such that they have no chance of being taken seriously in any demands or requests they might make. In order for this to change, some individual or group will need to begin to reflect upon, understand and articulate what is happening, and encourage others to do the same: a process described in the liberation language of Latin America as 'conscientisation'. This process will, if it generates sufficient determination, lead to the formation of groups committed to change. Their first task will be to continue the process of reflection and analysis, formulating a common purpose and strategy, then developing organisationally as they begin to take action to build support and so increase their relative power.

Some groups choose to use violence in their struggle; for others violence is not considered, or is not seen as a practical option; for yet others it is a matter of clear strategic choice and/or principle to act nonviolently.

As their power and visibility increases, as their voice begins to be heard, these groups will increasingly be seen as a threat by those in power, and a stage of open confrontation becomes inevitable - a stage which may well involve repressive measures, including physical violence, on the part of the oppressive power holders, even if the oppressed group have opted to act nonviolently. During this stage of open conflict, the relationship in power between the opposing parties will change as a result of their ongoing confrontation and other developments inside the parties or in the wider environment. Even if the confrontation takes the form of armed conflict, eventually a road back to dialogue has to be found. Once the oppressed group have increased their relative power or leverage sufficiently, they can expect to be taken seriously as partners in dialogue.

At this stage it is possible to begin the processes grouped together and described as 'conflict resolution', in which communications are somehow restored and settlements reached. This will not be a smooth process: talks may break down, agreements may be broken, the conflict may flare up again. Non-partisan intervention can help, for instance in the form of mediation, both in preparing the parties for negotiation and in the negotiations themselves. And through the work of preparing the ground, and through face to face dialogue, some of the heat may be taken out of the situation, some more hope and trust generated, some of the prejudice dissipated; which in turn will facilitate the reaching of and adherence to agreements. Once these are in place, it may be possible to begin to deal with some of the remaining psychological damage which the conflict and its causes have occasioned, and to develop more positive relationships between the previously conflicting groups.

These more positive relationships will be consolidated by projects for long-term co-operation for the well-being of the community as a whole, and by finding expression in the institutions and processes of society. But societies never remain static, and the final phase of 'peace' will need to be, in fact, a process (made up of a thousand processes) of maintaining awareness, of education, management of differences, and adjustment and engagement at all levels, so that some new situation of oppression - or other major source of conflict - does not develop, and just and peaceful relationships are maintained.

Note: Extreme imbalances of power are not the only starting point for the route to open conflict. The stages and processes leading to it may begin elsewhere. But questions of power and justice need to be taken into account in any consideration of conflict and how to engage in or respond to it. On the one hand, the untimely 'resolution' of conflict may mean in practice the suppression of just aspirations: 'pacification' rather than

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

'peacemaking'; on the other hand, those wishing to enter into conflict in the name of a just cause need to do so with some understanding of the likely cost to all concerned, and of their current and future possibilities, in the light of the distribution of power.'

See next page for diagram.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

The final phase shown on the diagram indicates what is needed for the prevention of violent conflict in the future. This includes the development of a constructive 'conflict culture', and the prevention of the kind of oppressive situation with which the diagram begins. In this sense 'peace building' and 'conflict prevention' amount to the same thing.

The note I make in the text about the choice between violence and nonviolence would be a matter of some discussion in a workshop: sometimes major discussion. However, since my workshops and theorising are concerned with constructive rather than destructive approaches to conflict, and since one key objective of 'conflict transformation' theory is to offer alternatives to violence, the nonviolent option is, for the purposes for which the diagram and text are intended, to be considered the preferred one. It cannot, however, be taken for granted, and the 'conflict resolution' phase outlined on the diagram is relevant for working through conflicts which have involved direct physical violence, as well as for those which have not.

No diagram can include all considerations, cover all eventualities, or represent all the ambiguities, nuances and complexities which characterise lived experience. In real life, as against diagrams - as I indicate in the text - stages and processes are not clear-cut and separate; they do not begin here or end there, but merge. They do not flow smoothly forward, but have their own unpredictable dynamics. They are unlikely to follow each other in a clear and orderly sequence. Likewise, the growth of a movement for change is often a confused and unpredictable affair, prey to the whims, ambitions and manipulations of political entrepreneurs and demagogues, and swept aside or along by outside events beyond the control of those directly concerned. Likewise, the impact and outcome of action taken will be affected by many extraneous, ungovernable forces, as well as by the choices of some or all of the members of a given group. The power struggle which ensues may send the oppressed group back to square one; or it may be so protracted that surrounding circumstances may change, with unforeseen effects.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

Moreover, large scale conflicts are not simple or single affairs. They usually involve multiplicities of issues, parties and sub-parties. They are likely to involve conflicts and power struggles within as well as between parties, and the stages of these internal conflicts may well not coincide with the stage the overall conflict has reached. The majority in a particular group may be ready for settlement with their original adversary, but facing a new threat from internal opposition. Even a 'peaceful' society will sustain a miriad of conflicts at any one time, all at different stages and following their own dynamics.

Nevertheless, despite all the cautions and disclaimers with which I surround this diagram and its explanation, both here and elsewhere, in writing and in workshops, I have found that this diagram bears some recognisable relationship to the experiences of those working with conflict, and proves a useful tool for thinking about the stages and processes involved in conflict and its transformation. Even when the conflict in question begins in a way other than that depicted by the diagram, that very difference becomes the ground for fruitful discussion as to how that conflict began.

The diagram, and indeed the text, have been modified in small ways as I have gone along (for instance by the inclusion of the words 'conflict/ violence prevention' in the last stage), in response to new insights and suggestions from participants and further thinking of my own. Its use and usefulness will be often alluded to in the workshop accounts recorded later.

My purpose in making and presenting this diagram has been to contribute to the understanding of conflict causes, and the possibilities for action to address them and move the conflict forward in a constructive way. I wanted to show that concern for justice and a desire for peace are not incompatible, though they may often be in tension, and that the maintenance of an oppressive status quo is a perpetuation of structural violence which may well lead to an explosion of physical violence, and is better addressed by constructive engagement in conflict. I saw and depicted oppressed groups themselves as the primary actors in this constructive engagement, and framed the subsequent conflict resolution phase primarily in terms of negotiation, rather than mediation, the latter being an optional aid to the former. Again, my purpose was to give emphasis to the role of the parties to the conflict, rather than to third parties.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

Such is the strength of emphasis which has been given to third party roles in the CR field that workshop participants see CR and mediation as synonymous. Consequently, they try to judge their own role, actual and potential, according to criteria relevant for mediation but not for action by those who belong to one of the conflicting groups. This is confusing and counter-productive. I therefore thought it would be useful to discuss, on paper and in workshops, the range of roles which can be played at different stages of a conflict, and who can appropriately play them. What may be new in my thinking is the categorisation and inclusion of 'semi-partisan' roles - as against the usual simple distinction between partisan and non-partisan (or partial and impartial). I wanted to help those seeking to make a constructive contribution to see the variety of things that need to be done, and that those can vary, both according to the situation and according to their own place (and capacities) within it.

The following is a piece I wrote as a summary of this thinking, soon after I had made a presentation of it (together with the 'stages' diagram) in Warsaw (see Chapter Eight). I begin with a statement about my purpose, and values, indicating my attitude to theory. I also make explicit once again that the 'stages' diagram from which this discussion follows is not meant to describe 'the truth' about the way in which conflicts start, but rather to be *a* way of depicting *one* way in which they may begin.

'DIFFERENT ROLES IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

My thinking about potential roles in relation to these stages and processes of conflict and its transformation is intended for those who wish to find a role on the side of just and sustainable relationships, to work nonviolently themselves and to help minimise the violence around them, respecting the basic human needs of all parties. There are, of course, other approaches. These are my aims and values.

Not all social conflicts begin with clear, one-sided oppression; most, if not all, however, will go through a pre-conflict phase in which both (or all) parties are increasingly aware of the underlying conflict, and beginning, with a greater or lesser degree of awareness and choice, to prepare for confrontation.

Most people who find themselves caught up in a conflict of an ethnic or political nature will not, in fact, have chosen to be involved or affected. Conscious decisions and

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

actions are often taken by a relatively small number within a wider group. The passive majority do, however, have the option of becoming active and influencing events.

Those wishing to play a constructive role in relation to a given conflict will need to consider their own possibilities in relation to it: their existing involvement, if any; their standing in relation to different groups and individuals; their personal gifts and capacities; the degree of support they can enlist. The following is one possible formulation of the roles available to such would-be actors in the different phases of a conflict, grouping those phases under the headings Pre-conflict, Open Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Post-conflict. The roles I have enumerated will be categorised as 'partisan', 'semi-partisan' and 'non-partisan', and identified as being available to members of the conflicting groups on the one hand, or 'third parties' (those outside the conflicting groups) on the other.

Since third-party roles tend to hold centre stage in discussion about constructive approaches to conflict, those who wish to play a part in the solving of conflicts within their own society - conflicts in which they are included, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, as member of one of the conflicting groups - tend to feel they should nonetheless be playing such a third-party role - or at least to assume the characteristic of impartiality so often attributed to third parties. To be a peacemaker, it is assumed, requires this. Since those involved in a conflict cannot play, by definition, be third parties, this assumption would logically exclude from constructive action in a conflict those most closely involved in and affected by it. It limits our understanding of the possibilities for peacemaking and overlooks some of its vital needs.

When the roles of third parties are under consideration, similarly, the assumption is commonly made that the third party, to be constructive, must be impartial; but this assumption seems to ignore questions of power and justice. To mediate, if one is in a position to do so, when a conflict is ripe for resolution, may be the most constructive option open to a third party; but what about a 'pre-conflict' phase where one group is being subjected to the violence of oppression. Is the only option then to be impartial? Or if, during open conflict, an oppressed group is being overwhelmed by its powerful adversary, is it still imperative to avoid taking sides? Can it not be the most constructive thing to support the weaker party, take a 'partisan' position, in the name of justice? Peace and oppression are incompatible.

Those who wish, in my words, 'to find a role on the side of just and sustainable relationships ......respecting the basic human needs of all parties', will always, in one sense, wish to avoid taking sides - to be 'non-partisan'. Their intention at all times will

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

be to uphold the dignity and human rights of all concerned in the conflict. They will wish to avoid taking sides against any group, in the sense of denying or undermining their dignity and rights. They could, however, wish to take sides against something they were doing, or against policies or structures which favoured them at another group's expense. And they could take the side of, or speak for, one group, in terms of its dignity and needs: become an advocate or actor on its behalf, whether as an outsider, a 'third party', or as a member of one of the groups which is party to the conflict. Negotiations, for example, need negotiators, and the qualities and attitude they bring to the process will be of great importance.

Those who belong to one of the conflicting groups will find it hard, if not impossible, ever to be regarded by the other side as non-partisan, impartial or neutral. They will also find it hard, if not impossible, to be so. Our belongings are fundamental to us, whether we accept or reject them, and colour the lenses through which we look at the world. Those who, from one side of a conflict, wish to build bridges of communication and understanding between their side and the other, will find ways of adjusting their own glasses and of establishing trust with the other. I describe such people, therefore, as 'semi-partisan' (though maybe a better expression could be found). If like-minded people from different sides join together, they may even establish quasi-neutral or non-partisan credentials. Personal goodwill and integrity may go a long way; but clear thinking is also needed, about what is being attempted - its appropriateness to the situation and to the capacities of the players.

Here, then, is a list of roles available in these different categories, to outsiders or 'third parties', and to insiders or members of the conflicting groups. The list is long, but certainly not exhaustive. I have made it because I wish to get away from single models of 'conflict resolution'; to demonstrate in some way that there are many different ways of acting constructively in relation to conflict; that the role of mediator is one among many; that those directly involved in or affected by the conflict have other options open to them and are, or should be, the most important players, and that the agenda for peacemakers of all kinds will change according to the stage that the conflict has reached.

IN THE PRE-CONFLICT PHASE (corresponding to the oppression --> conscientisation --> group formation phases on the diagram; applicable also, however, to the latent or incipient phase of a conflict not characterised by extreme power imbalance):

The partisan roles which may be undertaken by members of groups

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

between which there is hidden or underlying conflict include:

educator of own group (conscientisation)

activist**

advocate for own group with other power-holders (including the 'general public) and with the opposing side

establishing/developing contact and co-operation with potential supporters

Semi-partisan roles for members of (pre)conflicting groups (being as open and unbiased as possible):

bridge builder* - establishing/developing contact and understanding with appropriate members of the opposing side

public educator

Partisan roles for third parties:

agent of conscientisation; resource person (for money, information)

activist in solidarity**

advocate with opposing groups and potential supporters

builder of solidarity

('activist' here = someone who takes part/participates in action which has a direct impact on the situation, especially on power relations. 'nonviolent direct action' is a field of its own with its own literature.**

*** 'bridge-builder' here = someone who is instrumental in bringing individuals or groups together across inter-communal or factional divides, in order to reduce hostility and establish understanding.**

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

All these roles will be most powerfully undertaken within the framework of groups organised for action, and as a function of group strategy. Group-building and group-maintenance roles apply, therefore, to all concerned.)

Non-partisan roles for third parties:

> **bridge builder - helping establish contact/understanding between the (pre)conflicting sides**
>
> **public educator**
>
> **human rights monitor (often in practice semi-partisan)**

Note: in situations of clear, one-sided injustice - oppression -third parties are likely to opt for partisan roles. If, however, they have particular non-partisan expertise (or other qualifications) to offer, they may consider this still their best contribution, even at this stage; or they may choose to avoid clear partisan roles in order to keep themselves available - acceptable to both sides - for a non-partisan role at a later stage. Would-be mediators who have once been advocates of one side will find it hard to be trusted by all parties as impartial.

IN THE OPEN CONFLICT PHASE:

The role options outlined above for the pre-conflict phase will still apply, though the relative importance of the different roles may change, with 'acitivist' and 'solidarity' roles predominating. However, when power relations change in favour of the oppressed group, or as people weary of the struggle (especially if it has involved violence), some of those who have so far been partisan may shift to semi-partisan roles, putting their efforts into bridge-building or beginning to prepare the ground for talks with the other side, or to create a constituency in support of an end to hostilities.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

IN THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION PHASE:

Partisan roles for members of conflicting parties:

advocate

engager in pre-negotiation dialogue

negotiator

participants in reconciliation process

Semi-partisan roles for members of conflicting parties:

bridge-builder for dialogue;

advocate of resolution

solidarity builder/activist for resolution

supporter/participant in process of co-operative problem-solving and reconciliation

Non-partisan roles for third parties:

advocate of resolution

solidarity-builder/activist for resolution

bridge builder

mediator

monitor

facilitator in process of reconciliation

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

IN THE POST-CONFLICT PHASE (long-term co-operation --> peace maintenance):

In the first post-conflict phase, partisan roles will, ideally, become relatively unimportant, with the semi-partisan and non-partisan roles of monitoring and bridge-building continuing. In addition, post-traumatic therapies may be needed, and the practical work of social and physical reconstruction will have an important part to play at both the practical and the psychological level.

For the final phase of 'peace maintenance', however, since conflict is a part of life, and its constructive handling a key attribute for a healthy society, all the above roles will apply, but again their relative importance will shift, with co-operative rather than confronting functions coming to the fore in inter-group relations. In intra-group relations it may well be the reverse. As mentioned above, different social groupings will have their own factions, power struggles and conflicts, which also need constructive handling. The ways in which such 'peacetime' conflicts are handled can set a pattern for approaches to the larger conflicts which threaten the well-being of so many: approaches which, once established, could help shift social practices and norms; so help prevent the violence and suffering by which such conflicts are so often accompanied.'

(A note on terminology: The former Secretary General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros Ghali, in his 'Agenda for Peace', (1992), proposes three forms of UN intervention: 'peace making', 'peace keeping' and 'peace building'. The first two forms are military. When I use the term 'peacemaking' I mean not military intervention but any contribution to the achievement of just and peaceful relationships. 'Peace building', however, describes the range of nonmilitary activities which can contribute to sustainable peace, referring particularly to the post- (and pre-) violence phase of 'conflict prevention'.)

This text, then, exemplifies the way in which I have tried to open up discussion on the different roles open to those inside and outside a conflict, and the way the choice of role may change according to the stage that conflict has reached. But how do I understand theory? David Bloomfield's comments on theoretical models seem so apposite that I will quote from them at some length (Bloomfield 1995: 161). Arguing for 'greater theory/ practice integration' and the

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

adjustment of generalised theoretical models when applied to specific contexts, he asserts that such a model

> 'can only gain any real prescriptive validity if it is tested against practice at each stage of its development, and altered or rejected depending on the results of that testing. The model produced in this gradual fashion will only prove valid to the extent that it fulfils the descriptive requirements of (1) drawing its form inductively from empirical reality; (2) reflecting accurately the real-world situations to which it relates; and (3) remaining flexible enough to respond to the empirical evidence. Only then can it fulfil the fourth - prescriptive - requirement that it actually prove useful for addressing real conflict(s).'

Rouhana (whom I have quoted so extensively since his remarks seem so challenging for all CR theory and practice, although he is writing about interventions in international conflict) quotes McDonald and Diamond as distinguishing between practitioners who 'work from a particular conceptual model' and those who 'work more freewheeling, doing what feels right in the situation and trusting their experience and intuition.' (Rouhana 1995: 260) This seems to me an example of the 'either-or' theorising so characteristic and unhelpful in the CR field. I cannot imagine that many practitioners fall entirely into either category, though they may lean one way or the other. For myself, I hope to combine well grounded and developed thinking - what could be described as provisional theory - with continuing, moment by moment responsiveness on the basis of the kind of internalised and integrated knowledge which is described as intuition.

As the text on roles and stages in conflict suggests, my understanding of theory is that it is a device for exploring and clarifying things. I do not have to agree with a theory in order to have my thinking illuminated by it, and theories can only represent one way of thinking about what is: they cannot *be* it. Theory is not 'the truth about' things. It is part of the process of making meaning. Since I want my theorising to be directly useful to the people with whom I work as a trainer, it needs to be expressed in concise ways, visually as well as verbally, helping them to articulate their own reality and so to have an increased capacity for identifying relevant forms and possibilities for constructive action. I also want it to be directly useful to me, in sharpening my understanding of the range of tools and skills people will need from training in a given context. For that I need constantly to review its implications for the content of the courses I design. And I want it to be useful to 'the field', constituting some kind of response to well-founded fears of the 'pacifying' tendencies of conflict resolution. One of the frameworks through

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

which theory emerges and is conveyed to others is the framework of culture: its values and assumptions. The two fields of thought I have been trying to amalgamate in a sense already represent two quite different world views. In my work I am confronted by - and confront - some ways of seeing things which are grounded in cultures very different from my own.

THEORY AND TRAINING: CULTURAL ISSUES.

Differing world views

Thus far I have been explaining and reflecting on the theoretical base and contribution of my work. Since the focus of my research is not Conflict Resolution but Conflict Resolution training, I shall devote the final section of this chapter to a consideration of the challenges of the application of this theory and its assumptions in cross-cultural training.

Recently I was asked to review the draft founding document of a new CR organisation, and noted their emphasis on its secular nature. My comment was that whereas this could have the effect of making the organisation seem safe and ideologically neutral to potential users, it could also indicate a lack of sympathy or understanding for the world views, meanings and feelings of the overwhelming proportion of the world's population. Between one culture and another there is room for much disagreement and misunderstanding about the meaning of words and actions.

The notion of facilitation appears to offer part, at least, of a solution to this dilemma, if facilitation is understood to involve the art and practice of making space for the articulation of the points of view and experiences of all present in a given process. I see respect as a key value for such facilitation, and a concept which can provide a bridge between secular and religious worlds. It requires of a facilitator a recognition of other world views, and openness to them, and acknowledgement that the approaches offered are culturally laden.

ANV grows from more varied cultural perspectives than CR, having been born in Asia and developed on all continents, with a major contribution from Latin America. CR derives largely from one culture or counter-culture, and is based on the individualism of the North and West rather than the communitarianism of the South and East. It supports the notion that conflicts are

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

better opened up, rather than kept beneath the surface with the idea that if they are kept hidden they will not damage the social fabric. CR relies on the idea that issues can be broken down and analysed, and that they can be kept separate from relationships ('separate the person from the problem'), whereas in some other cultures a conflict must be seen as whole, with relationships themselves the most important issue. CR assumes that mediators should be outsiders, with a purely facilitative function, whereas in many cultures they would be weighty insiders, with an advisory as well as a brokering role, and in yet others a conflict would be dealt with by a whole community seeking consensus. In other words, the entire approach of CR is likely to be alienating in some cultures.

I also understand, from my own experience and from conversation with others, that in the Arab world and in Africa there is understandable suspicion and scepticism about an approach (CR) which emanates from the West and appears to emphasise the 'resolution' or settlement of conflict, as against opening, ignoring the importance of struggle for justice. CR's apparent eagerness for ending conflict is seen as a desire for pacification, a valuing of peace at the expense of justice. Similarly, CR's relativism, its assertion that conflicts can be analysed dispassionately, and that competing claims and arguments are not necessarily either right or wrong, can be seen as moral abdication in more traditional cultures with strong moral frameworks. It would seem likely that the discourse of ANV could be more acceptable in such cultures, with its emphasis on engagement in conflict for the sake of justice, and its strongly moral tone and religious roots. But the moral outlawing of violence is in itself liable to seem suspect when advocated by those from the West, since Western domination was achieved and is maintained through violence.

The Alternative Dispute Resolution movement (within the wider CR field), working within multi-cultural societies in North America, is making considerable efforts to address the question of cultural suspicion and appropriateness. Duryea outlines some of the major cultural differences which the ADR movement needs to take into account. She suggests (Duryea 1992: 39) that Hall's notion of high context and low context cultures is a helpful epistemological tool.

> 'Low context cultures generally refer to groups characterized by individualism, overt communication and heterogeneity. The United States, Canada and central and northern Europe are described as areas where low context cultural practices are most in evidence. High context cultures feature collective identity-focus, covert communication and

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

> homogeneity. This approach prevails in Asian countries including Japan, China and Korea as well as Latin American countries.'

Whereas I have not found in my work that there is any manifest conflict between collectivist and individualist points of view (perhaps because social or collective action is the focus of the workshops) the 'covert' as against open communication pattern has at times been a topic of discussion and of significance for the workshop process itself, where there have been Indian, Japanese and Korean participants. The very idea that individuals involved in conflict should speak openly of their feelings and needs sits uneasily with the value placed by most Asians on personal reticence and communal harmony. I imagine that in inter-group relations this reticence may not apply, but in intra-group and inter-personal relations in a multi-cultural group, it could present problems. For the facilitator, it may mean that feedback cannot be taken at face value, in that dissatisfaction or discomfort may be covered by politeness. What is seen in the West as helpful frankness may be seen in the East as shocking rudeness.

According to Barnes, a distinction can also be made between 'specific role cultures' on the one hand and 'diffuse role cultures' on the other (Duryea 1992: 44).

> 'In specific role cultures, we care only that the person we encounter fulfil our expectations. We do not care about the individual's religion, politics or aesthetic tastes. Only in intimate relationships do we concern ourselves with these questions.' In diffuse role cultures, such matters, it is claimed, are always important. Hence, presumably, some of the difficulty with 'separating the people from the problem'.

Polite behaviour may seem to suggest that this feat has been achieved, but may in fact denote only a desire not to behave improperly or to lose face through open conflict.

Those from a 'diffuse role culture' may feel uneasy with the notion that the ideal mediator not only has no prior relationship to those in dispute, but exerts no influence over their choice of solution, being a process facilitator, not a solution adviser. In many cultures in, for instance, the Far East and Middle East, the mediator is a skilled and respected person, often holding social status on account of age and position, whose advise is looked for and whose task it is to advise and persuade. This does not, to me, suggest a lack of self-respect on the part of disputants, nor the abandonment of all autonomy, but a choice to draw on another's wisdom, rather than relying on one's own. At issue is the relative importance attached to autonomy on the one hand and

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

interdependence on the other, and the role of status in social relations - which seems to be a matter for mutually enriching inter-cultural debate. The ideal of eventual willing ownership of the agreed solution to a conflict can still be met in authority-based forms of mediation, given that the parties to the conflict willingly accept the process. The egalitarian character of ADR, however, is absent.

Mohammed Abu-Nimer, in a paper entitled 'Conflict Resolution Training in the Middle East: Lessons to be Learned', (no date) describes (p. 25) one Middle East training in which participants 'challenged the team with the rhetorical question: do you intend to change the core values of the Arab Society?' Affirming (p. 12) the importance of introducing 'new skills and knowledge and reinforcing constructive old or existing cultural habits', Abu-Nimer continues: 'Stronger emphasis is needed, however, on the transformation of old negative and destructive attitudes toward conflict.' This seems to suggest that simply to offer something new is not an adequate way of dealing with negative aspects of existing culture. If this is so - which it may well be - I feel the limitations that an outsider will have. Not every aspect of a culture will support the well-being of all the members of the society it shapes. Some members of that society may challenge its values and behaviour patterns very strongly - as Ghaffar Khan (referred to above) did with the Pathens, and as I have done at times, at home in England. But I certainly do not consider myself in a position to challenge, directly, the cultural norms of those with whom I work when I do not belong to their culture. What I do, however, is to try and create opportunities for workshop participants to evaluate relevant aspect of their own culture. This is a recurrent topic in coming chapters.

Dangers of cultural generalisations

I have no doubt that cultural differences exist and can be described in a variety of ways. I am aware also that my own perceptions are culturally influenced, if not determined. I am convinced of the importance of this awareness. I am particularly aware of the dangers of Western cultural arrogance, and the sensitivities of 'the rest of the world' related to Western history and current political and economic power. Cultural generalisations however, while they may be useful, may oversimplify, both in geographical terms and in relation to specific groups - which are, in the end, composed of varied individuals (my Western construction!). For instance, personal reticence

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

is a relative matter. English people are probably, on average, far more reserved than their North American counterparts, though the two cultures have much in common. Teutonic and Latin styles in Europe differ considerably. And within whatever cultural grouping that is chosen there will in any case be all kinds of variations and contradictions. Although an awareness of cultural differences may be helpful in some ways, to generalise too broadly or to assume that all members of a given group will attach the same value to generalised cultural norms will prove counter-productive in terms of sensitivity.

Cultural generalisations can obscure important differences in power, values and interests between subgroups, as well as individuals, within a given group. Because of the nature of my work, I have thought of cultural difference largely in geographic and ethnic terms; but I could as well have chosen a class (or caste) focus. Whatever the chosen set of references, to frame things too readily in broad cultural terms can amount to prejudice and stereotyping: a denial of individual values, feelings and needs. In their introduction to 'Refusing Holy Orders: Women and Fundamentalism in Britain' (Sahgal and Yuval-Davis, 1992), the editors argue that multi-culturalism imposes a religious identity on those who do not wish it, encourages religious fundamentalism, and bestows authority on male religious leaders at the expense of women within ethnic minorities. The promotion of gender equality and egalitarianism in general, and participatory processes for decision-making, are anathema - at least to the male and the powerful - in many cultures. (Here, however, I should perhaps note the maleness of the academic world of CR and of the preponderance of male CR practitioners at the political as against the social level; and I have noted with sadness and irritation that Chris Mitchell (for instance 1991: 223), who has written so much and so helpfully, nonetheless excludes women by his language.)

Taslima Nasrin, writing in The New Internationalist (London, 1997), tells of her experience of being a 'disobedient woman' in Bangladesh, and concludes that the moral standards of any society are fluid and relate to its economic situation, political structure, religious influences and system of education. She calls for the exercise of social critique, arguing for individual moral responsibility.

Nasrin's argument for personal moral responsibility and the supremacy of individual moral understanding and conscience comes close, it seems, to the Western valuing of 'autonomy'. Duryea (1992: 18) notes that

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

> 'Respect is mentioned by many writers as a key element that transcends culture. Ishimaya (1989) writes of a "transcultural individual identity" as suggested by Jung, Maslow, Erickson and others. He suggests that 'transcultural and transpersonal identities can promote a deeper and broader appreciation of self and life, and facilitate healthier individuation and relatedness with the world, compared to a culture-bound, unidimensional self-identity." He suggests that those working with diverse populations would profit from looking beneath cultural differences to common anthropological roots, existential developmental themes and aspirations for self-actualisation.'

This thinking seems to connect with 'basic human needs' theory as developed by Burton and others (though Max-Neef, cited above, points to the different ways in which these needs may be satisfied in different cultures). Furthermore, Duryea cites Fisher and Long and their study findings which suggest that matching mediator and client ethnicity in ADR is not as important as other things, particularly gender and general life experience. It seems to me therefore that in my training, if I wish to work respectfully, I need to combine attention and sensitivity to cultural assumptions (especially my own) with attention to the being and contributions of individual participants.

Elicitive training: advantages and dilemmas

A precondition for respectfulness in the practice of training will be not only the personal attention of the trainer but, underlying that attention, a respectful approach to teaching and learning: one which respects the existing knowledge of participants, both tacit and explicit. Not a great deal has been written on CR training as such. For that reason, perhaps, and because of its own liveliness, clarity and wealth of examples, John Paul Lederach's 'Preparing for Peace' (1995) is much discussed by practitioners in the CR field. I shall therefore use it as a vehicle for my discussion of elicitive training.

Lederach's main theme is the importance of using an elicitive approach in cross-cultural training, although he acknowledges that, quite properly, most practitioners use a combination of elicitive and prescriptive or didactic methods. Culture can be seen as a resource, not an obstacle, if training is understood as a largely elicitive process. Given such an approach, 'Culture,.... natural and taken-for-granted knowledge in a given setting, is.....the foundation and seedbed of model

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

development and creation (p. 62). This, he argues, takes us beyond a concern for cultural sensitivity to a recognition that the solutions to conflict taking place within a given culture must come from the resources of that culture. This is a much more radical approach, and one which, in theory at least, I want to adopt.

However, I think Lederach exaggerates the extent to which an elicitive style of training gets round the problem of cultural assumptions on the part of the trainer. Even elicitive questions are based on assumptions. For instance, a key elicitive question for Lederach is, 'So to whom do you turn?' (ie for help in a conflict). That may be a pretty open question, but it reflects his key assumption about the importance of third party roles in conflict, coupled with the notion that third party help would be sought voluntarily. It becomes clear that Lederach's purpose is to pursue his own interest in third party roles in general and mediation in particular, using elicitive process to build mediation models. His 'third party' emphasis may not run counter to practice in other cultures, but the choice of it reflects the predominant approach of 'conflict resolution experts' in the West. I am sure I work in similar ways, using my own beliefs and interests as my starting point. To deconstruct Lederach's examples is to provide myself with a salutary warning against placing too much faith (as I tend to) in the power of an elicitive style to somehow leapfrog over all cultural divides. It reminds me that my own approach is not (and is not meant to be) value free.

Ronald J. Fisher, in a discussion of 'Training as a Form of Interactive Conflict Resolution' (1995), reflects on the cultural dimension of such interventions. Noting as Lederach does that workshops, even when elicitively inclined, will include some 'prescriptive' input, he suggests (p. 13), that

> 'trainers may propose concepts, models, strategies and skills that may be relevant to the participants' experience and appropriate to understanding and dealing with the conflict which they face. It is for the participants to assess this input, and to reject it or to blend it with their culturally appropriate ways of managing conflict....The onus is initially on trainers to provide the structures and procedures that will allow for a full and meaningful interaction between themselves and the participants, so that the latter can take away from the learning experience what is valuable and culturally congruent for them.'

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

One question which Lederach does not discuss to my satisfaction is how to respond to views, behaviours and suggestions reflecting social norms which offend his own values. Maybe he is able to set his own feelings aside in a way that I am not, but the personal feelings of a facilitator are not all that is at stake. If existing cultural norms were so helpful, the world would be a kinder, safer place than it is. The outlook which Lederach himself articulates in his introduction runs counter to mainstream culture in his own country, and very likely counter to other mainstream cultures, challenging the customary patterns of people's day to day experience. He argues that participants are the best people to evaluate their own ideas for how to go about things; which in principle seems fair enough. It certainly coincides with my own policy of making space for participants to do their own cultural evaluation. But I do not find that this approach removes all dilemmas. I wonder, for instance, if something is said which Lederach finds shocking, but no-one else challenges, will he himself challenge it, and if so, how? Does he let his own views and feelings show? Is this a point at which he moves one way or the other along his prescriptive-elicitive spectrum line?

These can be dilemmas for me as a facilitator, both at home and abroad. Is it appropriate for me to challenge what in my terms are racism, sexism or authoritarianism when I encounter them in training? Should there be bounds to my openness? I feel a conflict between my wish to respect the norms and values of others and my need to be faithful to my own: a conflict which will constitute a recurrent theme in coming chapters.

Elicitive training carries with it another dilemma. Although using an elicitive style in training is respectful in making way for and honouring the understandings and experiences of participants, it is also, in most circumstances, counter-cultural in itself. Workshops of this kind come as a culture shock to participants from almost anywhere, if they are encountering them for the first time. They create, in themselves, a temporary and intensely experienced culture in which participants speak and act in ways they would, perhaps, never do in the outside world. For instance, the degree of frankness which allows for mutual and public self-critique is likely to be counter-cultural in itself; which does not render the process impossible, but can make it a very sensitive matter. For those who understand learning as being delivered by experts in the form of lectures, to be invited to work in small groups, play games, participate in role-plays, can be seen as something of an insult - as not being taken seriously as students.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

The informality and intimacy of such workshops can be quite challenging and uncomfortable for some, though participants can to some extent choose their level of engagement. The fact that workshops create their own temporary culture is part of their power, because of the intensity of experience and learning which it makes possible. It is also a potential weakness, since there is a danger that the behaviours and ideas explored and practised there may not be easily transferable. There may be elements of the workshop culture, and the counter-cultural ideas which it has generated, which participants wish to incorporate into their lives outside; but the difficulties should not be underestimated. Overall, I believe that to use a largely elicitive approach to training, while it may be unfamiliar to participants, can go a long way to overcome the worst pitfalls of cross-cultural training and maximise the usefulness of a workshop. It will not, however, eliminate the very considerable challenges inherent in such an endeavour, and the skills modelled and practised in the workshop process will have to be carefully adapted for use in the world beyond. These challenges will be described and discussed in the workshop accounts which follow, and will be the subject of further reflection in my closing chapters.

Training as intervention

My final topic in this section, with which I shall end this chapter, is the respectfulness (or otherwise) of training as an intervention from outside: that is, from outside the conflict and, for the purposes of this thesis, outside the culture.

The first criterion for any respectful training intervention would be that it was wanted rather than imposed. Participation in the kind of workshops I facilitate is certainly voluntary (with the single exception of workshops included in a Peace Studies MA course!). However, if the decision by local partners to organise the workshop, and by participants to participate, is to be an informed one, its nature and purposes will need to be clear. Duryea (1992) quotes both Gosling and Chesler as describing the primary role of outside intervention as helping the parties to a conflict to look at the issues and power relations within that conflict, and consider their options for action - of which entering into a mediation process will be only one. Training is a form of intervention which can provide a framework for just such a process for understanding conflict and how it may be approached.

Link to: http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/publications/doc_theses_links/d_francis.html

If, however, as is so often the case, CR training is focused mainly on third party roles, with a major emphasis on mediation, the broader process of understanding conflict is restricted, and issues of power and empowerment for constructive self-advocacy are neglected. In other words, what I see as the theoretical short-comings of CR are played out in the training which is offered, which in my view often renders it inadequate. Abu-Nimer (1997: 31) challenges the field of CR with the 'core dilemma' which faces it: can it meet the needs of 'deprived groups who lack the basic needs' rather than serving the interests of those who benefit from the status quo? To be of real service, trainers need to help participants in the first place to identify the nature of their situation, the stage of their conflict; then to offer a corresponding menu of options for the workshop agenda, with as wide as possible a range of options, skills and tools. This is why CR training, like its theory, needs, in my view, to be expanded to include the resources of the ANV tradition.

Even if the style and content of a workshop make it as fit as possible for use according to its advertised purposes, it is possible for it to be 'sold' in advance in such a way that it deludes potential organisers and participants about the extent of its transformative possibilities. Rouhana (1995: 258) is deeply critical of CR's vague pretensions:

> 'For the most part, practitioners of unofficial intervention in international conflict do not describe what they intend to achieve of how they want to get there. Implicitly, since these individuals claim to practice 'conflict resolution', their inherent goal must be the resolution of conflict. But is the goal of the effort really the *resolution* of a given conflict or is it some limited *contribution* ..... to the resolution of the conflict?'

This apposite question and the answer it implies are as relevant to training as to any other form of CR intervention.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have discussed my understanding of respect; I have outlined the understanding of ANV which I brought to the field of CR; I have set out what I consider to be key elements of CR theory, showing how I think they can usefully be supplemented by insights and approaches from ANV; and I have outlined some of the challenges and dilemmas of cross-cultural training

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interventions in this field. These three elements - respect as a concept and value, respect embodied in theory useful to those involved in conflict, and respect in cross-cultural training (focusing on my respect as a facilitator) will constitute three different strands of thought and exploration in my thesis, as I test my understanding of respect in different cultural contexts, monitor responses to my facilitation and workshop input, and notice my own actions and reactions. The fourth strand of my research will be the inquiry process itself, and my own journey as inquirer. In my next chapter I will explain the research approach I brought to my inquiry.

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