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## Towards a Framework for the Study of "No War, No Peace" Societies

Dennis Dijkzeul

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## Abstract/Zusammenfassung/Résumé

This research paper provides a theoretical and methodological framework for studying the social construction and consequences of "no war, no peace" societies - with Armenia and Azerbaijan as examples. Scholars regularly describe these two countries as "no war, no peace" societies but to date the concept of a "no war, no peace" society has not been theoretically elaborated on. In response, this paper furnishes a theoretical framework for understanding the specific characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies, in particular the reproduction of institutions that generate conflict potential within and among societies. It also identifies core themes and issues that can be used for the operationalization and execution of empirical research. Finally, it examines the existing scientific knowledge of the consequences of long-lasting "no war, no peace" situations. The paper consists of four parts. The first part presents several conceptual approaches, which contribute to the study of "no war, no peace" societies. The second part discusses the analytical value of this concept. The next part explores institutional theory in relationship to "no war, no peace" societies. It asks why and how the reproduction of conflict potential takes place. The fourth part develops the methodology for this research project. The final part indicates possible/planned research outcomes of this INTAS-sponsored research project.

Dieses working paper bietet einen theoretischen und methodologischen Rahmen zur Untersuchung des sozialen Aufbaus und der Konsequenzen von Gesellschaften in einem Zustand von „weder Krieg noch Frieden“ am Beispiel von Armenien und Aserbaidschan. Obwohl beide Staaten wiederholt als Gesellschaften im Zustand von „weder Krieg noch Frieden“ beschrieben wurden, fand dieses Konzept bis heute keine fundierte wissenschaftliche Aufarbeitung. Mit dieser Arbeit soll deshalb ein theoretischer Rahmen ausgearbeitet werden, um nicht nur die spezifischen Eigenschaften einer Gesellschaft im Zustand von „weder Krieg noch Frieden“, sondern auch die Reproduktion von Institutionen, die ein Konfliktpotenzial innerhalb und zwischen sozialen Gruppen erzeugen können, besser zu verstehen. Es werden in dieser Studie jedoch auch Kernthemen und Probleme identifiziert, die für die Operationalisierung und Realisierung der empirischen Forschung verwendet werden können. Zusätzlich wird der bisherige Forschungsstand zur Beschreibung der Folgen, die ein fortwährender Zustand von „weder Krieg noch Frieden“ auf Gesellschaften hat, präsentiert. Die vorliegende Studie besteht aus vier Teilen. Der erste Teil präsentiert mehrere konzeptuelle Ansätze, die zum Studium von Gesellschaften in einem Zustand von „weder Krieg noch Frieden“ beitragen. Der zweite Teil diskutiert den analytischen Wert dieses Konzepts. Der dritte Teil erforscht die Institutionstheorie in der Beziehung zu solchen Gesellschaften. Es wird untersucht, warum und wie die Reproduktion des Konfliktpotenzials stattfindet. Der vierte Teil entwickelt schliesslich eine Methodik für dieses Forschungsprojekt. Zum Abschluss folgt noch ein Überblick über die möglichen/geplanten Forschungsergebnisse dieses von INTAS gesponserten Forschungsprojektes.

Cette recherche fournit un cadre théorique et méthodologique pour étudier la construction sociale et les conséquences d'une situation de "ni guerre, ni paix" - avec l'Arménie et l'Azerbaïdjan comme exemples. Les chercheurs décrivent régulièrement ces deux pays comme des situations de "ni guerre, ni paix", mais jusqu'au présent le concept de "ni guerre, ni paix" n'a guère été élaboré théoriquement. En réponse, ce document de travail fournit un cadre théorique pour comprendre les caractéristiques spécifiques de la situation de "ni guerre, ni paix", et en particulier se focalise sur la reproduction des institutions qui crée un potentiel de conflit dans et parmi les sociétés. Cette recherche identifie aussi des thèmes de base et des questions qui peuvent être utilisés pour la mise en œuvre de futures recherches empiriques. Finalement, il examine l'état de la recherche à propos des conséquences des situations de "ni guerre, ni paix" de longue durée. Cette recherche est composée de quatre parties. La première partie présente plusieurs approches conceptuelles, qui contribuent à l'étude des situations de "ni guerre, ni paix". La deuxième partie discute de la valeur analytique du concept. La partie suivante explore la théorie institutionnelle en rapport avec les situations de "ni guerre, ni paix". La question de pourquoi et comment le potentiel de conflit se reproduit est notamment posée. La quatrième partie développe la méthodologie pour ce projet de recherche. Enfin, la dernière partie indique des résultats de recherche possibles/prévus de ce projet de recherche INTAS.

# Preface

## Heinz Kruppenacher and Christian Gebhart<sup>1</sup>

Armenians and Azeris have started increasingly to use the term "no war, no peace" to refer to their societies, and international scholars are also using the term to describe the societies of these states, which differ strongly from societies living either in a state of war or in one of peace. "No war, no peace" societies are continuously reproducing institutions that generate potential for conflict and thus undermine democratic transformation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

The following study by Prof. Dr. Dennis Dijkzeul, published as a swisspeace Working Paper, *Towards a Framework for the Study of "No War, No Peace" Societies*, serves as the methodological background study for a larger research project - a comparative analysis of the Armenian and Azerbaijan societies.<sup>2</sup> It offers a methodological framework for understanding the specific characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies. Armenia and Azerbaijan are illustrative of the contemporary challenge faced by societies caught in between conditions of instability, war and peace.

The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the region of Nagorny Karabakh has smouldered in a state of „no war, no peace" since the ceasefire of 1994. The conflict, which can be described as a clash between the principles of self-determination of peoples and the territorial integrity of states, is a central obstacle to the political development of Armenia and Azerbaijan, both of which so far have not succeeded to find productive ways for conflict transformation. Currently, Armenia and Azerbaijan are officially striving towards resolving the Nagorno Karabakh conflict by peaceful means.

However it is not very likely that a comprehensive peace agreement can be reached in the foreseeable future. Still there is a persistent risk of increasing ceasefire violations, while both parties are engaged in an expensive arms race and are making martial statements that are received enthusiastically by major parts of the population. There are radical forces within government and opposition in both states which seek to maintain a certain level of public antagonism towards the *other*, and therefore it is essential to prevent this condition from reaching a crisis point.

It is thus extremely important to promote the collaboration with and between both countries at the level of civil society, not only to create trust, but also to gain a better knowledge of the specific condition of each other's society. We hope that the larger project, for which this paper was prepared, will contribute to this process.

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<sup>1</sup> Heinz Kruppenacher is Managing Director of swisspeace, and Program Director of FAST International, Bern. Christian Gebhart is research analyst for FAST International, responsible for South Caucasus.

<sup>2</sup> In spring 2006, scholars from the Centre for Regional Integration and Conflict Resolution (CRICR), Yerevan State University, applied to swisspeace for a joint study of the construction and dynamics of "no war, no peace" societies. After an in-depth assessment in September 2006, swisspeace and three partner institutes started the scientific research project "No War, No Peace" Society: Problems and Perspectives of Democratic Transformations, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding. The implementing partners are the Centre for Regional Integration and Conflict Resolution (CRICR) at Yerevan State University, Faculty of Sociology, Armenia, the Institute for Peace and Democracy (IPD), Baku, Azerbaijan, and the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV), Ruhr University Bochum, Germany. The application for conducting this research was submitted to INTAS (The International Association for the Promotion of Co-operation with Scientists from the Newly Independent States [NIS] of the Former Soviet Union) and was successfully approved for the duration of two years.



# 1 Introduction

Despite the large number of societies that have suffered from war and have only reached incomplete peace, these “no war, no peace” societies have not yet received systematic attention in the social sciences. Our research attempts to fill this void, which is important because conflicts can always restart. Sometimes, conflict just lingers on as in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Angola with the (recurrent) possibility of new outbreaks of large-scale violence, as recently happened in Somalia.<sup>3</sup> But also in countries where warring parties did sign a peace agreement, about half of all civil wars resume.<sup>4</sup>

This research paper provides a theoretical and methodological framework on the (on-going) social construction and consequences of “no war, no peace” societies with Armenia and Azerbaijan as examples. Scholars regularly describe these two countries as “no war, no peace” societies but to date the concept of “no war, no peace” society has not been elaborated on theoretically.<sup>5</sup> Nor has it received sufficient empirical analysis that could lead to a more grounded theory. Therefore the current research has three aims, namely:

1. to elaborate on a theoretical framework for understanding the specific characteristics of “no war, no peace” societies, in particular the reproduction of institutions that generate conflict potential within and among societies;
2. to identify core themes and issues that can be used for the operationalization and execution of the empirical research;
3. to examine the existing scientific knowledge of social consequences of long-lasting “no war, no peace” situations.

The main research assumption is that a “no war, no peace” society continuously reproduces institutions, such as structures, formal organizations, informal groupings, as well as norms and values that generate conflict potential both within the society and among neighboring states. This reproduction of conflict potential undermines democratic transitions, conflict transformation, and economic development.

This paper consists of four main parts. Part two introduces the concept of “no war, no peace” societies. It presents several approaches that can contribute to the study of such societies. Although these approaches provide important insights, none of them is specifically applicable to “no war, no peace” societies. Part three discusses the analytical value of the concept of a “no war, no peace” society. What is its added value and how does it differ from other, related concepts? The fourth part explores institutional theory in relationship to “no war, no peace” societies. It asks why and how the reproduction of conflict potential takes place. The fifth part discusses the methodology for this research project and indicates the planned research outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> An earlier version of this paper was prepared as a background document for the International Expert Conference: *Towards A Methodological Framework for the Study of “No War, No Peace” Societies: The Case of Armenia and Azerbaijan*, Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict, Ruhr University Bochum, 6-8 October 2006, Bochum. This conference was part of the current research project, which was generously sponsored by INTAS.

<sup>4</sup> Hanlon, J. 2006: 200 wars and the humanitarian response. In: H. Yanacopoulos and J. Hanlon (eds.) *Civil War, Civil Peace*. Oxford: James Currey, pp. 18-48.

<sup>5</sup> De Waal, Th. 2003: *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War*. New York/London: New York University Press, pp. 251- 268. Goodhand, J. 2006: *Aiding Peace? The Role of NGOs in Armed Conflict*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, p. 19. International Crisis Group 2006: *Conflict Resolution in the South Caucasus: The EU’s Role*. Europe Report No. 173. 20 March 2006, p. 2.

## 2 "No War, No Peace" Societies

Whereas a vast amount of research and literature has been devoted to the analysis of economic change and democratic transformation of post-war states, almost no international scholarly attention has focused on the specific characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies. Conclusions from a specific post-war reconstruction and democratization approach in one country are hardly applicable to those countries whose conflicts and transitions took different trajectories. In addition, it is often assumed that a peacebuilding process ends with the establishment of an election mechanism along with the introduction of some economic recovery package. Relatively little analysis has been made of how institutions and political transitions are either undermined or strengthened by the specific characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies. In response, this project examines how the institutions and their transformations influence the social fabric of "no war, no peace" societies and analyzes the prospects for peacebuilding and democratization.

As there is only a small amount of literature available on the specific characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies, this research framework draws from existing literature on humanitarian affairs, war, security, conflict and peacebuilding. The current literature can be grouped into three related - and partially overlapping - categories:

- Research on the evolving characteristics of violent conflict. This category can be subdivided into five subthemes:
  - Violent conflict as the new barbarism; an irrational phenomenon that deviates from and destroys a society's path to modernity;<sup>6</sup>
  - Violent conflict as an identity-based phenomenon with ethnic and religious sources;
  - Violent conflict as a Malthusian phenomenon based on resource scarcity;
  - Violent conflict as an economically rational social phenomenon, for example in the debate on greed and grievance, and the political economy of war;<sup>7</sup>
  - Violent conflict as an anthropological and sociological phenomenon;<sup>8</sup>
- Violent conflict as both an international and local security issue;
- Violent conflict as a problem that can be solved through conflict transformation, peacebuilding and international interventions.

All these perspectives were by and large developed in reaction to the changing forms of conflict, often civil war, after the end of the Cold War. Initially, the demise of superpower rivalry had raised hopes for a better functioning of the United Nations, an end to the proxy conflicts supported by the superpowers, and more robust peacekeeping. In short, many people hoped to cash in on a global

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<sup>6</sup> Kaplan, R.D. 2000: *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War*. New York: Random House.

<sup>7</sup> Collier P. and A. Hoeffler 1998: *On Economic Causes of Civil War*. *Oxford Economic Papers* 50, pp. 563-573. Reno, W. 1998: *Warlord Politics and African States*. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publisher. Kaldor, M. 2001: *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Richards, P. 2005: *No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts*. Athens: Ohio University Press.

peace dividend. In general, interstate conflict declined but intra-state conflict in the poorest countries increased and gained more media and public attention.<sup>9</sup>

## 2.1 Concepts of Violent Conflict in Historical Perspective

Although the end of the Cold War helped terminate some violent conflicts, for example in Central America, other conflicts arose or intensified as in Africa's Great Lakes Region and the South Caucasus. In countries where (civil) wars began during the Cold War but lasted long after outsiders lost interest, as in Afghanistan and Angola in the late 1990's, the political economy of war changed. Resource extraction and asset stripping became more important than the earlier superpower support as a resource base for conflict. Some countries like Somalia oscillated between a state of war and only slightly more peaceful warlord politics. Some parts of the country, however, such as Somaliland and Puntland, remained relatively peaceful and were able to rebuild themselves to some extent. Other countries, such as Colombia and Sri Lanka, maintained capable state institutions in relatively peaceful areas but were unable to end armed conflict in other parts of their territories. In a large number of states a combination of corrupt politics, weak governance, economic decline, diminishing international support, cheap weapons and local tensions caused or refueled conflicts so that long-lasting "no war, no peace" situations arose.

It is important to notice that each of these situations has its own unique characteristics. Nevertheless, they share some commonalities. The first is that the roads these conflicts take are often tortuous and their complexity and dynamics often baffle outside observers. Secondly, collective action (in particular through state and civil society institutions) is weakened. Thirdly, in order to understand the conflict's roots and why they have become so chronic, we must examine the strategies and tactics used by political elites, warlords, and other groups to gain or retain power, as well as to obtain resources (financial, material, diplomatic, symbolic, etc.). Understanding both the roots and changing nature of these conflicts helps us understand the weaknesses and strengths of international and local peacebuilding and democratization efforts.

### The New Barbarism

The first reaction to the spate of "internal" civil conflicts during and after 1989 was to perceive these conflicts as deviations from peaceful normality. Robert Kaplan described how social and economic changes, in addition to a resurgence of tribalism and ancient hatreds, caused clashes that would lead to a "coming anarchy" marked by an inevitable fragmentation of societies.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Collier P. (et al.) 2003: *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*. Washington, DC and Oxford: World Bank and Oxford University Press, pp. 5-11. According to Collier, the number of civil conflicts - "an identifiable rebel organization challenges the government militarily and the resulting violence results in more than 1,000 combat-related deaths, with at least 5 percent on each side" - has risen substantially over the last forty years, peaking around 1989. "For most of the world's population development has been significantly reducing risks, but a significant minority of people live in low-income countries that have not shared in development. For them the risks have been increasing." For a critical review of the problems with counting the numbers of war, see Hanlon 2006: 200 wars and the humanitarian response. In: Yanacopulos and Hanlon (eds.) *Civil War, Civil Peace*, pp. 18-48.

<sup>10</sup> Robert D. Kaplan's *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War* is often interpreted in this vein. Surprisingly, when Kaplan writes about tribalism, he actually treats Huntington's clash of civilizations thesis.

Similarly, other authors interpreted war as a disruption of positive, natural development processes.<sup>11</sup> Hence, these conflicts were irrational - consequences of a developmental collapse and a breakdown of communication.<sup>12</sup> The inevitable fragmentation, anarchy and irrationality would make it difficult for outsiders to intervene successfully in these conflicts. The upshot of Kaplan's thesis for international policy-making was that there was little that could be done about these conflicts because they were mainly caused by endogenous factors that were hard to influence.<sup>13</sup>

### Identity Based Conflict

The next strand of theory emphasized that identity conflicts were perhaps not rational in their consequences. The motivations could nevertheless be understood more rationally as part of identity politics. Hence, conflicts in places like Bosnia, Rwanda and Nagorno-Karabakh were said to stem from old ethnic or religious tensions and aimed at exterminating or disempowering specific ethnic or religious groups.<sup>14</sup>

A related vein of theory (on a worldwide scale) was proposed by the American political scientist Samuel Huntington.<sup>15</sup> He suggested that with the Cold War over a new type of international conflict became more dominant: The Clash of Civilizations. He especially focused on conflict of the "West" with the "Confucian East" and the "Islamic World."

Both types of identity-based explanations of violent conflict received fierce criticism. First, they were considered too deterministic. People can have multiple loyalties and some of these will transcend ethnic or religious differences. Empirically, some ethnically diverse states, such as Zambia, were better able to contain ethnic conflict than countries with only a few ethnic groups, e.g., Rwanda. Moreover, "Kaplan's worst-case scenario failed to materialize: *barbaric* African wars did not spill uncontrollably over borders and create havoc among peaceful and unsuspecting neighbors. If anything, the reverse is the case. In much of Africa it is the neighbors who inflame local conflicts by venturing across borders, seeking to control what might otherwise be quite localized fighting. Cases in point are Nigerian and Guinean *peacekeeping* activities in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Ethiopian and Eritrean support for opposing militias in Somalia, and most obvious of all, the role of six neighboring countries (...) in the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo."<sup>16</sup> In short, the identity-based approach may actually obscure analysis of the various grounds for and impacts of the conflict.

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<sup>11</sup> For an early critique, see Duffield, M. 1994: Complex Emergencies and the Crisis of Developmentalism. IDS Bulletin 4, pp. 37-45.

<sup>12</sup> Duffield, M. 2000: Globalization, Transborder Trade and War Economies. In: M. Berdal and M. David (eds.), Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars, Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, p. 74.

<sup>13</sup> Kaplan's thesis is said to have contributed to the long inaction by the Clinton Administration during the conflicts in former Yugoslavia.

<sup>14</sup> For example, Francis Deng, the former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on displaced persons, argued in 1993 that "[t]he gist of the new internal conflicts is that the ethnic pieces put together by colonial glue and reinforced by the old world order are now pulling apart and reasserting their autonomy. Old identities rendered dormant by the structures and values of the nation-state system, are reemerging and redefining the standards of political participation, distribution of goods and services and government legitimacy." F.M. Deng, (1993). Protecting the Dispossessed: A Challenge for the International Community. Washington, DC, p. 115, quoted in K.A. Maynard, (1999). Healing Communities in Conflict: International Assistance in Complex Emergencies. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 3. Maynard also puts a strong emphasis on identity.

<sup>15</sup> Huntington, S.P. 1997: The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. London: The Free Press.

<sup>16</sup> Richards 2005: No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts, pp. 8-9.

## Malthusian Problems

The idea of (civil) war driven by population growth and the resulting environmental scarcity was written by Thomas Homer Dixon in 1994. "Around the same time, a number of writers predicted wars over the growing shortages of fresh water."<sup>17</sup> Richards summarizes their position as "Malthus with guns."<sup>18</sup>

However, "later research showed that there does not appear to be a convincing case that environmental factors cause major violent conflicts which in turn lead to massive flows of forced migrants."<sup>19</sup> Moreover, resource-rich countries, such as Angola and Sierra Leone, also turned out to be conflict ridden. Could it not be that scarcity of justice was actually a larger problem than scarcity of resources? Finally, the search for a specific set of resource-based or other causes of war failed to take into account that the motivations for conflict - economic or otherwise - also evolve over time. In brief, there were so many mitigating and exogenous factors that the simple Malthusian perspective was disregarded and resource scarcity came to be seen as only one possible contributing factor to conflict.

## Political Economy of War

With the benefit of hindsight, the Malthusian perspective on war can be considered a simplified version of the political economy of war approach to conflict. In the latter half of the 1990's, deeper analysis showed that ethnic and religious identity as well as resource scarcity were not the only factors triggering violence nor were they always the primary factors. The causes of war, or at least the motivations of fighting factions, were first discussed in the greed and grievance debate. Was war about groups who illegally tried to gain a better economic position (greed) or were groups trying to redress grievances? Or were grievance arguments used to justify greed?<sup>20</sup> For some groups war turned out to be a way to survive or to gain power and status.

In a play on the words of military philosopher Carl von Clausewitz, David Keen illuminated the changing understanding of the political economy of war when he wrote, "War may be a continuation of economics by other means."<sup>21</sup> Many contemporary civil wars are not about winning or imposing one party's (political) will as in Clausewitzian war among states; rather, they are about controlling a steady flow of resources. Private control over trade and assets instead of territory is becoming a defining quality of political power in many conflicts (but not all). Such control can take place in both resource-rich (e.g., the DRC) and resource-scarce (e.g., Somalia) environments.

As the political economy of war becomes increasingly based on resource extraction and asset stripping, hostile groups rely less and less "on generating popular legitimacy to sustain

<sup>17</sup> Hanlon 2006: 200 Wars and the Humanitarian Response. In: Yanacopulos and Hanlon (eds.) *Civil War, Civil Peace*, pp. 18-48.

<sup>18</sup> Richards 2005: *No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts*.

<sup>19</sup> Hanlon 2006: 200 Wars and the Humanitarian Response. In: Yanacopulos and Hanlon (eds.), *Civil War, Civil Peace*, pp. 18-48.

<sup>20</sup> Berdal M. and Malone D.M. (eds.) 2000: *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*. Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner Publishers. Collier (et al.) 2003: *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*.

<sup>21</sup> Keen, D. 2000: Incentives and Disincentives for Violence. In: M. Berdal and D.M. Malone (eds.), *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*. Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

themselves."<sup>22</sup> This not only affects the internal cohesion of fighting forces but also their relationship with the local population.

Disciplined standing armies, controlled either by a strong government or dominant ideology, have become rarer so that combatants depend less on steady payments from the state to earn a living. Hence, loyalty to a state or leader has decreased and armed groups fragment into smaller factions with weak command-and-control structures. Their relative autonomy is further reinforced by the proliferation of small, cheap arms. Because they frequently lack a strong internal hierarchy, these groups (often marauding bands) are difficult for their commanders or international patrons to control. Furthermore, such groups do not engage in direct battles to destroy their opponents or conquer territory but prefer to plunder for a living, which results in chronic crises. Whereas standing armies are public institutions, these groups operate more as private enterprises. During the conflict in the Former Yugoslavia, Croatian and Serbian fighters, for example, at times coordinated their fighting to avoid pitched battles over territory, allowing them to control and manipulate the local population.<sup>23</sup> On the border of Tajikistan and Afghanistan as well as in Bosnia villages were destroyed but electrical wires remained unscathed because all parties engaged in the conflict needed electricity.<sup>24</sup> In Sierra Leone and Liberia child soldiers sometimes operated on their own or in small groups plundering to stay alive. The increasing fragmentation makes it extremely difficult to identify the different forces controlling territory, to negotiate with them and to ensure that humanitarian law and agreements regarding humanitarian access and conflict resolution are adhered to.<sup>25</sup>

Because asset predation and resource extraction are becoming central goals, fighters resort to strategies such as ethnic cleansing, rape and mass murder to engender fear and create mass population movements. Therefore the number of civilian casualties, refugees and IDPs tends to be very high.<sup>26</sup> When people flee they leave behind most of their possessions, which are stolen in their absence. Moreover, their departure, death, or subjugation prevents them from upholding claims on their land and natural resources. In this way identity conflicts can be started or exploited for economic and political gain. Frequently, when people take up arms in these kinds of conflicts the distinction between armed groups and civilians and between perpetrators and victims is blurred.<sup>27</sup> In addition, fighting can become a survival strategy for those at the bottom of society who lack other economic opportunities; this is particularly true for young unemployed men.

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<sup>22</sup> Macrae J. (ed.) 2002: *The New Humanitarianisms: A Review of Trends in Global Humanitarian Action*. HPG Report 11, April 2002, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Kaldor, M. 2001: *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

<sup>24</sup> Anderson 1999: *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace - or War*. Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, p. 26.

<sup>25</sup> Macrae 2002: *The New Humanitarianisms: A Review of Trends in Global Humanitarian Action*, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> To some extent, this is a disputed claim. During the Rwandan genocide, victims were killed at a faster rate than during the Holocaust. In all likelihood, the speed and number of people killed varies highly from crisis to crisis. In chronic crises, the breakdown of health, agricultural, transport, and educational systems contributes to high morbidity and mortality rates. Hence, it is difficult to make general claims.

<sup>27</sup> According to Terry, the "distinction between combatants and non-combatants disappeared with the advent of aerial warfare. Bombs dropped on cities throughout the Second World War did not discriminate between targets." It might even be that this distinction already blurred in the "nineteenth century, when small professional armies were replaced by enormous conscript armies, and casualty rates among non-combatants rose dramatically." Nevertheless, this distinction took place in the context of war among strong states. The blurring we discuss is the effect of fragmented armed groups, resource extraction and asset stripping, together with manipulated ethnic or religious grievances in weak states. F. Terry, (2002). *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, p. 11.

When conflicts last long and violence becomes chronic, people's coping mechanisms diminish; unable to rely on the state for protection, security and other services, people retreat into their families, communities, clans, or ethnic groups. They become increasingly afraid to trust others. For the local population, the political economy of war makes life, if not survival, increasingly difficult.

As the political economy of war approach evolved, it increasingly began to stress differences in state institutions' - and state officials' - capacity in preventing or dealing with conflict. Crucial differences existed among the crises in terms of each state's capacity to stem the conflict and the wealth in natural resources that could be fueling the conflict. Some states, including Colombia and Sri Lanka, had relatively capable governmental institutions and diversified economies but still were not able to defeat insurgents. "Others - Congo, Angola and Sudan - [were] resource-rich states whose elites [were] incapable or unwilling to develop their countries and end civil wars."<sup>28</sup> Still others, like Somalia, were weak states with poor resource endowments that could not provide effective governance. Though state capacities and the extent of state failure differed in each crisis, the crises shared at least three overlapping characteristics:

1. a government that was not accountable to (segments of) its population;
2. a breakdown of government services including the ability to provide protection to the population, which in particular refers to an inability to maintain a Weberian monopoly on physical coercion within the national borders and the breakdown of the monetary monopoly;
3. and a conflict that although a disaster for most members of society, benefited others; warlords, militias and governing elites often manipulated these conflicts to their own political and economic advantage.

In other words, a hidden order existed behind the disorder. This was captured in terms like the criminalization of the state patronage,<sup>29</sup> warlord politics<sup>30</sup> and the political economy of war<sup>31</sup> in weak and failed states.<sup>32</sup> These terms refer to the use of violence and other extra-legal methods by groups, generally elites, who either run the state institutions or attempt to capture them for their own private enrichment and political gain. These groups use public power and when possible, the trappings of sovereignty to control production and market channels. Through the corruption of these groups, the state weakens and the majority of the population suffers.<sup>33</sup> In the end conflict ensues and because these groups live off the conflict, peace is hard to establish.

<sup>28</sup> Ignatieff, M. 2002: *Intervention and State Failure*. Dissent, 2002, p. 117.

<sup>29</sup> Davidson, B. 1992: *Africa en de Vloek van de Natie-Staat: The Black Man's Burden*. Amsterdam: NOVIB/Mets; J. Bayart, S. Ellis and B. Hibou, (1999). *The Criminalization of the State in Africa*. Bloomington & Indianapolis, Oxford: James Currey, Indiana University Press; P. Chabal and J. Daloz, (1999). *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*. Oxford, James Currey.

<sup>30</sup> Reno, W. 1998: *Warlord Politics and African States*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

<sup>31</sup> Keen, D. 1998: *The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars*. Adelphi Paper 320:88; Kaldor (2001). *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*; Berdal and Malone (eds.) (2000). *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*. Macrae (ed.) 2002: *The New Humanitarianisms: A Review of Trends*. In *Global Humanitarian Action*.

<sup>32</sup> Rotberg, R.I. (ed.) 2003: *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*. Cambridge and Washington, DC: World Peace Foundation and Brookings Institution Press.

<sup>33</sup> Reno, W. 2000: *Shadow States and the Political Economy of Civil Wars*. In: M. Berdal and D.M. Malone (eds.) 2000. *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*. Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp. 44-45.

A strong point of the political economy of war approach was that it did not just look for "barbarian" or "Malthusian" causes of conflict but treated conflict increasingly as a process, so that it could pay attention to changing motivations behind the conflict.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, as the political economy approach evolved and took the state into account, it faced several theoretical challenges. First, as conflict became more chronic, the distinction between peace and war became less clear. Violence often continued after the signing of a peace agreement and many conflicts flared up after more or less peaceful periods. Similarly, it became difficult to distinguish the actual difference(s) between an expanded concept of the political economy of war and war itself.

### **Violent Conflict as an Anthropological/Sociological Issue**

The above perspectives share the view that war is an aberration. Nevertheless, just as war or chronic conflict can be seen as alternative forms of political economy, they can also be seen as alternative social systems. In this sense peace and war are not clear-cut phenomena; instead, they can be placed on a continuum of social action in which they are an intimate part of the daily life of many people. Richards writes:

"new war" needs to be understood in relation to patterns of violence already embedded within society. The way to tackle this aspect of the subject is through the ethnography of practice. Careful analysis of what people do, and how they do it - for example, in carrying out "bush" campaigns or organizing ethnic killing - may help to establish what conflict is about.<sup>35</sup>

He argues that such a "practice orientation as a means to keep a focus on two rather distinctive aspects of the anthropological study of lethal violence – the strategic/instrumental approach (...) and an approach which engages with symbolic and expressive/emotional aspects."<sup>36</sup> He further stresses:

War belongs within society [and] that mono-causal perspectives (whether stressing resource competition, material motivation, economics or symbolic aspects of violence) are ultimately unsatisfactory. (...) careful comparative analysis of ethnographic evidence establishes no single explanation of war. War only makes sense as an aspect of social process. The best analytical approach to war as process is through the ethnography of actual practices of war and peace.<sup>37</sup>

In short, the anthropological approach addresses more the question of "how do people make war and peace" than exploring (mono-causal) triggers of war. Thus war loses its unique and isolated character of human evil and becomes recognized as a (possible) extreme expression of sets of dangers facing us all.<sup>38</sup> This approach also broadens the scope of research further by incorporating symbolic factors, as well as local perceptions into its analysis. The difference between the anthropological and sociological approaches is in name only. Both can share the same methodological approaches but anthropology focuses more on conflict within other societies and

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<sup>34</sup> Richards argues about the econometric analysis by one of the main authors in the greed and grievance debate, Collier, that several of his economic variables can better be seen as political variables and that this mistake at the very least partially weakens Collier's conclusions. Richards 2005: No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 14.



sociology on conflicts within one's own society. Their similarities are therefore more important than their differences.

The anthropological approach usually depends on the quality of long periods of fieldwork. It is, however, an open question whether other data collection methods or a combination of them can also reveal more about a specific conflict, especially if people from conflict countries themselves are involved.

## 2.2 Security

Just as the understanding of conflict and humanitarian crises evolved at the international level, it also changed at the subnational level. The international debates on security reflect this.

### Security at the International Level

In line with the changing conceptions of conflict, interpretation of the concept of security underwent a change at the international political level to include economic and social determinants of conflict. Traditionally, security is conceived in terms of relations, in particular military ones, between sovereign states.<sup>39</sup> The armed forces are a central tool in enforcing and protecting state security. A limited vision of security is based on military power to safeguard the state and its population against invasion or other threats, for example through deterrence and defense. The armed forces constitute a crucial component of the state's internal monopoly on legitimate coercion.

With Boutros Boutros Ghali's *Agenda for Peace*, this state-centered understanding of security gave way to a concept of peace, which featured the individual; human security became a new, ill-defined topic in the UN system.<sup>40</sup> In the 1990's, the UN Security Council (UNSC) became more attentive to non-state actors and held special sessions with major humanitarian NGOs to discuss their experiences and perspectives. Humanitarian organizations - NGOs and UN agencies - jumped at the chance to influence the UN Security Council, which included humanitarian issues on its agenda, alongside more long-term structural threats to international security, such as environment and HIV/AIDS. The UNSC also became more active with two other forms of non-military intervention: sanctions and international criminal prosecutions. In addition, it increasingly perceived civil war and internal strife as potential threats to international security, which meant these conditions could form the basis for enforcement action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. "This development was virtually inconceivable during the Cold War, when similar conflicts were not considered to constitute such threats."<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Of course, the term security has also been applied to the field of espionage.

<sup>40</sup> Boutros-Ghali B. 1995: *An Agenda for Peace*. New York: United Nations.

<sup>41</sup> Weiss T.G. and Hubert D. (eds.) 2001: *The Responsibility to Protect: Research, Bibliography, Background*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, p. 119. This development has continued with the UN reform process. See for example, the suggestions proposed by Kofi Annan's High Level Panel in 2004: *United Nations General Assembly 2004: A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility - Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change*. A/59/565, New York: United Nations; and the subsequent reports: *United Nations General Assembly (2005)*. In: *Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Right for All*. A/59/2005, New York: United Nations; and *United Nations General Assembly (2005)*. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly: 60/1. 2005 World Summit Outcome. A/Res/60/1, New York: United Nations.

In addition, "for a growing number of states the security of individuals is becoming a foreign policy priority in its own right."<sup>42</sup> In humanitarian circles and foreign policy establishments, "human security" rapidly gained currency. Human security in its more restricted definition means "freedom from pervasive threats to people's rights, their safety, or even their lives. Though the state remains the principal provider of security, it is seen in instrumental terms - as a means to an end, rather than the end itself. In the face of repression or weak states, advocates of human security argue that international actors have a responsibility to come to the aid of populations at risk."<sup>43</sup>

Similarly, the "responsibility to protect"<sup>44</sup> loosens traditional interpretations of sovereignty.<sup>45</sup> In other words, there is - in theory at least - a broadening from "security of state" to "security of people," which frequently also includes addressing social and economic inequality within or among countries. However, this broadening is definitely not complete and many strong states prefer *realpolitik* to further their interests. At the same time, various developing countries fear that human security may lead to unwelcome interventions and other forms of political pressure from outsiders.<sup>46</sup>

### Security at the National Level - and Below

As many of the post-Cold War conflicts occurred at the (sub-) national level as forms of civil unrest or civil war, some of the security concepts that were used to study conflicts between states in general and the superpowers in particular were being adapted to understand conflict at local levels. For instance, when an empire disintegrates, the anarchy (or at least the absence of hierarchical order), that realist international relations scholars usually assume at the international level, all of a sudden takes place within and among newly formed states. One of these international concepts was the so-called security dilemma.<sup>47</sup> This concept explains how states as rational actors that do not want to start a conflict can nevertheless end up in conflict as they attempt to preempt military action by another state and strike first.

Strictly speaking, the security dilemma is currently less useful in the case of Azerbaijan and Armenia because armed conflict has already taken place. It does, however, more generally help highlight the importance of understanding national security and concomitant security measures, such as military mobilization, arms races (either for deterrence or offense) and possible strikes due to the changing power balance. In addition, a security-based perspective pays attention to international power

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<sup>42</sup> Weiss and Hubert 2001: The Responsibility to Protect: Research, Bibliography, Background, p. 11.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> In the discussion on when to intervene, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty moved the discussion from the reasons for states to intervene to a debate on the responsibility of the state to take care of its citizens. It introduced the concept of "the responsibility to protect," indicating that sovereign states should protect their own citizens from genocide, ethnic cleansing, and other crimes against humanity. If they abdicate this responsibility through incapacity or ill will, it shifts to the wider international community. International Crisis Group (2006). Press release. October 2006. Hence, attention shifts from state security to the rights of its citizens.

<sup>45</sup> Canadian officials, e.g. Lloyd Axworthy, have played a leading role in the development of both "the responsibility to protect" and human security. It is therefore no surprise that both terms overlap conceptually. Axworthy L. 2000: Human Security and Global Governance: Putting People First." *Global Governance* 7(1), pp. 19-23.

<sup>46</sup> Ayoob, M. 2004: Third World Perspectives on Humanitarian Intervention and International Administration. *Global Governance* 10 (1), pp. 99-118.

<sup>47</sup> Melander, E. 1999: Anarchy Within: The Security Dilemma between Ethnic Groups in Emerging Anarchy. Report No. 52, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala: Uppsala University. Roe, P. 1999: The Intrastate Security Dilemma: Ethnic Conflict as Tragedy? *Journal of Peace Research* 36 (2), pp. 183-202.

games, coalition formation, and less visible influences. Could it be that "no war, no peace" societies get caught in recurring security dilemmas? Understanding a security perspective also raises awareness of the need for a "toolbox" for preventing and ending armed conflict from the perspective of fighting forces and other combatants, as well as their national and international allies and sponsors. Tools vary from Security Sector Reform (SSR), Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR),<sup>48</sup> confidence building measures, and international diplomatic efforts at peace negotiations. At the same time, the military balance of power needs to be taken into account on a continuous basis. If well executed, these tools overlap with or can become part of conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

## 2.3 Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding

In line with the evolving literature on understanding different types of conflict and their evolution, a new theory was also developed on ways to address these conflicts. The field of conflict transformation and peacebuilding mushroomed. A complete treatment of all the different approaches to conflict transformation and peacebuilding falls outside the scope of this framework paper. In general, conflict transformation and peacebuilding have grown in scope, ambition, and frequency of application after the end of the Cold War. Richards describes a central trend:

Conflict resolution was once largely a matter of negotiation by leaders and diplomats. Where states have collapsed, or weak leadership is part of the problem, other approaches need to be tried. This has led to so-called Track Two negotiation processes, i.e. addressing wider aspects of a conflict at the same time as leaders negotiate a political deal. The aim of this work is not conflict *resolution*, but conflict transformation, such as, re-directing the social energies deployed in war to problem-solving ventures on a cooperative basis.<sup>49</sup>

Whereas the approaches discussed in earlier sections often focus at the policy level in their recommendations and rarely involve taking direct action towards trying to end the conflict or mitigate its consequences, conflict transformation and peacebuilding want to play a positive role in addressing the conflict. These activities can take place at all levels of society, as well as with many different groups within and among societies. Conflict transformation and peacebuilding approaches take the social process aspects of war and peace very seriously. Hence, conflict transformation and peacebuilding tools frequently dovetail with analyses of the political economy of war and anthropological approaches because these approaches are also multi-causal and process oriented. The next section draws the main conclusion from the conceptual debates described above.

## 2.4 Conflicting Conclusions

Whereas none of the above approaches fits our research program perfectly, all of these approaches can contribute to our research. In summary, the important lessons learned are:

- The "new barbarism" sees conflict as a form of irrational behavior. However, the other perspectives progressively stress that conflict can have its own type(s) of rationality. It is therefore intelligible and in principle, can be transformed.

<sup>48</sup> Currently, it is becoming increasingly common to speak of DDRRR, which stands for Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration, and Resettlement.

<sup>49</sup> Richards 2005: No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts, p. 18.

- The "new barbarism," "neo Malthusian" and "identity-based" approaches tend to see violent conflict - either from a descriptive or prescriptive point of view - as an exceptional state of affairs. They tend to focus on only one or a few aspects of violent conflict without placing these conflicts in their broad historical and societal context. Security approaches see armed conflict (and the possibility of it) as a common state of affairs. The political economy of war, ethnographic and peacebuilding approaches place conflict in its broader context and increasingly perceive war as a multi-causal social process. In different ways, they also stress that conflicts and the motivation(s) for them can evolve over time.
- The perception of war and peace as social processes also implies that there is no clear-cut distinction between war and peace. Hence, a "no war, no peace" society can be seen as a social system, among other possible social systems.
- The problem of distinguishing between the political economy of war and war itself indicates the importance of disaggregating conflicts.
  - Many different types of conflict exist. Civil war, inter-state war, coups d'état, urban violence, terrorism, ethnic cleansing, genocide, crime, and skirmishing can partially overlap but should not be uncritically put together as related or similar types of conflict.
  - Within one conflict different overlapping or recurring stages can be distinguished over time.
  - Within an on-going conflict, there may be pockets or periods of tranquility.
  - Within one conflict, there may also be institutions that mitigate the conflict and resist the divisions it causes.<sup>50</sup>

All the approaches mentioned above could generally do a better job in delineating and disaggregating different types of conflict. The goal should not be a static list of different types of conflict but a better understanding of the manifold ways in which war and peace are socially constructed over time. Ideally, different local perspectives should be captured in order to understand and address the conflict more comprehensively.

- To understand the conflict's roots and why conflicts have become so chronic, we must examine the strategies and tactics used by political elites, warlords, and other groups to gain or retain power, as well as to obtain resources (financial, material, diplomatic, symbolic, etc.). The two central issues in many conflicts - weak state capacities and suboptimal collective action by other actors - are hard to address. What they have in common is that they both show a weakening of those institutions that could foster peace and support democratization, as well as a concomitant strengthening of those institutions that could intensify conflict or lead to a longer duration of the conflict.
- The methods of study among the different approaches differs from mainly descriptive accounts - with a few normative conclusions on the futility of outside intervention - of the "new barbarism" to the economic quantitative tools and case studies in the political economy of war to in-depth field studies in the ethnographic approach. All these approaches can, in principle, shed light on the conflict(s) studied. Hence, a good study of conflict has to combine several methodological approaches in order to better understand the different, evolving aspects of conflict.

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<sup>50</sup> Anderson 1999: Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace - or War.

- Finally, conflict, relief, rehabilitation, and development, as well as crisis prevention and conflict transformation can all occur simultaneously (but obviously not necessarily in harmony).

The preceding sections made several references to societies where neither positive peace nor full-out war occur but where violent conflict may recur anytime. They demonstrated that several related, partially overlapping theoretical debates took place. While these debates are important for describing and analyzing societies caught in conflict, they do not show the analytical value of the concept of "no war, no peace" societies. The next section discusses what needs to be done to make the "no war, no peace" concept useful, in particular by challenging it empirically, which is what this research team will do in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

### 3 The Analytical Value of "No War, No Peace" Societies

Does the concept of "no war, no peace" societies really add something new or is it just old wine in new bottles? This question has become steadily more pressing as Armenians and Azeris have started to use the term "no war, no peace" to describe their societies. Several international authors have also used the term to describe Armenian and Azeri societies.<sup>51</sup> Is this just a local phenomenon or does this have a broader sociological value?

Recently, Hanlon and Yanaocopulos,<sup>52</sup> Richards,<sup>53</sup> and Mac Ginty<sup>54</sup> published books with "no war, no peace" in their titles, which did not specifically analyze the Azeri-Armenian situation.

Hanlon and Yanacopulos essentially provide an introductory overview of many issues related to humanitarian and peacebuilding interventions. Despite the similarity in title, it is only tangentially related to this research project due to its emphasis on outside interventions.

Mac Ginty provides a critical overview of peacebuilding approaches. He argues that the implementation of peace accords has often become "a technocratic exercise of tacking boxes, counting heads and weapons, amending constitutions, and reconstructing housing units, while the more thorny affective and perceptual issues of reconciliation, exclusion, and the restoration of dignity are left unaddressed."<sup>55</sup> Although he moves towards a broader sociological understanding of societies in conflict, his approach still centers on interventions from abroad and their role in improving the effectiveness of peace accords.

Richards, as described above, indicates the value of a process approach and field-level anthropological research to societies in conflict. His approach is definitely valuable to our research but his focus on specific cases does not yet lead to a fuller understanding of "no war, no peace" societies. Through anthropological field work Richards shows the importance of understanding different forms of conflict within different societies but he does not develop a sociological theory. His work is still conflict oriented.

Hence, we now need to develop a theory of societal change due to latent or low-intensity conflict that may intensify at any time. We should thus surpass terms as frozen conflict and negative peace and ask how broader society is changing. In sum, we argue that the strong focus on conflict (and when possible ending it) fails to indicate systemic changes in how broader society - and not just conflict parties or elites - develops. Building on a suggestion by Prof. Harutyunyan, we can schematically indicate the place of the "no war, no peace" concept in comparison with and corresponding to several other concepts of war and peace.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> De Waal, 2003: *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War*, pp. 251-268; Goodhand 2006: *Aiding Peace? The Role of NGOs in Armed Conflict*. p. 19; International Crisis Group, (2006). *Conflict Resolution in the South Caucasus: The EU's Role*, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Yanacopulos H. and Hanlon J. (eds.) 2006: *Civil War, Civil Peace*. Milton Keynes and Oxford, The Open University in association with James Currey.

<sup>53</sup> Richards 2005: *No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts*.

<sup>54</sup> Mac Ginty, R. 2006: *No War, No Peace: The Rejuvenation of Stalled Peace Processes and Peace Accords*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>56</sup> Harutyunyan, L. 2006: personal correspondence.

**Model I: Different Stages of War and Peace**

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War	Frozen Conflict/Negative Peace	Positive Peace
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**Model II: Societal Models of War and Peace**

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Society at War	No War, No Peace Society	Peaceful Society
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Galtung's theory of peace present three stages of peace and conflict: full-out war, negative peace, and positive peace. Negative peace is the absence of direct violence but may endure unjust societal relations marked by structural violence, such as poverty and racism. With positive peace, structural violence has been eradicated. If an armed conflict cannot find a resolution, then it is common to speak of a frozen conflict between two or more parties. Our research differs in its broader societal approach. We describe how society itself changes.

In summary, this research project follows the most basic tenet from sociology: "no war, no peace" societies are social phenomena in their own right. Our study is based on the assumption that a "no war, no peace" society constitutes a complex and dynamic social system in which institutions become reproduced with a potential for - positive or negative - conflict transformation.

Still, for the "no war, no peace" concept to be useful, it requires further theoretical elaboration. In order to understand a "no war, no peace" society and its transformation(s) better, we need to turn to sociological theory, in particular institutional theory. Afterwards, we will discuss the methodology of our research.

## 4 Institutions and Reproduction of Conflict

Violent conflict either breaks down societal institutions or changes their functioning. It also creates new ones that often create more conflict potential; for example, stereotyping among different groups grows, economic exchange decreases, and warrior myths arise. Fortunately, ending a conflict frequently offers opportunities to develop new institutions, sometimes from scratch.

To study "no war, no peace" societies we first need to define what an institution is. Secondly, we should determine which specific form(s) of institution(s) we want to study (as independent variables). Thirdly, we should examine how these institutions influence behavior as they shape the context and conditions for human action (as independent variables). Finally, how and whether the dynamics of these institutions can be changed in a more peaceful direction (as dependent variables).

### 4.1 Definitions

Institutions are central to the social sciences. Durkheim even called sociology "the science of institutions."<sup>57</sup> The main problem in studying institutions is that many different phenomena, ranging from a handshake to an army or an international regime can be called an institution. The concept of institutions thus runs the risk of becoming a meaningless catchall phrase. It is therefore important to define what "institution" means.

In this respect, it is sometimes confusing that at least three academic "schools" concern themselves with institutions in different ways: historical, economic and sociological institutionalism.<sup>58</sup> While they share some roots in the "old" institutionalism of the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they developed rather separately from each other. For example, both the economic and sociological approaches speak of the "new" institutionalism but as shown below, these forms of institutionalism differ considerably despite their similarity in name. Still, all three schools commonly attempt to elucidate the role institutions play in determining social, political, and economic outcomes.<sup>59</sup> As such, institutions are central to both the dynamics and (relative) stability of societal order and development.<sup>60</sup>

#### Historical Institutionalism

"Historical institutionalists accepted the contention that conflict among rival groups for scarce resources lies at the heart of politics, but they sought (...) explanations for the distinctiveness of national political outcomes and for the inequalities that mark these outcomes. They found such explanations in the way the institutional organizations of the polity and economy structures conflict so as to privilege some interests while demobilizing others".<sup>61</sup> Many historical institutionalists look closely at the state, which is seen no longer as a neutral broker among competing interests but as a complex of institutions capable of structuring the character and outcomes of group conflict. In addition, they also explore "how other social and political institutions, of the sort associated with labor and capital, could structure interactions so as to generate distinctive national trajectories." In

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<sup>57</sup> Jepperson, R.L. 1991: Institutions, Institutional Effects, and Institutionalism. In: W.W. Powell and P.J. DiMaggio (eds.): *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 143.

<sup>58</sup> For a broader overview of different types of institutionalism, see Scott, W.R. 2001: *Institutions and Organizations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

<sup>59</sup> Hall P.A. and Taylor R.C.R. 1996: *Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms*". MPIFG Discussion Paper 96 (6).

<sup>60</sup> March J.G. and Olson J.P. 1998: *The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders*." *International Organization* 52 (4), pp. 943-969.

<sup>61</sup> Hall and Taylor 1996: *Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms*, p. 5.



this school, institutions “provide moral or cognitive templates for interpretation and action. (...) Not only do institutions provide strategically useful information, they also affect the very identities, self-images and preferences of the actors.”<sup>62</sup>

### Economic Institutionalism

This form of institutionalism developed as a critique of neo-classical economics and its highly abstract mathematical models based on the (too) abstract idea of a *homo economicus*: He knows his utility preferences well and with (virtually) no effort finds and rationally processes information concerning alternative courses of action. It centers on how institutions, in particular transaction costs, property rights and contracts as well as bounded rationality, lead to satisficing instead of maximizing behavior. A well-known example is Williamson’s argument “that the development of a particular organizational form can be explained as the result of an effort to reduce the transaction costs of undertaking the same activity without such an institution.”<sup>63</sup> In general, “property-rights allocations condition the economic results produced by a society and (...) transaction costs are responsible, in part, for the way in which property rights are allocated and reinforced. In short, the introduction of transaction costs into the orthodox model of productions and exchange (...) demands a fundamental reorientation in our thinking about economic processes.”<sup>64</sup> Put differently, neo-institutionalist economics originally wanted to update and add to neo-classical theory but found many of the resulting economic models, although interesting, inconsistent. Nowadays, “new” institutional economics is increasingly differentiating from neo-classical economics.<sup>65</sup>

### Sociological Institutionalism

Sociological institutionalists define institutions in a broad way: “not just formal rules, procedures or norms, but the symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral templates that provide the *frames of meaning* guiding human action.” Of course, “such a definition breaks down the conceptual divide between *institutions* and *culture*. The two shade into each other.”

The new institutionalists in sociology began to argue that many of the institutional forms and procedures used by modern organizations were not adopted simply because they were most efficient for the tasks at hand, in line with some transcendent ‘rationality.’ Instead, they argued that many of these forms and procedures should be seen as culturally specific practices, akin to the myths and ceremonies devised by many societies, and assimilated into organizations, not necessarily to enhance their formal means-ends efficiency, but as result of the kind of processes associated with the transmission of cultural practices more generally. Thus, they argued, even the most seemingly bureaucratic of practices have to be explained in cultural terms.<sup>66</sup>

In this way, the sociological institutionalists developed a fresh perspective on the genesis and change of institutional practices and processes. Organizations often adopt new procedures or

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-8.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>64</sup> Furubotn E. and R. Richter 2005: *Institutions & Economic Theory: The Contribution of the New Institutional Economics*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, p. xii.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Hall and Taylor 1996: *Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms*, p. 14.

structures, not because these advance means-ends efficiencies, but because these enhance social legitimacy.<sup>67</sup>

Given the long history of institutionalism and the rather separate developments of the three - mainly mono-disciplinary - schools, it is not surprising that definitions of institutions abound. Parto recently came up with a comprehensive but not exhaustive list of definitions.<sup>68</sup>

**Table 1: Different Definitions of Institutions**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Habits of a group or the customs of a people (Hamilton 1932)</li><li>• Conventions, rules of action, embedded in social structure (locally specific) (Krätke 1999)</li><li>• Settled habits of thought common to the generality of men (Veblen 1919)</li><li>• Collective action exercised by different types of organizations (family, corporation, trade union, state) in control of individual action (Commons 1924)</li><li>• Convenient term for the more important among the widely prevalent, highly standardized social habits (Mitchell 1950)</li><li>• Sets of rules of the game or codes of conduct defining social practice (Young 1994)</li><li>• Formal organizations, patterns of behavior, negative norms and constraints (Coriat and Dosi, 1998)</li><li>• Mental constructs (Neale 1987)</li><li>• Rules of the game (North 1990)</li><li>• How the game is played (Nelson and Sampat 2001)</li><li>• A set of socially prescribed patterns of correlated behavior (Bush 1986)</li><li>• Prescribed and proscribed patterns of correlated behavior (Tool 1993)</li><li>• A relatively stable collection of practices and rules defining appropriate behavior for specific groups of actors in specific situations (March, Olson, 1998)</li><li>• Constitutional rule systems for society, collective choice rules governing different kinds of organizations, operational rules of organizations (Ostrom 1999)</li><li>• Norms that regulate relations among individuals (Parsons 1990)</li></ul>
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<sup>67</sup> Powell W.W. and DiMaggio P.J. (eds.) 1991: *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

<sup>68</sup> Parto, S. 2005: *Good Governance and Policy Analysis: What of Institutions?* Maastricht: MERIT.

Parto states that “the diversity of conceptualizations of institutions originating from these disciplines has generated a literature on institutions that is rich and extensive but difficult to operationalize.”<sup>69</sup> Moreover, it should be noted that these forms of institutionalism are not always easily compatible. Some economic institutionalists still tend to combine neo-classical assumptions about independent individuals who strategically calculate and act to further their personal interests with their institutional approaches. Sociologists study more how such interests are culturally constituted.

Nevertheless, all three schools use institutions to show how individuals with their bounded rationality deal with insecurity in situations they experience. Institutions both constrain and facilitate human action. In this respect, Jepperson writes “all institutions simultaneously empower and control.”<sup>70</sup> In this way, they produce and reproduce human behavior. Jepperson states:

An institution is (...) a social pattern that reveals a particular reproduction process. When departures from the pattern are counteracted in a regulated fashion by repetitively activated, socially constructed, controls - that is by some set of rewards and sanctions - we refer to a pattern as institutionalized. [Such] routine reproductive procedures support and sustain the pattern, furthering its reproduction - unless collective action blocks, or environmental shock disrupts, the reproductive process.<sup>71</sup>

Institutions and their routine reproduction are often taken for granted.<sup>72</sup> If people would continuously doubt an institution and try to change it, the reproduction process would cease to take place and the institution might disappear or become more weakly institutionalized.

In summary, in all three schools institutions have some shared characteristics as they both constrain and enable human action. Institutions are generally reproduced, often unconsciously, over time. They “operate primarily by affecting persons’ prospective bets about the collective environment and collective activity.”<sup>73</sup> Yet, there is a wide diversity of institutions and the three different schools mentioned above often study them in different ways. Still the different types of institutions can be brought together in the following figure.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Parto S. 2005: Economic Activity and Institutions: Taking Stock. *Journal of Economic Issues* XXXIX (1), pp. 1-32.

<sup>70</sup> Jepperson 1991: Institutions, Institutional Effects, and Institutionalism. In: Powell and DiMaggio (eds.), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, p. 146.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Zucker, L.G. 1991: The Role of Institutionalization in Cultural Persistence. In: W.W. Powell and P.J. DiMaggio (eds.), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 83-107.

<sup>73</sup> Jepperson 1991: Institutions, Institutional Effects, and Institutionalism. In: Powell and DiMaggio (eds.), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, p. 147.

<sup>74</sup> Based on Parto, 2005: Economic Activity and Institutions: Taking Stock and Parto 2005: Good Governance and Policy Analysis: What of Institutions?

**Table 2: Characteristics and Manifestations of Institutions**

<b>Behavioral</b> Institutions as standardized (recognizable) social habits - manifest in instinctive behavior of individuals and groups as reflections of social norms	<b>Cognitive</b> Institutions as mental models and constructs or definitions, based on values and embedded in culture - aspired to by individuals and groups	<b>Associative</b> Institutions as mechanisms facilitating prescribed or privileged interaction among different private and public interests - manifest in activities of groups of individuals	<b>Organizational</b> Institutions as organizations, which are durable forms of joint goal-oriented behavior that maintain clear boundaries between internal and external aspects - manifest in activities by organization members	<b>Regulative</b> Institutions as prescriptions and proscriptions - manifest as the immediate boundaries of action by individuals and groups	<b>Constitutive</b> Institutions setting the bounds of social relations - manifest as the ultimate boundaries of action by individuals and groups
←					→
<b>Informal; Social</b>					<b>Formal; Societal</b>

Table 2 also implies that different institutions can be studied by different research methods, varying from quantitative questionnaires to anthropological participant observation.

## 4.2 Different Institutional Forms

In this research, it is important to identify the specific types of institutions - or lack thereof - that we want to study. It is therefore central to our research to be able to identify different types of institutions. "Whether a practice is an institution is (...), relative to particular contexts."<sup>75</sup>

Within any system having multiple levels or orders of organizations, (...), primary levels of organization can operate as institutions relative to secondary levels organization. A (...) computer's basic operating system appears as an institution relative to its word-processing program (especially to a software engineer). In collectivities, constitutional procedures may appear institutional relative to practices of formal organization, and the latter practices institutional relative to unorganized social practices.

Further, whether an object is an institution is, (...), relative to a particular dimension of a relationship. (...) Parents are more institutions to their own children, than to other kids, as taken-for-granted realities; yet children may contest their own parents' authority more than that of others' parents.<sup>76</sup>

Finally, whether an object is an institution is, (...), relative to centrality. In systems, cores are institutions relative to peripheries. The regime of international politico-economic coordination is more an external, objective, constraint for Ghana than for the IMF. An association can be more an institution - more a fixed feature of an external environment - for a nonmember than for a member.<sup>77</sup>

In a similar vein, Parto remarks that studying institutions can take place at different levels (individual, organizational, and societal), on different scales of governance (from local to global) and for different subsystems (economic, political, cultural, ecological, etc.).<sup>78</sup>

In the final analysis, "the details and dimensions are here less important than the general point - that the same term, 'in a different context' (...) may, or may not, denote an institution. Whether we consider an object an institution depends upon what we are considering to be our analytical problem."<sup>79</sup>

For our study we should take into account that the different institutionalist schools cannot be applied wholesale to "no war, no peace" societies because our societies under study have their own problems with institutions that - in varying degrees - differ from those in the rich, Western world. Frequently, institutions have been weakened by war, they have been co-opted by (competing) elites, or there is an absence of institutions that may foster peace. In

<sup>75</sup> Jepperson 1991: Institutions, Institutional Effects, and Institutionalism. In: Powell and DiMaggio (eds.), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, p. 146.

<sup>76</sup> More generally, "institutions are taken for granted... in the sense that they are both treated as relative fixtures in a social environment and explicated (accounted for) as functional elements of that environment." Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Parto 2005: *Economic Activity and Institutions: Taking Stock*. *Journal of Economic Issues* XXXIX (1): pp. 1-32. Parto 2005: *Good Governance and Policy Analysis: What of Institutions?*

<sup>79</sup> An institution is generally not an idea or an individual.

the context of state-building and state-failure, Chesterman, Ignatieff, and Thakur have remarked:

It is only through a more nuanced understanding of the state as a network of institutions that crises in governance may be properly understood and perhaps, avoided or remedied. In many situations, the remedy will depend upon variables that are political rather than institutional, although the sustainability of any outcome depends precisely upon institutionalizing procedures to remove that dependence on politics and personality.<sup>80</sup>

As stated, our main research assumption is that a "no war, no peace" society continuously reproduces institutions, such as structures, formal organizations, informal groupings, and norms and values that generate conflict potential within a society, as well as within and among neighboring states. This reproduction of conflict potential undermines democratic transitions, economic development, and peacebuilding. Moreover, such reproduction usually implies strong normative disagreements within society, among or within groups, and the social exclusion of certain groups. As a consequence, the taken-for-granted nature of institutions may erode and sometimes informal or weak institutions may become more prevalent. Other institutions, for example, ethnic or religious ones may reify.

The following table shows the different examples of institutions we derived from brainstorming during our conference in Bochum. Given the differences in context between Armenia and Azerbaijan, both research teams may identify different institutions as relevant to the purpose of the study. It would be important, however, to compare these different types of institutions beforehand to see whether the research teams are on comparable tracks.

**Table 3: Conference Outcomes: Different Types of Institutions**

<p><b>1. Societal Structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The political system<sup>81</sup> should be studied in at least two ways:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The characterization of the type of rule, for example:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Democratic</li> <li>➤ Authoritarian</li> <li>➤ Totalitarian</li> <li>➤ Autocratic</li> <li>➤ Kleptocratic</li> <li>➤ Oligarchic/Plutocratic</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The administrative system, subdivided in (Trias Politica)                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Executive</li> <li>➤ Legislative</li> <li>➤ Judiciary</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• The economic system</li> <li>• The legal system</li> <li>• The religious system</li> <li>• The cultural system (e.g., changes in ethnic identity)</li> </ul>
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<sup>80</sup> Chesterman S., M. Ignatieff and R. Thakur 2004: Making States Work: From State Failure to State-Building. New York: International Peace Academy/United Nations University, p. 2.

<sup>81</sup> The term *rule* was rejected in favor of *system* during the Bochum conference.

## 2. Organizations<sup>82</sup>

- Religious organizations
- Diaspora (organizations)
- Labor unions
- Refugee groups
- Political parties
- Government (needs to be subdivided and elaborated on, e.g., main power holders within the government. It could also be that some kind of hidden shadow government exists.)
  - Presidential Office (or more correctly, certain members in the presidential office)
  - Ministry of Defense
  - Family of the President
  - Parliament
  - Local government bodies
  - Local commissions
  - Courts (and their degree of independence)
  - Oligarchs
- Media
  - Newspapers
  - Television
  - Radio
- Think tanks
- University/Universities
- Private enterprise
- Mafia (see also oligarchs)
- Warlords (are currently not present)
- NGOs (= Non-governmental organizations)
- Veterans and combatants
- Interest groups based on place of origin (kinship groups, village interest groups, cultural groups)
- Ethnic minority groups
- Security actors:
  - Military
  - Police
  - Secret Service
  - Border Patrol
  - Russian Military Bases
  - Western actors (American/NATO bases for oil-pipeline security; OECD)
- Migrants

## 3. Norms and Values

- Stereotypes of one's own group or another:
  - Hospitality
  - Family
  - Labor ethic

<sup>82</sup> During the Bochum conference, we had a long conversation whether we should include informal groups, such as criminals/mafia, (illegal) traders, armed gangs, and warlords into our research. Although this discussion was not closed, during our brainstorming we did not employ this type of institution as a separate category.

- Brave/Cowardly
- Impudence/Brutality
- Aggressiveness
- Nationalism
- Laziness
- Patriotism
- Fear
- Tolerance
- Peace-loving
- Hypocrisy
- Other?
- Myths:
  - Victimization (and Genocide)
  - De-victimization
  - "Armenization"
  - Long-suffering
  - (Russification was dropped, because it was not considered relevant anymore)
- Identity/Roles:
  - Ethnic (Turkic or Caucasian)
  - Religious (Positive or Negative)
  - Regional (sub-national and supra-national)
  - (Post-)Soviet
  - Cultural
  - Other?
- Generational/ideological (and the influence on perception).

This list may need adaptation during our operationalization. It may also turn out that we need to identify alternative types of institutions (or actors) that have either always been lacking or have been destroyed, so that peacebuilding and democratic development could not take off. Similarly, we may also have to include some international institutions and/or actors. In any case, during operationalization we will need to establish more objective criteria for determining which institutions count.

### 4.3 How Institutions Influence Behavior and Society

The three schools differ in their study of the processes by which institutions influence behavior. The main characteristic that they share is, as stated above, that institutions consciously or subconsciously affect the way people anticipate their collective environment, as well as collective and individual activity.

The historical school has two different approaches to the question of how institutions influence behavior. The first adopts a calculus approach and focuses "on those aspects of human behavior that are instrumental and based on strategic calculation. They assume that individuals seek to maximize the attainment of a set of goals given by a specific preference



function and, in doing so, behave strategically. They canvass all possible options to select those conferring maximum benefits. In general, the actor's goals or preferences are given exogenously to the institutional analysis.<sup>83</sup>

With this calculus approach institutions provide information about the behavior of others - of power relations, enforcement mechanisms, penalties, pay off schemes, etc. Put concisely, institutions alter the expectations of actors about other actors in response to or during their own actions.

A second, more cultural approach stresses "the degree to which behavior is not fully strategic but bounded by an individual's worldview."<sup>84</sup> For example, people often follow familiar routines, rely on ethnic relations, or follow religious ideas to formulate and reach their goals. Hence, "institutions provide moral or cognitive templates for interpretation and action" but in the process they may cause an uneven distribution of power among different groups.<sup>85</sup>

As stated, the economic school emphasized as its main institutions: property rights, transaction costs, and contracts. For example, ownership structures of companies can strongly influence the performance of such companies. Similarly, the position that people hold in state or private bureaucracies may influence their rent-seeking behavior, especially if patronage is rampant. And whether contracts are being upheld, as well as the way in which this is being done, strongly determines the costs of transactions and therewith the opportunities for economic growth.<sup>86</sup> Scholars in this vein of theory often see politics as a series of collective action dilemmas where individual goal-maximizing behavior can produce an outcome that is collectively suboptimal.<sup>87</sup>

Neo-classical assumptions and game-theoretical/statistical models often emphasize such strategically calculating behavior of individuals. Economic institutionalists traditionally accepted these assumptions and worked to update these models but most neo-institutionalists increasingly move away from these assumptions and models and incorporate more sociological approaches.

The sociological institutionalists also emphasize the role of culture but do so in a very nuanced way. Older forms of institutional sociological analysis emphasized how roles and concomitant norms and values shaped behavior. They often stressed how vested interests led to unintended consequences and goal displacement. Newer lines of inquiry put more emphasis on the cognitive dimension (e.g., scripts) of institutions as they influence human behavior. In this way, this form of institutionalism comes close to social constructivism.<sup>88</sup> Accordingly, this type of sociologists often describes how individual action and institutions interact and frequently mutually constitute each other.

<sup>83</sup> Hall and Taylor 1996: *Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms*, p. 7.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>86</sup> Furubotn and Richter 2005: *Institutions & Economic Theory: The Contribution of the New Institutional Economics*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

<sup>87</sup> Conceptually, this is similar to the security dilemma.

<sup>88</sup> Powell and DiMaggio 1991: *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, pp. 1-38.

For our research, it is important that we continue to think about how institutions reproduce behavior and shape action and therewith influence prospects for peacebuilding and democratization. The above ways in which institutions can influence human action will help us to think through possible ways in which the potential for conflict or peace is being reproduced. For example, a growing role for oligarchs may lead to a marginalization of other economic groups and a change in political elites.

**Table 4: Conference outcomes of institutional influences in "no war, no peace" societies<sup>89</sup>**

<p>Psycho-social characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alienation</li><li>• Personalization</li><li>• Victimization</li><li>• De-victimization</li><li>• Armenization:</li><li>• Identification</li><li>• Socialization</li></ul> <p>Political characteristics of "no peace, no war" societies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Politicization</li><li>• Legitimization</li><li>• Instrumentalization</li><li>• Securitization</li></ul> <p>Economic characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commodification</li><li>• Redistribution</li><li>• Reproduction</li><li>• Oligarchization</li></ul> <p>Social characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Criminalization</li><li>• Decriminalization</li></ul> <p>Normative characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dehumanization</li><li>• Heroization</li></ul>
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In this respect, it is important to note that institutions in war zones, and to some extent also in "no war, no peace" societies, have often been weakened, sometimes even specifically targeted for destruction. At the same time, many institutions may have a more informal character. It will be important for our research to identify these informal institutions - such as criminal gangs, mafia, warlords, informal markets, intermediary rule, patronage, regularized political backroom dealing - rather than more formal state bureaucracies.

<sup>89</sup> For more details including definitions, see the outcomes of the Bochum conference.

## 4.4 Institutional Change

Institutions tend to persist, but are not immune to change. The following points indicate how institutions may change - or not - over time within one society or among different societies.

- In “no war, no peace” societies, the role of violence - either structural or direct - in society has usually grown. Both the institutionalization of violence, as well as the impact of violence, for example through unresolved trauma or control over resource extraction and asset stripping, may be important for our research.
- Even though institutions usually persist over time, sudden shocks from outside society (this can literally be an earthquake that shows the incompetent response by political elites - like in Nicaragua) and new forms of collective action with new normative claims from inside society, for example by a students movement (e.g., Otpor in Serbia), may deeply influence some institutions and actions. The taken-for-granted nature of some institutions may become disputed. Examples include:
  - Formal institutions may become more informal or vice versa.
  - Highly institutionalized phenomena may become more weakly institutionalized or vice versa.
  - Institutions may disappear or become newly formed.
- In response to new societal demands or international diplomatic pressure, institutions may also adapt more slowly. In this sense, it is useful to study whether different types of institutions are compatible with each other, reinforce each other, uneasily coexist, weaken, or replace other institutions.
- Institutions may simply be very robust and not change at all or only a little.

Finally, given the weakening and destruction of some institutions during war, as well as the potential absence of useful institutions for peacebuilding and democratization, our research should also make an effort to think through alternative forms of institutions and actions that currently do not exist.

## 5 The Larger Research Project: Methodology, Objectives and Outputs

### 5.1 Research Strategy

This part discusses the methodology for the larger research project, entitled "*No War, No Peace*" society: *Problems and Perspectives of Democratic Transformations, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding* for which this study serves as a methodological background document.<sup>90</sup> The multi-dimensional character of our research object requires a comparative multi-method sociological research strategy. Hence, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used to study our research topic from different perspectives.

Our research methods include desk-based analysis, expert surveys, mass surveys, focus groups, and document analysis.

*Desk-based theoretical analysis* aims at elaborating a model that will provide a conceptual basis for the empirical investigation. In the framework of the proposed research project, we use desk-based analysis as an instrument for generating theory closely related to empirical practice. Such conceptual or theoretical knowledge helps designing, operationalizing, and interpreting key aspects of this research.

*Expert surveys* provide an opportunity to obtain opinions and evaluations concerning the topic from competent, recognized experts.

The aim of *mass surveys* is to provide an objective picture of public opinion, which will help to characterize the current potential of both peace and conflict and to reveal support for peacebuilding efforts in Armenia and Azerbaijan (based on the analysis of the population's perceptions, value orientations, social expectations, and attitudes).

The method of *focus groups* enables us to obtain information on real socio-psychological mechanisms of the formation of public opinion for different segments of the population. The results of focus-groups surveys will give the opportunity to deepen information received by mass surveys and help understand different population groups in Armenia and Azerbaijan and their perception of conflict potential and possible ways of conflict transformation and peacebuilding. This method will give an opportunity to reveal mechanisms for the formation of ideas on the research subject under the conditions of a modeled situation when group dynamics influence respondents in expressing their opinions.

### 5.2 Research Plan

The project will consist of five discrete but interrelated research tasks that will be coordinated by the different project partners.

*Task 1* concerns the analysis of existing scientific knowledge on "no war, no peace" societies at a conceptual level. The main goal of the task is to develop a theoretical and methodological model that better corresponds with the characteristics and changing nature of "no war, no peace" societies. The current paper is the outcome of task 1. It provides the conceptual basis of this study and begins developing tools for comparative sociological research of Armenian and Azerbaijani societies. It supports operationalization and thus provides an opportunity for later systematic scholarly analysis of the research results.

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<sup>90</sup> Section 5 is to a large extent based on our INTAS research proposal.

*Task 2* aims at gathering empirical evidence and provides a comparative analysis of institutional characteristics of Armenian and Azerbaijani societies based upon the theoretical findings from the previous task. To this end, this task deals with research and analysis of factors and mechanisms producing conflict potential and institutionalization of “no war, no peace” situations in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

*Task 3* aims at providing comparative analysis of the state-of-the-art and perspectives for democratic transformations related to peacebuilding in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

*Task 4* summarizes the theoretical and empirical findings from the previous tasks. At this stage, researchers seek to identify the main factors, institutions and development trends that determine either in a negative or positive manner peacebuilding and democratization in Armenia and Azerbaijan. To this end the task aims to formulate scientific hypotheses/theory concerning preconditions, alternatives and scenarios of transforming “no war, no peace” societies into peaceful and democratic states.

*Task 5* focuses on the finalization and dissemination of project results, including the preparation of the final report, which consists of a technical report, a methodological report, a financial report, as well as an analytical report with policy recommendations.

### 5.3 Research Objectives and Outputs

The project will develop a theory or at least a set of hypotheses about the specific characteristics of "no war, no peace" societies. In the next research round, we can then also study other "no war, no peace" societies from a comparative perspective. We will also highlight "Issues for Further Research" and "Policy Recommendations."

After our conference in Bochum, we already discussed several outputs. As the next stage of our research concerns operationalization, it is important to keep these publications in mind. The research outputs help further operationalization, as well as to raise awareness about possible target groups for research results, varying from other social scientists to the interested public, as well as national and international policy makers. The following publications have been agreed upon:

Nr.	Title	Place of publication	Language	By whom
1	Concept paper	Bern	EN	D. Dijkzeul
2	Comparative Survey on Methodology	Yerevan	RUS	L. Harutyunyan
3	State and Society Building in Armenia	Yerevan	ARM RUS	S. Astvatsaturov
4	State and Society Building in Azerbaijan	Baku	(AZ) RUS	A. Yunusov
5	Conflict Settlement in the Eyes of the Public in Armenia	Yerevan	ARM RUS	S. Astvatsaturov
6	Conflict Settlement in the Eyes of the Public in Azerbaijan	Baku	(AZ) RUS	A. Yunusov
7	International Studies Association Conference Paper	Bochum	English	Dijkzeul, Harutyunyan, Astvatsaturov and Yunusov
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