

PEACE STUDIES  
JOURNAL

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# PEACE STUDIES JOURNAL

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The Peace Studies Journal (PSJ) is a leading and primer journal in the field of peace, justice, and conflict studies internationally. PSJ, founded in 2008 out of the initiative of the Central New York Peace Studies Consortium was established as an informal journal to publish the articles presented at the annual Peace Studies Conference, but in 2009 PSJ was developed into an international interdisciplinary free online peer-reviewed scholarly journal. The goal of PSJ is to promote critical scholarly work on the areas of identities politics, peace, nonviolence, social movements, conflict, crisis, ethnicity, culture, education, alternatives to violence, inclusion, repression and control, punishment and retribution, globalization, economics, ecology, security, activism, and social justice.

The Journal welcomes scholars, activists, and community organizers/leaders to submit. We hold to a caring, welcoming, and constructive process aiding in the publishing of your articles/review, rather than turning you away with delayed harsh and deconstructive review feedback. We encourage articles that interweave theory and practice and especially welcome articles on topics that have not yet been examined.

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- All submissions should have appropriate references and citations. Manuscripts should be single line spacing, 12-point font, Times Roman, 1 inch margin, with an a paragraph

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## **Stereotype of Masculinity and Its Effect on Recruitment and Exploitation of CAAFAG in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

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**Keywords:** recruitment and exploitation, CAAFAG, toxic culture of masculinity, personal security, Democratic Republic of Congo

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### **Abstract**

Continuous ethnic-related conflicts and ongoing civil war in the DRC had led every military group involved to recruit as many soldiers as possible in order to maintain its power and domination against other groups. In the DRC, approximately ten thousand CAAFAG (children associated with armed forces and armed groups) were recruited with force. Despite both boys and girls having the same possibility of being recruited by the military groups, boys are still preferred to be in the front line because of the gender bias that still occurs throughout the country. This paper aims to analyze the impact of the stereotype of masculinity on the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG that still prevails in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Drawing from the concepts of the toxic culture of masculinity and personal security, this paper argues that the deep-rooted stereotype of masculinity influences the widespread recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG in DRC. It forces Congolese boys to embody toxic masculine traits, such as tough, emotionally detached, and violent.

## **STEREOTYPE OF MASCULINITY AND ITS EFFECT ON RECRUITMENT AND EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN ASSOCIATED WITH ARMED FORCES AND ARMED GROUPS (CAAFAG) IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

### **Introduction**

In the past few decades, Zaire, now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), has been the battlefield for ongoing armed conflicts. Although the civil wars officially ended in 2002 as all parties signed the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement, violence and hostilities continue throughout the country with more or less twenty-five armed groups and armed forces (Reyntjes, 2009). As of March 2020, more than five million people are displaced inside the DRC, and more than one million refugees and asylum seekers in the DRC and other African countries, according to a UNHCR report (2020). This prolonged conflict has also affected the lives of Congolese children, as nearly seven million children aged 5 to 17 are out of school due to sluggish economic conditions and political unrest. The children were also forcibly recruited and exploited by armed groups and forces who sought to maintain their power against the government and opposing groups.

UNICEF (2003) defines the term ‘child associated in armed groups and forces’ (further in this paper will be referred to as CAAFAG) as children, defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNGA, 1989) as any person under the age of eighteen, who are part of any kind of armed forces or armed group in any capacity. Those children may be trained and used for combat or other supporting roles such as porters, cooks, spies, or human shields, as happens in Africa. Most of the children recruited were taken by force or abducted, although some of them also voluntarily joined the armed groups. Other than the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG have also been regulated in the Paris Principles, in which all children are entitled to protection and care under international, regional, and national instruments, from being recruited and exploited by armed groups and armed forces (UNICEF, 2003). The African Union (1990) has also ratified a regional agreement to protect children through its African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The charter has forbidden any form of child exploitation, as regulated in articles 15 and 16. Unfortunately, despite the international, regional, and national efforts, recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG remains an upsetting issue.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is one of several countries with a high CAAFAG recruitment and exploitation rate. According to a report by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) (2019), between 2014 and 2017, more than six thousand children were recruited by no less than 49 different armed groups. 72 percent of the recruitment was perpetrated by DRC’s most prominent armed groups, such as FDLR FOCA, Nyatura, and Kamuina Nsapu. The method used by the armed groups is usually abduction, but sometimes they also use persuasion. Armed groups typically abduct children from schools and even from their own homes. Meanwhile, the persuasion method is usually used on children whose family or community members were killed by opposing armed groups, thus encouraging the need to seek revenge and ‘self-defense’ (MONUSCO, 2019).

There have been several academic literature that discussed this matter. Claude Rakisits (2008), in the paper entitled “Child Soldiers in the East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo,” explained the condition of CAAFAG in the DRC and the country’s legal obligations to international statutes.

Another piece of literature by Claudia Seymour (2014), entitled “Everyday Violence and War in the Kivus, DRC,” examined the structural violence experienced by Congolese children and international child protection interventions. Mikavica (2020), through a literature entitled “Child Participation in Peace Processes: Identifying Gaps between Language and Action,” argued that children can only participate in conflict resolution during the peace processes. It is their right to negotiate and advocate for children’s welfare. Unfortunately, despite both works having thoroughly explained the condition of CAAFAG in the DRC, they have yet to examine the factors causing the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG. The analyses on the factors driving the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG are primarily found in MONUSCO reports, not academic literature.

Regarding the toxic culture of masculinity, there have been several academic literature that discussed the matter, such as “Making Sense of Violence: Voices of Soldiers in the Congo (DRC)” by Maria Baaz and Maria Stern (2008). In the said literature, they explained how the Congolese soldiers tried to live up to the expectations of being tough, strong, and masculine. Desiree Lwambo (2013), in the article “Before the War, I Was A Man: Men and Masculinities in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo,” also examined the effect of a toxic culture of masculinity on Congolese men. However, both literatures above focused more on the adult soldiers than the CAAFAG. This research offers a new perspective to analyze the issue of the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG in the DRC by using the concept of masculinity. This particular concept is the one that will be used to analyze the factors causing the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG and eventually damage Congolese children’s personal security.

### **The Effect on Recruitment and Exploitation of CAAFAG on Congolese Children’s Personal Security**

The concept of human security was derived from the paradigm of human development coined by former Pakistani Prime Minister Mahbub ul Haq in 1990. Through the Human Development Report (UNDP, 1994), Mahbub ul Haq laid out the basis of the concept of human security developed by the UNDP. The Human Development Report states that human development and human freedom complete each other. There have been several historical events in which people would sacrifice their lives to fight for their freedom. With liberty, individuals are free to develop their potential to the fullest. The Commission on Human Security would later define “human security” as the following:

Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms- freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military, and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood, and dignity (2003).

From the definition above, it can be said that security is not only about protection from invasion or war but more about protection from violence and crime, which threaten day-to-day lives.

UNDP further proposes seven main categories of human security, which complement each other. However, the governments, who are mainly responsible for protecting these securities, rarely

manage to ensure the protection of all aspects of human security. Most governments only succeeded in protecting several categories and lacking in others. In the case of recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG in the DRC, personal security is still lacking when it comes to protection.

The concept of personal security aims to ensure the protection of individuals from violence and crimes that constantly risking human life (Gierszewski, 2017). This particular category could relate to most people, as human life is continuously being threatened by the possibility of violence, both in poor and rich countries. In their article, Gasper and Gomez (2015) argue that fulfilling personal security would automatically guarantee the realization of other categories of human security since other categories are also considered personal, such as health, access to adequate food, and civil liberties. The absence of violence threatening human life could only happen once their basic needs and other security aspects have been fulfilled. UNDP (1994) later classified three threats to personal security, which can be either external or internal threats. These are regular and/or irregular armed conflicts, threats committed by the state or other bodies, and threats to oneself, which in this case, are related to suicidal behaviour and drug usage.

The Congo wars and the following ongoing armed conflicts in the DRC have claimed more than three million lives, of which 2.3 million were children. Over 12 percent of Congolese children did not reach their first birthdays, as most could not live past 12 months. Children face difficulties accessing essential foods and healthcare as the conflict rages on. Many children were forced to survive in several areas while hiding in the bush from armed groups (Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflicts, 2003). In Kasai, one of the most vulnerable regions in the DRC, more than 770,000 children are malnourished, and 400,000 of them are at risk of dying due to acute malnutrition. Congolese children are also denied their rights to healthcare and education, as armed groups have continuously launched attacks on schools and healthcare centers in several provinces, such as Kivu, Kasai, Lomami, Sankuru, and Tanganyika (UNICEF, 2018).

In the DRC, almost 80 percent of armed groups and armed forces troops are composed of child soldiers, making more than 30,000 child soldiers fighting as militias and bodyguards for army commanders. The children were abducted at the age of as young as five years old, as retold by one of the CAAFAG survivors below:

I was blindfolded, handed an AK-47 gun, and ordered to shoot. So, I pulled the trigger. I took off the blindfold. There was blood on my hands, there was blood on my shirt, and in front of me was my best friend Kevin. I was 5 years old, and I was forced to kill my best friend as a way of being initiated. – Michel Chikwanine (Taylor, 2016)

The brutal orders given to the child soldiers traumatized them greatly, turning them into emotionally broken and socially isolated children. Efforts from MONUSCO and other NGOs to help the child soldiers readjust often faced difficulties, mainly because of the guilt and shame that weighed on them.

Many children recruited by the armed groups and armed forces would later be sent to the frontlines with minimum weapons. Some were even sent without weapons and naked to be the “bulletproof shields” to protect other soldiers. The children, also known as “Baby Police,” were forced to drink a potion made from the powder of tree barks mixed with human blood and ground-up bones. The

rest of the potion was made into a paste and spread onto their bodies, making them “bulletproof.” As one former CAAFAG testified

They gave me eggs. When I threw the eggs they turned into bombs and the enemy was killed by the fire. I killed many people that way. [The children] who died met their fate because they had not followed the rules. Perhaps they had eaten meat, or had sex, or had worn underwear while fighting. I knew that as long as I remained naked, I could be sure that the charms worked. Sometimes we would swallow three live red ants before marching to the battle and chanted the words “In the name of the Kamuina Nsapu”. – Jean-Paul (The Telegraph, n.d.).

For the Congolese children, once forced to join the armed groups and armed forces, they would no longer be seen as boys but as fellow men who fought for their freedom and dignity. It has also been noted that they often experienced physical abuse as recruits, which was said to harden their bodies to sustain suffering in preparation for war (Hynd, 2020). Retrieved from a work by Seymour, a former CAAFAG from the FDLR armed group also retold his abusive experience, as cited below:

[...] For one week, we walked. We didn't eat anything except *ugali* [manioc-based paste]. I was so hungry, I asked a soldier about getting food, he replied: ‘Do you see any one of us eating meat? Are you so hungry?’. He took my arm. He cut off the flesh from my arm. He made me grill my flesh, and then he forced me to eat it. I pretended to, but I couldn't. I spat it out when he wasn't looking. – Emile, 22-year-old, former CAAFAG (2014).

Boys who were recruited as CAAFAG were also not free from sexual abuse. According to MONUSCO, approximately 5 percent of boys have experienced sexual abuse at least once, and the number was considered to drastically underrepresent the actual amount of boy victims of sexual abuse. During armed conflicts, sexual abuses are usually committed to shame and degrade opposing soldiers or soldiers accused of betraying their groups (2019). Research by Stemple has found that sexual abuses against CAAFAG can take many forms, such as rape involving objects, enforced sterilization, enforced nudity, enforced masturbation, castration, genital violence, and even to the extent of enforced incest or enforced rape of other females or males (2008).

When a child is recruited into the armed groups and armed forces, be it forcibly or voluntarily, they would be denied access to school, family, and community. As CAAFAG, they would be at constant risk of being killed or injured in battles and dying from diseases, drugs, and alcohol. All ties related to their roots would be cut off (Matambura, 2017). The denial of the children's fundamental rights and best interests shows that the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG endanger the personal security of Congolese children. They live in constant fear of being abducted by the armed groups. Those who have been recruited also live in constant fear of dying, being captured, tortured, and subjected to other forms of violence. The children who managed to flee and escape the armed groups also live in constant fear of being re-recruited, as told by a former CAAFAG from the Nyatura armed group below:

I went back home but I was recognized by my old group members. My father wanted to give them our only goat to pay for the weapon I had escaped with. It did not work so they threatened

to kill me if I didn't go with them. They took the goat too. – 17-year-old former CAAFAG (MONUSCO, 2013).

Former CAAFAG are also often not welcomed by society as they might be perceived as criminals and suffer shame and embarrassment for what they have done as CAAFAG.

The Congolese government has also failed to protect children's personal security, as the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, further in this article, will be referred to as the FARDC. The Congolese National Police, further in this article, will be referred to as the PNC, which also recruited and exploited children into the armed forces. As OHCHR (2016) reported, from January 2014 to March 2016, 50 perpetrators of violations against children and child recruitment were sentenced. Among those 50 people, there were 37 FARDC high-ranking soldiers and 10 PNC agents. One of those high-ranking soldiers was Lieutenant-Colonel Bedi Mobuli Engangela, Colonel 106. He was convicted on 15 December 2014 after a trial from 11 August to 7 October 2014. He was found guilty of recruiting children, inhuman treatment, sexual exploitation, and collaborating with armed groups Mayi-Mayi and FDLR in launching attacks against civilians in Kalehe, South Kivu.

The recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG in the DRC proved that Congolese children still experience threats to their personal security, as they are still caught in the middle of an ongoing armed conflict, with the Congolese government's failure to protect their personal security and the constant threat of being recruited by the armed groups and armed forces being added into the mix. This shows how severe the violations of Congolese children's personal security are. Because the violations against the children's personal security are treacherous, immediate protection for them becomes the utmost priority. Once the protection of Congolese children's personal security is ensured, they will have the courage and the freedom to pursue other aspects of human security, such as economy, food, and politics.

### **The Effect of Toxic Culture of Masculinity on Recruitment and Exploitation of CAAFAG**

The concept of a toxic culture of masculinity originated from the mythopoetic men's movement, which began in the 1980s. According to the movement, a toxic culture of masculinity is the opposite of deep masculinity. The members of the movement, also known as 'mythopoeists,' argue that deep masculinity is "good masculinity," such as being a father, hunting for food, seeking access to economic resources, and saving lives. Messner (1997) argued that the inability of men to exercise their deep masculinity caused them to resort to destructive and hyper-masculine values, also known as toxic masculinity.

Despite the lack of a universally agreed-upon definition of the concept of a "toxic culture of masculinity," this concept is usually used to refer to a set of norms and beliefs associated with "masculine" traits (Schulos, 2017). According to Kupers (2005), the norms of toxic masculinity have a higher chance of being implemented in punitive isolation settings or in a condition in which there is a clear gap between the power of two parties, such as in armed groups and armed forces. The high-ranking officers have total control over their subordinates, thus allowing them to order them around, and are less likely to treat others respectfully. This action would either encourage

the subordinates to rebel or act the same way once they have control over their subordinates. The concept of toxic masculinity appears in the cycle of men asserting domination over others.

Fracher and Kimmel (1995) stated that toxic masculinity does not mean that masculinity itself is the problem. Still, it refers to a patriarchal construction of masculinity, such as neglect, abuse, and violence. Toxic masculinity believes men should be challenged and willing to use violence and not show emotions, especially those seen as “feminine,” such as affection, dependence, and compassion. Men’s roles are defined as more important than women’s; thus, their failure to fulfill those traditional roles may be seen as a weakness. Men are constantly pressured to perform and assert masculinity (Lwambo, 2013). This practice helps men to maintain their dominance in society. In the DRC, as well as in other parts of the world, most boys grow up being taught the Boy Code, which is a set of strict rules boys have absorbed about how they “must” behave, with four basic stereotyped male ideas (David & Brannon, 1976). Those four ideas are:

**a. The “Sturdy Oak”**

Boys are not allowed to share their pain or grieve openly. They must be stoic, independent, and stable.

**b. “Give ‘Em Hell”**

Boys are ‘destined’ to act macho and violent. This would later lead boys to fight each other, and once they injured themselves or others, they would defend their action with the classic “boys will be boys.”

**c. The “Big Wheel”**

Boys are taught to avoid shame at all costs. Therefore, they are expected to act tough, as if everything is under control, to assert their dominance and power.

**d. “No Sissy Stuff”**

Boys are prohibited from expressing feelings seen as ‘feminine,’ such as dependence, empathy, and affection. They are prematurely forced to become self-reliant as depending on others is considered taboo.

In countries with ongoing conflicts like the DRC, armed groups and armed forces became the preferred method to enforce masculine traits on boys. Soldiers are considered strong and tough. They are also seen as the protectors and defenders of their community’s interests and dignity. The armed groups use persuasion to recruit children, mainly those whose family or community members were killed by opposing armed groups, to join and seek revenge. Moreover, soldiers and militants are familiar with looting, robbery, and theft. They often launch attacks on villages, take the possessions left by their owners who have fled their houses, and slaughter people. The soldiers would either give the possessions to their own families or sell them to earn money to provide for the basic needs of their families. As cited below (Lwambo, 2013):

Without money, everybody leaves you. When you are poor you are not respected by anybody, not even by your own spouse. Money means everything to man.

In our customs, a man was respected when he had a lot of goats, grains, and women. Such a man was called a *musholai*. Someone who only had one wife are less expected.



Without possessions, a man has no meaning.

The statements above show that men will be deemed ‘respectable’ only if they satisfy their families’ basic needs successfully. They are considered dependable, stable, and responsible. This is an example of implementing the first Boy Code, “The Sturdy Oak.”

The boys recruited by the armed groups and armed forces are forbidden to show their emotions, fear, and weakness. They are demanded to be fearless and strong, as a former CAAFAG recalled:

That was [given] the night before training, when you have to use guns. It was a mixture of like, cocaine and gunpowder. The idea was that they give you this thing that would give you superpower.

The statement above shows how important the image of ‘strong boys’ is for the armed groups that they forced the children to use illicit drugs for the sake of an adrenaline rush that caused them to be reckless and fearless during training and battles. During the training, it is also not uncommon for them to fight other children voluntarily or forcibly. Retrieved from a paper by Kelly et al. (2016), one former CAAFAG from the Lord’s Resistance Army armed group stated:

It is difficult to leave the LRA because they scare children and say if you try to escape, they will chase you and kill you. They found two boys from the Zande tribe who tried to escape, and they pulled other Zande boys from the group and forced them to beat those who tried to escape with sticks until they died. – 18-year-old abductee.

From the statement above, the armed group does not only use violence to ensure obedience but also as a way to mold children into violent soldiers. This is an example of implementing the second Boy Code, “Give ‘Em Hell.”

To protect their family and community, to be economically successful, and to be strong and tough are several traditional norms enforced on Congolese boys. The inability to meet those expectations would cause the feeling of humiliation and dishonor, or what is also known as the ‘shame-hardening’ method. Pollack (1999) defined ‘shame-hardening’ as a process in which boys resist showing emotions that might make them feel ashamed. Pollack also stated that ‘shame-hardening’ came from the fear of feeling dishonored rather than the desire to be courageous. This method is not only being implemented by armed groups but also through family and peer pressure. As many Congolese believe that ‘respectable’ boys and men are tough, strong, fearless, and economically successful, they often pressure their sons to join the armed groups and armed forces to achieve those masculine traits. Boys who refused would be isolated, raped, shamed, and called derogatory names such as ‘bush wives.’ Also, in DRC and other African countries, many males who have sexual intercourse with other males often experience aggression, alienation, discrimination, and sexual assault (Ogbu, 2020). A male rape survivor recalled (Gettleman, 2009):

I’m laughed at. The people in my village say: ‘You’re no longer a man. Those men in the bush made you their wife. – Tupapo Mukuli.

I hid that I was a male rape survivor. I couldn't open up - it's a taboo. As a man, I can't cry. People will tell you that you are a coward, you are weak, you are stupid.

Armed groups are not the only ones who use sexual assault as a weapon to force Congolese boys to support their missions. The government's armed forces also used the same method, as a male rape survivor stated (Thust & Estey, 2020):

They said: 'You support the rebels. We'll show you that you are not a man.' [...] The soldiers grabbed me and held me down. They said, 'We are going to raped you.' And they each took turns.

As boys and men are expected to be dominant, to exert more power and control against others, the statement above shows that boys and men who became the ones who were overpowered are no longer considered as 'men.' This is an example of implementing the third Boy Code, "The Big Wheel".

Another deep-rooted belief resulting from the toxic culture of masculinity in the DRC is that boys and men must have sufficient knowledge, influence, and skills and be able to be in charge of decision-making. If the father of a family passed away or left, the son must take the role of the head of the family. They are forced to assert their leadership as well as dominance over other family members, as a statement of a Goma citizen retrieved from Desiree Lwambo's essay (2013) below:

Once you find yourself in a good social situation, you are faced with the problem of the extended family. All members of the extended family tend to come to you with their difficulties, and you have to bring a solution. So, a real man must look to satisfy everybody.

You learn how to be a good boss from observation. I learned how to be a man through the influence of my father. What he taught me is that the woman comes after me and that she cannot surpass this rule.

Boys and men are deemed 'responsible' and 'masculine' if they are dependable instead of dependent. They must be willing to make decisions and take matters into their own hands, for example, regarding the community's safety and interests. One of several push factors why Congolese boys voluntarily joined the armed groups and armed forces was self-defense. A report from MONUSCO (2019) stated that at least 32 percent of children who volunteered to join the *Mayi Mayi* armed group reasoned that being CAAFAG was the only way to protect the Nande community from opposing Hutu-based armed groups. Boys are expected to be dependable from a very young age; thus, they are expected to protect the security of their community. A soldier from the *Mayi-Mayi* armed group stated in an interview, retrieved from Ismael Matambura's essay (2017) below:

When it comes to fighting, we mobilize the children and young people. And even those who stay in the village and don't participate directly in the fighting can protect the population.

From the statement above, it is clear that Congolese people hold boys accountable for the community's defense, believing that is what 'real men' do. Boys should not rely on others and depend neither on their safety nor their communities on other people. Boys are expected to be self-reliant. This is an example of implementing the fourth Boy Code, "No Sissy Stuff."

The toxic culture of masculinity that has been deeply rooted among Congolese people has pressured boys to embrace their masculine traits so that they could grow up as 'real men.' They are expected to dominate all aspects, from economy, society, politics, and others. In a conflict-ridden country like the DRC, success in providing for their families' basic needs and defending their family's and communities' interests become the main goals for boys and men to be respected by society. This condition encouraged not only the armed groups and armed forces to recruit and exploit children but also encouraged Congolese boys to join the armed groups and armed forces to meet the expectations to become 'real men.'

## **Conclusion**

This research aims to analyze the impact of the stereotype of masculinity on the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as its impact on Congolese children's personal security. Historically, the ongoing armed conflicts in the DRC date back to 1996, a spillover from the Rwandan genocide. Many members of the Tutsi tribe sought refuge in neighboring countries, one of them being the DRC. This caused Rwandan Hutus to invade the DRC to capture the Tutsi tribe. In retaliation, several Congolese tribes formed armed groups to fight the Tutsi migrants and the Rwandan army. The number of armed groups and armed forces operating in the DRC resulted in high demands on soldiers to fight for them. As of 2017, there had been more than six thousand cases of recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG in the DRC. As persuading and controlling children is more manageable, many armed groups and armed forces train them to become loyal and fearless soldiers and send them to the front lines.

Based on the process-tracing analysis of the data collected through document analysis and interviews, it can be concluded that, first, the toxic culture of masculinity widely believed by Congolese people plays a significant role in the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG in the DRC. As boys and men are only deemed respectable and masculine if they are strong, independent, and economically stable, joining the armed groups and armed forces becomes the preferred method to enforce those masculine traits. Congolese boys will grow up implementing the 'Boy Code' by joining the armed groups and armed forces. They will be forbidden to grieve openly and express feelings and actions seen as 'feminine.' They will be forced to act tough and violent and avoid shame at all costs. If they implemented the 'Boy Code,' they would be deemed 'real men.' To this day, the implementation of the deep-rooted toxic culture of masculinity justifies the armed groups and armed forces to recruit and exploit Congolese children continuously. The exploitation is still happening as several regions in the DRC are still affected by the ongoing armed conflicts.

Secondly, as mentioned in the first paragraph of this conclusion, the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG also affected the Congolese children's personal security. In the DRC, the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG were not done only by rebel armed groups but also by the Congolese national forces. As of 2018, more than 30,000 children were being exploited as soldiers for the militias and bodyguards for high-profile army commanders. This shows the failure of the

government to protect Congolese children's personal security. The use of the shame-hardening method in the recruitment and the training of the CAAFAG also caused the children to live in constant fear of being recruited. If recruited, they would have lived in constant fear of dying in battles or being killed by their commanders for defying orders. If they had managed to escape, they would have lived in fear of being recaptured and killed or being re-recruited by their old armed groups or by other armed groups and armed forces.

Suppose there is no effort to find immediate and practical solutions to end the recruitment and exploitation of CAAFAG. In that case, not only are the future of the children being bet against but also will be the future of the nation and its people.

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## **Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanisms as Cure to Chieftaincy Conflicts in Bawku Traditional Area, Ghana**

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**Keywords:** Conflict Resolution, Bawku Traditional Area, Bawku Inter-ethnic Peace Committee, Ghana

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### **Abstract**

This study evaluates the conflict management and resolution processes in Ghana using the Bawku chieftaincy conflict as a case study. The study employed a sequential explanatory design within the framework of the pragmatist paradigm to explore the research questions. The study found that the continuous applications of the Track 1 interventions have been unsuccessful in resolving the Bawku conflict. The Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee which has been constituted has proposed a symbolic burial of the okro stick to end the conflict. The findings support the hypothesis that the traditional conflict resolution mechanism can serve as a remedy to chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. The study recommended that the government of Ghana through the National Peace Council should apply the Gacaca conflict resolution approach to resolve the Bawku conflict. The Ghana government should support the Bawku Inter-ethnic Peace Committee with remunerations, permanent offices, and logistics to enable it to function effectively.

## **TRADITIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS AS CURE TO CHIEFTAINCY CONFLICTS IN BAWKU TRADITIONAL AREA, GHANA**

### **Introduction**

One of the problems the globe is currently confronting is a violent conflict. Anderson and Sumner (2006) contended that funds that may have been used to provide social services were instead used to settle disputes. The prevalence of violent conflict in human society is attributed to contagious illnesses (Freedman & Poku, 2005). Most of the worsening trends in armed conflict can be attributed to nations like Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Iraq (Gates et al. 2016). The Middle East and North African countries have experienced several conflicts and wars (Mahnaz, 2022). These conflicts were fueled by state-level resources, power struggles, and identity issues.

Since 1949, the African continent has been a hotbed of global violence (see Gleditsch et al., 2002 as cited in Agyeman, 2021). Over the past 60 years, the continent has witnessed some of the world's most brutal conflicts, including the Biafra War in Nigeria in the 1960s and 1970s, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the 1990s and 2000s, the Rwandan genocide, Civil wars in Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1999-2000, and Sierra Leone and Liberia in the 2000s and 2010s. The war in Somalia dates back more than 30 years and has claimed an estimated 2,000 civilian lives each year over the past five years (Allansson et al., 2016). These conflicts are fueled by domestic national resources, power relations, and identities. The consequences of conflict on the continent are severe, resulting in reduced income, increased military spending, and the diversion of funds to social, economic, political, and cultural development (Fang et al., 2020).

Globally, Ghana has been referred to as Sub-Saharan Africa's building block of peace. However, numerous instances demonstrate that violent confrontation does occasionally occur. Conflicts over chieftaincy are especially important in this. For example, there have been more than 22 chieftaincy battles in the northern areas (See Brukum, 2006). Gongas invaded the village of Bator in 1980, then in 1991, 1992, and 1994, they assaulted Nawuris and Nchumurus. In 2002 at Yendi, the Dagombas attacked themselves after attacking the Komkombas in 1995 (see Awedoba, 2009). Chieftaincy disputes have been cited as the greatest danger to Ghana's socio-economic, cultural, and political development (Anamzoya, 2010; Tona, 2017). Conflicts between the Royal Gates of Dagbon resulted in the deaths of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II and 30 other persons, as well as the destruction of possessions worth millions of Ghana cedis (Boafo-Arthur, 2003).

The Bawku Traditional Area (BTA) has not yet profited from the steady economic growth Ghana has been enjoying during the 1990s, as is well recognized in conventional literature (Adjei, 2016)). The ongoing chieftaincy conflicts play a key role in the region's extreme poverty. Available literature shows that Na Atabia, the Nayiri of Nalerigu, sent his son Prince Ali to set up a police post at Bawku to defend the trade route between the Nalerigu and Gambaga when the slave trade was still thriving in northern Ghana. By that time, the Kusasis were not formally organized under a leader. Therefore, the British colonists endeavoured to reform chieftaincy in a way that would support their indirect control system (Opoku Afari, 1957). Prince Ali from the Mamprugu kingdom was chosen in 1931 by the White Colonial District Commissioner for Bawku to serve as Bawku Naba. Six Mamprusi princes convened in Nalerigu after the passing of the last Mamprugu chief, Naba Asaa Awuni, in 1957 so that one of them might be chosen to return to Bawku and rule as Bawku Naba. On June 6, 1957, Yiremia Mamprusi was appointed in defiance of the other princes.

Similar to this, the Kusasis elders and their Tendanas also assembled at Bawku in force and gave Abugurago Azoka the title of Bawku Naba (Opoku Afari, 1957). For decades, these agitations have led to violent conflicts between the two ethnic groups. However, despite the application of several conflict management and resolution techniques, the Bawku conflict has not yet been resolved. In light of the above analysis, the central research question is this; how can the Bawku



chieftaincy conflict be resolved? This study evaluated the available interventions and offered one as a potential solution. This study makes the case that chieftaincy disputes can be resolved using the conventional conflict resolution process.

## **Literature Review**

It is crucial to analyze the conflict management and resolution literature to situate the study in the context of local and global academic debates. According to Neuman (2000), a researcher must define terms to avoid ambiguity. The significant ideas at the heart of the study are covered in this part. The fundamental distinction between conflicts and disputes is that the former is more intense than the latter and less amenable to settlement. Conflict and dispute are both parts of the same continuum.

Groups start conflicts to further their objectives. The motivations for conflict may include entitlement, command over the state's institutions, and access to resources, identity, recognition, and respect for or adherence to ideals. According to Braham (2013), conflict develops through the following phases: latent, escalation, de-escalation, and settlement. Tensions between the parties and their growing awareness of the issue are features of the latent phase (Tona, 2016). Conflicts grow and get violent if they are not resolved at this point. The following features describe the conflict rising stage: Increased use of litigation tactics by the parties, issues raised throughout the dispute, a fundamental question that was formerly specific has now become broader, and the parties' motivations.

This stage is regarded as a feeling of sustainable peace, and a healthy power relationship is established between parties (Dudouet, 2006). This stage is mediated by institutions such as State Courts, Civil Society Organizations, Community Groups, and Opinion Leaders. Tona (2016) stated that conflict is a many-sided incident and may not occur in a linear form. For instance, protracted conflicts appear to be resolved for some time and re-occur. The process conceived conflict resolution as too flexible and one-dimensional. However, conflict is a dynamic process with different phases. Fisher et al. (2000) findings show five stages of conflict as follows: pre-conflict stage, which is a period when the goals of the parties are incompatible, which could lead to open conflict. The second stage is the stage of hostility. This is characterized by sporadic aggression and a search for allies by parties, mobilization of resources, tense rapport, and divergence. The third stage is the stage of crisis, which represents the highest degree of conflict. The fourth stage is the outcome stage. At this stage, a third party intervenes to resolve the conflict. At this stage, the level of intensity declined and the parties tried to determine and fix the root causes of the conflict.

## **Conflict Management and Resolution**

Practitioners and academics have varied definitions of conflict management and resolution. Conflict resolution is a process of resolving conflicts from adversarial, fact-based, and legally binding decisions. Conflict management is applied in times of war, and conflict situations. Activities aimed at settling conflicts to ensure a lasting peace are referred to as conflict resolution. To resolve a conflict and create lasting peace, it is essential to uncover its underlying causes. Conflict can be used to promote progress once it has been handled. Cultural and structural violence are addressed through conflict resolution. According to Kaye and Béland (2009), conflict

resolution aims to determine the parties' requirements and turn those needs into beneficial solutions.

Conflict resolution has 1 to 9 tracks, and when used all together, they are referred to as multi-track. The tactics or strategies used to resolve conflicts are called tracks. Preventive diplomacy is what Track 1 is known as (Sandole, 2010). The Track-one is connected to the state as the authorized means of promoting peace (Davies & Kaufman, 2002). Consultations, special envoys, mediation, and discussions are all part of the diplomatic track-one activities. Track one's primary flaw is that it uses punishments and psychological intimidation against the parties (see Adjei, 2016). According to Kaufman (2002), proponents of track-one diplomacy serve as the mediator in dispute resolution without including the parties in the negotiating process. The activities of non-state actors looking to settle disputes are covered in track two. Track two consists of unofficial discussions between individuals from rival organizations or governments to formulate plans, sway public opinion, and allocate people and material resources in ways that advance conflict resolution (Montville 1987). The track two interventions allow group representatives to settle disputes in a non-threatening, non-coercive, and non-confrontational way (Azar, 1991).

Track two interventions were divided into three phases (1991). Workshops for problem-solving make up the initial phase. The goal of these workshops is to encourage the parties to a conflict to consider additional options for resolving their issues. The objective is to transform the disagreement from a zero-sum to a win-win situation. The second stage of track two diplomacies, according to Azar (1991), is the use of public opinion to change the attitudes and perceptions of the parties. The second track focuses on civil society organizations' efforts to resolve conflicts. To address the requirements of the opposing parties, track three entails offering employment possibilities. Track 4 promotes peace via individual action (Sandole, 2010). The fifth track focuses on promoting peace through grassroots non-governmental organizations' research, training, and education. Track 6 is thought of as promoting peace through advocacy. The seventh track examines the role that religious institutions play in resolving disputes. The eighth track discusses promoting peace by supplying resources. The ninth and final track discusses the function of the media in resolving disputes.

### **Western Conflict Resolution**

Best (2006) asserts that the approach to settling a dispute is dependent upon understanding its root reasons. A mechanism that would most effectively address the root causes of conflict must also take into account cultural values and the nature of the dispute (Awedoba, 2009). Negotiation, mediation, conflict analysis, case evaluation, and arbitration are examples of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) techniques. It entails the third party helping the parties in conflict reach non-binding conclusions. After a settlement has been reached. ADR is a non-traditional strategy that satisfies both sides (Best, 2006). Agyeman (2008) stated that intra-ethnic disputes benefit from conventional arbitration. An informal method of dispute resolution involving a third party's intervention is mediation. Typically, there is no winner and defeat. This suggests that mediation can encourage peaceful co-existence between the disputing parties. Any mediation process must begin with a conflict assessment phase.

Conflict analysis deepens our understanding of the conflict through the assessment of the dynamics, parties, and profile of the conflict. Conflict assessment helps the parties and other stakeholders to get an insight as to the causes of the underlying conflict. Conflict analysis enables

development practitioners to offer planned responses to manage conflicts. Conflict assessment is anchored on the following perspectives: The Harvard approach (HA), the Human Needs approach (HNA), and the conflict transformation theory (CTT). The Harvard approach stresses the differences between positions and interests.

The Human Needs system (HNA) asserts that conflicts are caused by the deprivation of human needs. For the conflict to be resolved, those needs should be provided to the parties (Burton, 1990; Rosenberg, 2001). The CTT perceived conflicts as a functional or dye-functional process in society, which comes naturally from human interactions. Sandole (2010) opines that conflict analysis should be done from the perspectives of the structure, actors, and dynamics. Conflict analysis should emphasize the context to provide insight into all aspects of the conflict. The critical components of conflict analysis are as follows: The profile focuses on the political, socio-economic, and cultural context of the conflict. The actors have to do with the conflicting parties and their interests, goals, and positions in the conflict. Dynamics factors stress the scenarios that can be charted from the other vital components of the conflict analysis.

Arbitration is the ADR method with legal representation outside the court. The arbitrator award tends to produce a winner and a loser. This implies that arbitration cannot foster peaceful co-existence among the feuding parties. The award may be entered as a judgment of the court. To have a fruitful arbitration, certain factors must be met. Those conditions are outlined as follows; date for the arbitration hearing, venue, procedures, submission of claims, and inspection of relevant documents to enable the arbitrator to prepare adequately for the whole exercise. Finally, security arrangements must be made to erase fear from the parties during the arbitration exercise.

Arbitration facilitates the peaceful resolution of disputes by avoiding hostility among the parties. That implies that the parties reach mutually satisfactory agreements that will result in a long-term resolution of the conflict. The unwillingness of the parties to engage in such initiatives is one of several challenges confronting Western conflict resolution efforts. The Western approach's major flaw is that it ignores local resources and peace-building capacities.

### **Conventional Conflict Resolution**

Formal conflict resolution approaches can help us rebuild social trust in conflict-prone areas. Indigenous conflict resolution encourages parties to engage in dialogue to address their grievances. Formal conflict resolution is based on a win-win situation and strengthens the relationship between the parties. This also implies that the traditional conflict resolution mechanism is based on community participation, whereas the Western approach is based on litigation, which emphasizes the win-lose sum (Brock-Utne, 2001). Rwanda, Mozambique, and South Africa have used Gacaca, Amnesia, and Ubuntu to resolve conflicts (Issifu, 2015).

The analysis shows that traditional conflict resolution approaches encourage participation and provide a platform for conflicting parties to re-establish unity (Zartman, 2000). Indigenous conflict resolution promotes peaceful coexistence among groups and maintains social order (Yakubu, 1995). The following describes indigenous conflict resolution efforts in a few African countries. Gacaca is a village court where members meet to settle disputes. The trials are not presided over by qualified judges, but rather by elderly members of the communities. In the Gacaca approach, parties are allowed to present their case in an old-style courtroom in a non-threatening manner.

This allows the survivors to assess the consequences of the crimes committed. The Gacaca conflict resolution approach can be dangerous because of the lack of security personnel.

### **Methods for Managing and Resolving Conflicts in Ghana**

Ghana uses a variety of conflict management techniques, including the courts, commissions of inquiry, and security services. Additionally, the government has appointed Regional and District Security Committees (REGSEC and DISEC) to uphold peace in their respective regions (Awedoba, 2009). The constitution gives the government the authority to name an investigation commission investigating any issue of public interest. Some commissions had trouble resolving the dispute, and some never produced a report. The administration should, however, adopt and put the committee's recommendations into practice.

As Ghana's focal point for conflict resolution, the National Peace Council was created in 2006. (Ahorsu, 2016). Act 818 of the Ghanaian Parliament gave it its official mission in 2011. The NPC is given the authority under this act to design interventions for conflict management, prevention, and transformation to bring about lasting peace across the nation. The act also established Support Units for peacebuilding under the Ministry of Interior. The peace-building assistance team acts as a liaison between the NPC and the Ghanaian government.

### **The Study Settings and Methodology**

The study was conducted in the Bawku Traditional Area (BTA) in the Upper East Region. The BTA cut across six political, and administrative districts: Bawku West, Binduri, Bawku East, Pusiga, Garu, and Tempane (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). The BTA is bordered by Burkina Faso to the north, the Republic of Togo to the east, the Nabdam District to the west, and the Mamprusis East District to the south in Ghana's North-East Region (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). From pre-colonial times to the present, the BTA has been known as the Kusaug Traditional Area. The White Volta divides the Kusaug Traditional Area in two. The eastern half is known as Agolle, while the western half is known as Atoende (see Opoku-Afari, 1957).

The Kusasis and Mamprusis are the two major ethnic groups in the area. Other ethnic groups include the Bisa, Moshie, Hausa, Busanga, Frafra, Kasena, and Dagombas. However, the people of all other ethnic groups combined do not even come close to the Kusasis ethnic group. The Kusasis, make up 45 percent of the people, followed by the Mamprusis at 25 percent, the Moshie at 15 percent, and the Hausa at 10 percent. All other ethnic groups account for 5 to 5% of the total population (GSS, 2012). The main protagonists of the Bawku chieftaincy conflict are the two largest ethnic groups, the Kusasis, and the Mamprusis. BTA was selected as a study area based on media reports and existing literature on the Bawku conflict.

### **Methodology**

The study uses a sequential explanatory approach within the framework of the pragmatist paradigm to examine the research questions. The method provides insights into findings that a single design might miss (Creswell et al., 2003; Bowen et al., 2017). The research process began with an exploratory survey to establish a relationship for the primary data collection.

As part of the preliminary survey, secondary data on emerging trends in conflict resolution efforts were collected from the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee (BIEPC) and the Kusaug

Traditional Council (KTC). The data collected were used to design the interview guidelines and the questionnaire. First, a quantitative survey was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the conflict resolution and management processes in the BTA. The respondents were distributed into five communities (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Number of Households Surveyed in BTA**

<b>Selected communities</b>	<b>Number of households</b>	<b>Number of households surveyed</b>	<b>Kth house</b>
Bawku	9,738	136	264
Pusiga	1,187	17	32
Mognori	580	8	16
Zebila	1,724	24	47
Garu	1,096	15	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,325</b>	-	-

Source: Authors' Construct, 2019

Systematic sampling was used to select every kth householder for the survey based on the randomly selected first householder. The traditional authorities, mainly Chiefs, the Police, and the Belim Wusa Development Agency were selected for in-depth interviews to authorize the quantitative data. The data collected were analyzed for the pattern of subjects and were used as narratives in the study. The study adhered to research ethics and safety approvals (WHO, 2001). Ethical permission was obtained from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) before the primary data collection exercise began. Respondents were informed of the confidentiality and anonymity principles. The questionnaires were administered and analyzed without the household identities.

## **Results and Discussions**

This section is organized around specific research themes. It included police interventions, the Courts and Commission of Inquiry, and the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee. These issues are explored as follows.

### **Police Interventions**

The police were not allowed to initiate domestic violence arrests due to societal morals that perceived communal conflicts as a family issue (Borum et al, 1998). The Police were instructed to

quiet down those involved in domestic disputes and refer them to court for trials (Borum et al, 1998). The improved police responses led to an increase in the number of prosecutions of assaulters (Morewitz, 2003).

Positive interactions with the police may encourage victims to actively seek out their assistance, increasing safety and reducing the likelihood that they will become victims again (Stalans, Studdard, & Dugan, 2004). The police interventions do not touch the hearts and minds of the people to resolve their differences. Such endeavour has enlarged the psychological insolences of both Kusasis and the Mamprusis making them more prone to conflict. The empirical information (see Table 2) illustrates how well police actions in Bawku Traditional Area (BTA) work.

**Table 2: The effectiveness of Police Interventions in BTA**

Ranking	Percentage
Poor	9.5
Average	21.5
Good	27.5
Very Good	25.5
Excellent	15.5
Total	<b>100</b>

Source: Authors' Field Data, 2020

Responses were obtained from the field using a five-point Likert scale index. The householders in each study area were given a scale of 1-5, where 1 = poor; 2 average; 3 = good 4 = excellent good, and 5 = perfect to measure the effectiveness of conflict resolution efforts in the area. 69% of households stated that they were satisfied with the police operations. In an interview, one of the interviewees said,

*"The immediate interventions by police have always been the imposition of curfew in Bawku and its surroundings. The Police have instituted a social marketing strategy to retrieve all weapons from the people, only two people have submitted theirs, and an amount of 2000 Ghana cedis were given to each person".*

According to the officeholder,

*"Police do not respond quickly whenever the conflict occurs and when you ask them, they will say that it is an ethnic matter, so we don't have to take sides. If they do not intervene, we will get the means of intervention by ourselves. God did not create their youth with iron and steel and created ours with clay and water".*

### **Court and Commission of Inquiry**

A commission of inquiry is a constitutional tool used by the government to look into any issue that is important to the general public. According to Article 278(1), the President may, by constitutional instrument, appoint a commission of inquiry into any topic of public concern

(Republic of Ghana, 1992). Article 280 subsection (2) states that the judgment of a commission of investigations is a decision of the High Court.

Conflicts within communities are not successfully resolved by the court or commission of inquiry. This can be ascribed to the various court officials' and committee members' ignorance of customary laws. The government's interest also lies in accepting and carrying out the committee's recommendations. The parties involved in communal disputes should be allowed to create a standard for settling their differences. In the empirical data (see Table 3), about 12% of households reported poor intervention by the Courts and Commission of Inquiry. This indicates that more than 60% of heads of household are satisfied with the Court's interventions.

**Table 3: The Effectiveness of Court and Commission of Inquiry Interventions**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Poor	11.5
Average	22.5
Good	30.5
Very Good	19.5
Excellent	16.0
Total	<b>100</b>

Source, Authors' Field Data, 2020

The results show that a committee of inquiry was set up under Section 7(1) of the State Council (Northern Region) Order No. 5 of 1952 to investigate Abugurago Azoka's claims that he had been appointed head of the Kusaug traditional area. The committee reported that Abugurago Azoka was duly elected and installed as chief in the Kusaug Traditional Area. The governor-general issued a white paper supporting the committee's advice. Yirimea Mamprusi dismissed the commission's advice as he referred the matter to the Accra High Court. Accra High Court upheld Yirimea Mamprusis' allegation. The Commission also challenged the Accra High Court ruling by appealing to the West Africa Court of Appeal. The Court of Appeal overturned the Accra High Court's judgment. This allowed the then President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, to enact the Chiefs Recognition Act 1959 to install the late Abugurago Azoka as Bawkunaba. However, on April 29, 2003, the Mamprusis filed a lawsuit against the Kusasis in the Supreme Court of Ghana.

Faced with overwhelming evidence against them, they later applied for permission to discontinue permission to go to court on the same matter at any time. The motion for discontinuity was granted without permission to go to court on the same issue under the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) Act 75 and Articles 270 and 277 of the 1992 Constitution.

### **Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee**

The conventional method of resolving disputes is based on win-win scenarios and promotes relationships between the parties. This means that the Western technique is positioned within the context of litigation, which emphasizes the win-lose sum, whereas the traditional dispute resolution mechanism is situated within the context of community engagement (Brock-Utne,

2001). Gacaca, Amnesia, and Ubuntu have been used by nations including Rwanda, Mozambique, and South Africa to end the conflict (Issifu, 2015).

The available literature shows that countries such as Rwanda, Mozambique, and South Africa have used Gacaca, Amnesia, and Ubuntu for conflict resolution (see Francis, 2006). In the case of BTA, the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee (BIEPC) was formed to resolve the Bawku conflict. It comprises 20 members. The breakdown is as follows; six Kusasi, six Mamprusis, and two representatives from the other minority tribes in BTA, namely the Moshie, Hausa, Bisa, and Dagombas. This shows the commitment of both parties to settle their differences. The strength of this intervention is that it creates a platform to involve all parties in the settlement process. Table 4 shows the level of effectiveness of the BIEPC interventions.

**Table 4: The effectiveness of Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee Interventions**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Poor	18
Average	21
Good	21
Very Good	14
Excellent	26
Total	<b>100</b>

Source, Authors' Field Data, 2020

Approximately 18% of households indicated they were dissatisfied with the interventions of the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee. While 26% of households said they were happy with the interventions of the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee. This implies that significant proportions of heads of households are happy with the interventions of the BIEPC.

According to the officeholder,

*"The BIEPC has proposed a symbolic burial of the okro stick to resolve the conflict. The two groups, Kusasis, and the Mamprusis will make a promise and swear before a piece of okro that if in the course of their life, they start a conflict, the tender should strike and kill them, after which they will burial the okro to end the conflict. The BIEPC has formed several committees to handle issues that trigger conflicts in the area, such as the land committee and festival committee. The committee has organized peace talks through churches and mosques, women's groups, and political parties on peacebuilding in Bawku".*

The activities of the BIEPC have sowed negative peace in the area since its inception in 2009. A serious dilemma facing the Committee has been the axiological positions of its members. That has erased the trust that people have in the Committee members. The committee has not been effective in injecting positive peace into BTA because it is faced with challenges such as permanent offices, logistical constraints, and a lack of remuneration for its staff.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**



The study evaluates the conflict management and resolution process in the BTA. Police interventions, courts and commissions of inquiry, and Inter-ethnic Peace Committees are the available interventions used to settle the Bawku conflict. The study found that the Bawku conflict could not be resolved through the ongoing employment of Track 1 interventions, including police interventions, court cases, and commissions of inquiry. The established Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee has advocated burying the okro stick as a sign of peace to put a stop to the strife. The findings are consistent with the idea that Ghana's chieftaincy disputes can be resolved through traditional means. The study recommended that the Ghana government through the National Peace Council use the Gacaca conflict resolution strategy to end the Bawku dispute. For the Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee to function properly, the government and other stakeholders must provide funding, permanent offices, and logistical support.

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The authors affirm that they have no conflict of interest that would have unjustifiably impacted their authoring of this work.

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## **Virtual Global State: A Vision of a More Peaceful and Cooperative Real-World**

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**Keywords:** Virtual Global State; Post-Maturity Insight; Missing Link; 3-axes human needs and challenges; Global Interim Vision; World Transitional Mission; Future Model of the World

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### **Abstract**

In light of the current situation of wars and human tragedies in the world and the absence of a promising prospect for true peace and constructive cooperation among people, this article urges us to think outside the box and search for innovative solutions to try to change this reality. It presents a new concept, the Virtual Global State (VGS), that is hoped to be the first step in the right and long path towards a better future for human life on Earth. The VGS represents a virtual entity parallel to the real-world and embodies the prevailing trend in the world to take advantage of the massive and accelerating development in ICT and AI to shift towards Virtual Space. It liberates people from the complexities of their national, racial, ethnic, and ideological differences, with full respect for them, and helps address vital issues of the world, with innovative ideas, freely and without constraints. The primary mission of the VGS is to re-process the negative thoughts that hinder progress towards a more peaceful world. This will be based on two developed concepts: the *Post-Maturity Insight* and the *Missing Link*. A description of the basic programs to implement the VGS concept, including the development of a future model for the world is presented. Furthermore, the promises and ethical, technological, and political challenges of the VGS implementation is highlighted. The article is annexed with a practical model for the VGS implementation's stages and the timeline.

**PEACE, SECURITY, AND PROSPERITY IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER**

### **Introduction**

The emergence of the current states in the world is due to various and complex factors that have evolved throughout history. Despite the existence of the global political system after the second world war [1] represented by the United Nations (UN) and various bodies that emerged from it, wars, conflicts and violations of basic human rights are still continuing. This is happening whether between different states or even among the components of the state itself. And by examining the current geopolitical situation in the world and what is written in the global media, the world is unfortunately heading to more conflicts between states that may lead to more wars, killing and destruction. The media are even talking about the possibility of a third world war. One may ask why the various organizations, whether affiliated to the UN or operating independently, have failed to establish true peace between states and to resolve disputes between and within states. One may wonder if more positive results can be expected. Therefore, it is easy to conclude that the reality of differences between states, entities, civilizations, religions, beliefs, and interests is much more complicated than achieving a better level of peace and cooperation between peoples. Peace on earth could be classified into ‘negative peace’ and ‘positive peace’. Negative peace indicates the absence of direct violence, when, for example, a ceasefire is enacted, a negative peace will ensue. It is negative because something unwanted has stopped happening (for example, violence or war has stopped, oppression has ended).

Positive peace refers to the absence of indirect and structural violence and is full of positive content such as restoring harmonious relationships, creating social systems that serve the needs of all populations and constructive conflict resolution. In the same context, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King in a *Letter from a Birmingham Prison* in 1953, defined "negative peace as the absence of tension" while "positive peace as the presence of justice, or structural peace" [2]. The balance-of-power theory of international relations envisions peace as the result of preventing any state, faction, or personality from gaining sufficient power to dominate all others [3]. If a country becomes much stronger, the theory predicts that it will take advantage of its weaker neighbors, prompting them to unite in a defensive alliance. Liberal peace theories argue that there is a strong tendency for domestic and international peace to follow when most individuals in a society have control over decisions in both political and economic issues [4]. The theories assume common people have a self-interest in peace, since they can usually obtain material and non-material well-being only during peace. Hence, peace can be ensured if narrow groups and potential elites can be restrained through effective political institutions. Trade between states serves as a similar constraint on state leaders. Democratic peace is the assumption that democratic nations never (or almost never) wage war with one another [5]. A distinction must be made between the concept of democratic peace and the claim that democracies are generally more peaceful than non-democratic states. While the latter claim is controversial, the claim that democratic nations do not fight each other is widely considered valid by scholars and practitioners of international relations. Proponents of the democratic peace trace back to the German philosopher Immanuel Kant and, more recently, to U.S. Pres. Woodrow Wilson, who in his 1917 war message to Congress declared that the United States aimed to make the world “safe for democracy” [6].

Since 1945, the UN and the five permanent members of its Security Council have worked for resolving conflicts without war or declarations of war. However, the nations have engaged in many military conflicts since then. This is one of the main reasons for creating the Virtual Global State (VGS) [7], as a viable vision of a more peaceful and cooperative real world. What can be concluded

from the pioneering book of E. Schmidt and J. Cohen [8] it is theorized that the real world will integrate with the virtual world in many areas but will clash with it in others. Moreover, the information revolution will lead to a partial retreat of what is called the sovereignty of states over their lands and the fragmentation of what is called the principle of national sovereignty towards virtual states. So, the next sovereignty will not be of political geography as much as it will be of virtual geography. This is what can be described as the end of full national sovereignty and the beginning of virtual global states.

Since ancient times, the natural evolution of human gatherings on the surface of the earth began with the formation of the small family, which was then merged in large ones, and soon the large families united to form what is known as the tribe. And with time, came the role of the so-called emirate or small state to represent a larger human gathering of people who share some common denominators of a specific language and ethnic origins. Emirates- or small states- developed over time to form the larger kingdoms- or modern states of today. Many peoples were not satisfied with the "state" as a maximum limit for human gathering, but some of them tended to form voluntary federations between their countries on the basis of certain common denominators, bypassing the barriers of language, history and race, such as the European Union. There are countries that represent unions between peoples of different races, nationalities, languages, cultures and religions, such as India, China and Russia. In addition, major countries were formed from immigrations of different races from different geographical areas, such as the United States of America and Australia.

No one can imagine the existence of a real global state that physically includes all the peoples of the world, and the natural evolution of human communities on the surface of the earth cannot continue to this extent! However, it should be noted that it is not necessary for this real global state to exist in order to include all the peoples of the world in a physical way. Rather, the virtual space - with all the capabilities of the Internet and social media - provides humankind with the opportunity to form a "Virtual Global State- VGS" that represents the commonalities the challenges of the present, and the hopes for the future of the peoples of the earth. The VGS will be a neutral representative body for the real world with all its states and entities, and it may not be possible to make a development plan for a better real world without it. The VGS uses advanced information and communication technologies (ICT) to address peoples' negative thoughts that impede progress toward a better world. Having a preamble of a virtual constitution and a flag, (Figure 1), everyone in the world has the right to belong to the VGS and gets its virtual citizenship, provided that its constitution is approved. The "citizens" of this virtual state are liberated from the barriers of their national, racial and ideological differences as well as from historical legacy.

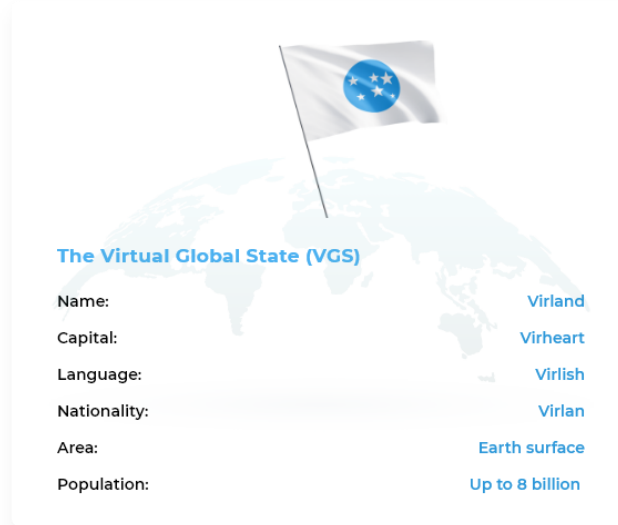


Figure 1: The Virtual Global State's (VGS) flag and data

In one aspect, the VGS represents a global intellectual forum that allows its virtual citizens to discuss and influence vital real-world issues, free from the barriers of ethnic, national, ideological, and geopolitical complexities. It does not seek to deal in any way with material matters such as cryptocurrencies or virtual lands or others and is not directed to any geographic area. While the world's leading companies specialized in virtual and/or augmented realities allow users to escape-in whole or in part- from the real world and its problems to the virtual world for entertainment and play more often, the VGS- on the contrary- uses virtual space as a tool for solving real-world problems and improving its conditions. These companies may make the real world worse, while the goal of the VGS is to make it better. Besides, the VGS differs from the UN in that the latter reflects the reality on the ground and the dominant power centers in it (represented by the UN Security Council, after World War II), which resists any change that does not come in its favor. On the contrary, the former (the VGS) enjoys a space free from the effects of these powers, geopolitical problems and historical sedimentation between existing states and entities! Virtual citizens are already a part of the real-world in addition to being part of the VGS and thus they will form a bridge between them and will create public opinion for a peaceful, cooperative, and constructive real-world away from national, ethnic, ideological, and other determinants. The VGS will represent a valuable guide and positive pressure force on decision makers in the real-world to implement the required reforms and face actual challenges and this force will increase with the increase in the number of virtual citizens belonging to the VGS.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The next section 2 introduces the intellectual bases of the VGS's initiative, and the following section 3 illustrates the global interim vision and the world transitional mission of the VGS as a virtual entity parallel to the real world. Section 4 presents brief description of the basic programs to implement the VGS concept, including the development of a future model for the world and section 5 highlights the promises and challenges of the VGS implementation. Finally, section 6 concludes the paper, followed by an annex showing a practical model for the VGS-implementation stages and the timeline.

## Intellectual Bases



The primary mission of the VGS is to re-process the negative thoughts that hinder progress towards a more peaceful world. This will be based on two developed intuitive concepts: the "Post-Maturity Insight" and the "Missing Link".

### **1. The Post-Maturity insight (PMI)**

In his effort to achieve permanent and enduring peace, Kant's cosmopolitan right stems from an understanding of all human beings as equal members of a universal community [9]. Upon him, the right of resort is considered as fundamentally bound to the conditions of universal hospitality, defined as the right to be welcomed upon arrival in foreign territory. However, it is conditioned on a guest arriving in a peaceful manner. Although Kant understood the surface of the earth as basically a community, [10] and all human beings have the basic right of asylum everywhere, many restrictions are placed in front of immigrants and asylum seekers nowadays. Glenn D. Paige, in his turn, [11] introduces the concept of “nonkilling” in human community, that refers to the absence of killing, threats to kill, with no weapons designed to kill humans and no justifications for using them. However, in USA and other developed countries, killing occurs every day with government’s legitimizations of weapon possession. In this paper, an intuitive concept of the "Post-Maturity Insight" is developed as follows:

Imagine that a group of old intellectuals or mature men (call them group 1) were watching another group of children (call them group 2) who were arguing, breaking possessions, and hitting each other. When inquiring about this matter from the elderly, they find that the cause of conflict between children is simple and can be easily resolved without a fight if the children are as wise as the first group. Of course, when children grow up and expand their understanding, they will not fight and hurt themselves over such a simple matter. Now imagine a group of aliens living on another planet, similar to humans, but much more intelligent and perceptive (call them group 3). While global policy makers are called (group 4), suppose that the difference in intelligence and awareness between group 4 and group 3 is just like the difference between group 2 and group 1, see Figure 2. When group 3 observes the world on the ground, they immediately notice the consequences of armed conflict that kills large numbers of people with the destruction of entire cities on their heads and the death of people due to starvation and the search for a livelihood. They also notice the repressive regimes that sit on the breath of their people, shut down their energies and cause poverty and unemployment, but at the same time find the support of developed countries under the pretext of common interests. They will also notice the lethal weapons systems (conventional and unconventional) that have killed millions of people and are constantly evolving under the pretext of defense and deterrence, and that many countries have been destroyed by other countries because of material interests. For many years, civilians have been killed and massacred every day without making real efforts to stop these tragedies. Examples of man-made tragedies and disasters are countless. Unfortunately, the world is full of causes that lead to the outbreak of conflicts between human beings, whether individuals, groups, or even countries. This is a fact. Examples include: the clash of civilizations, religions, beliefs and ideas, the conflict of influence and wealth, the conflict of geopolitical borders, conflicting political and economic systems, illiteracy and insufficient education, and many other reasons. Of course, group 3 will give group 4 the same rating that group 1 gave group 2; That is, the group of aliens will diagnose global policy makers with a lack of wisdom and awareness.



The assessment made by group 1 on group 2 is based on the fact that when children (group 2) grow up and reach maturity, they will not fight and hurt themselves for this simple reason in the eyes of group 1. On the contrary, children will easily come to a wise solution which will enable them to avoid quarrel and abuse. Similarly, group 3's assessment of group 4 is based on the fact that "when humans, and therefore global policy makers, reach maturity" they will not fight and hurt themselves for these simple reasons in the eyes of group 3. On the contrary, group 4 (global policy makers) will easily come up with wise solutions that will enable them to avoid the catastrophic consequences of the causes that lead to conflicts between human beings, whether individuals, groups, or countries. Thus, the rate of killing and destruction of the foundations of human civilization decreases. Again, what it means to say: "*When humans, and therefore the world's decision-makers, reach maturity*" is that when humans go through many bitter trials that may take hundreds of years, they will gain more experience and wisdom to find creative solutions to their problems. *But will man wait hundreds of years full of experiences of killing and destruction? Or is the human mind capable of shortening the time, leaping into the future and accelerating to maturity?*

Reprocessing negative thoughts that impede progress toward a better world requires psychological and material reprocessing. Psychological reprocessing demonstrates tangibly that reducing man-made conflicts and investing in human potential through constructive cooperation between states is a supreme human interest. On the other hand, the material reprocessing rearranges the methods of dealing with all important geopolitical and economic data affecting the world and reorganizes the way of dealing with border problems between states and different entities and the root causes of power and wealth conflicts. It also rethinks the way to deal with the causes of economic backwardness in many countries, as well as the causes of poverty and illiteracy. VGS will help pave the way for these vital issues to be discussed freely and without restrictions and, in turn, reflects the output for the benefit of the real world.

## **2. The Missing Link (ML)**

Before getting into this topic, here is an example of theory and application: The polio vaccination started in the "theoretical phase" of drug development and ensuring its efficacy through chemical equations on paper. Then it moved to the "application phase" where the drug was practically tested, piloted, manufactured, then approved and distributed through an advanced health system. One may ask what prompted parents to rush to health centers to vaccinate their children on time. The reason for this motive or incentive is surely that parents are fully convinced that if their children are not vaccinated, risk of paralysis is certain. Parents have been persuaded, of course, thanks to an effective program of information and advice directed at people about the need for vaccination for their children. Although it was good in theory, vaccination would certainly fail, in the application stage, if the program was not effective and convincing. Therefore, the effective information and advice program, targeted to people, is indispensable and represents an incentive or a link between theory and application.

Back to our topic, the international bodies represented in the UN, and before that the League of Nations, "theoretically" adopted many standards, treaties and understandings on international relations [12] based on *the principles of international cooperation and peaceful solution to*

*problems.* In this paper, these standards and treaties will be referred to as Global Theoretical Standards (GTS). They are based on respect for human rights, including the right to choose their government by democratic and fair means, ensuring a world free from war and violence, and allowing human beings to enjoy safety, freedom, and social and economic security. Although most of the GTS had roots in the UN Charter [13], some of them may be applied in whole or in part in some countries. The "The fourth freedom from fear" among the Four Freedoms [14] articulated by U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt on Monday, January 6, 1941, indicated that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor. Nevertheless, the USA and other countries do not obey this concept.

Hence, Major countries apply some of the GTS, especially with regard to democracy and human rights only within their borders, while their relations with other countries are governed by the laws of interests and domination. This is opposed to the core of the GTS. So, a question could be raised why the GTS didn't move to the comprehensive implementation stage knowing that the implementation would lead to a world free of war and violence where people enjoy not only safety and freedom but also social and economic security. The answer, in contrast to the previous illustrative example above (polio vaccination), is clearly the absence of motivation. This incentive is the convincement of the decision makers in international politics (group 4) of the need for a comprehensive application of the GTS. This is the missing link (ML), Figure 3, between theory and application. One might ask why this link is missing and whether an effective advisory program- directed to (group 4)- is needed for the comprehensive implementation of the GTS. Of course, it is not so simple, as in the example of vaccination above, but it has the same principle. What this means is not a traditional mentoring program but a Multicultural Persuasive program (MPP). It should be prepared by a group of selected thinkers from different cultures of the world and specialists from various fields and backgrounds. VGS will include MPP as part of the GP-WTM to achieve this goal.

### **3. The Global Interim Vision and The World Transitional Mission**

Since man was found on earth, he asks himself and thinks about the secret of his existence and his goal. Some have found metaphysical answers through religions and beliefs, others are still thinking and will continue to think, perhaps forever. Perhaps this is due to the limited capacity of the human mind in front of the infinite complexity of the universe and life on Earth. In addition to this ambiguity, man faces many complex challenges and dangers, whether in his relationship with his fellow human beings or in his relationship with nature around him. However, this proposal will not delve into the mystery of human existence because it is a thorny topic and will focus on the needs and challenges facing humans. It is agreed that most human basic needs are to enjoy social and economic security, health insurance, decent residence, freedom of expression and belief, freedom of movement and work, and prospects for ambition and advancement. In short, a human being should enjoy all the rights stipulated in the relevant international conventions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) [15], adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948. These rights range from the most fundamental - the right to life - to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty. The challenges that people face can be summarized in three axes (3-axes of human needs and challenges), Figure 4, as follows:

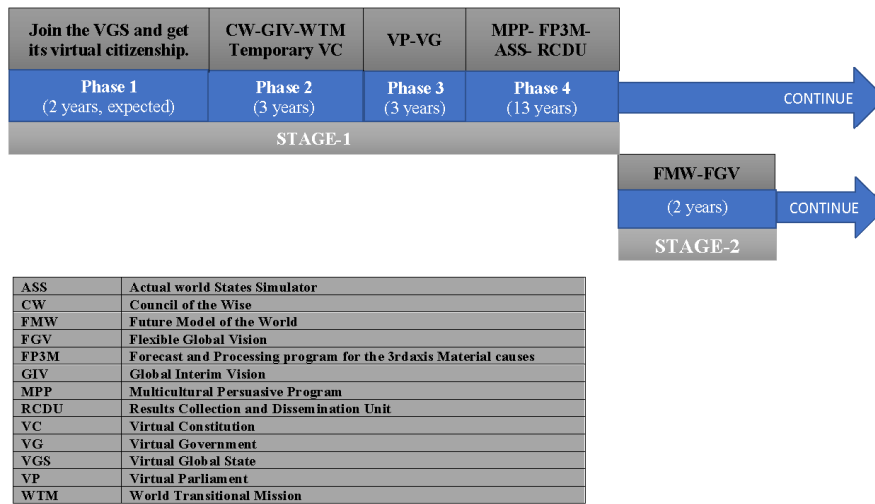


Figure 4: The 3-axes Human Needs and Challenges

1. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, epidemics, droughts, etc.
2. Daily life and work accidents/difficulties such as transport accidents, fires, incurable diseases, poisoning, fractures, drowning, crime incidents and others.
3. Man-made disasters such as wars, assassinations, torture, sieges, dictatorships, and repression.

Of course, it is not possible to prevent the first and second axes of the challenges facing human beings. However, its consequences can be reduced by good planning, forecasting and good handling of its consequences using the tools and outputs of modern scientific development. What is important is the third axis (3<sup>rd</sup> axis) of these challenges (man-made disasters) and their root causes, which can be divided into basic psychological and material causes. The most important of them are:

Psychological causes

1. Differences in religions, races, ethnicism, doctrines and beliefs
2. Conflicting thoughts
3. Civilizations' conflicts and clashes.
4. Opposing political systems
5. Illiteracy and insufficient education

Material causes

1. Border problems between countries and different entities
2. The struggle for influence, wealth and resources
3. Opposing economic systems
4. Conventional arms race and weapons of mass destruction

Many psychological causes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis cannot be put to an end because they constitute the normal life of people, but they can be managed constructively to avoid destructive effects to some extent and hence, reduce access to the case of the clash. To achieve this goal, the proposed MPP

system which represents the ML (incentive) between GTS and comprehensive application, could be a proper means to gradually prevent the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis psychological causes. Hence, constructive and fruitful cooperation between countries will be strengthened to meet basic human needs and face the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> axis of human challenges. Regarding the material causes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis, the world is witnessing clear limitations in addressing them, or at least managing them constructively in a way that prevents their devastating effects on humans. Like the case of psychological causes, material causes cannot be completely eliminated, but they can be managed and dealt with in a creative way to gradually reduce resort to destructive force. To achieve this purpose, a non-traditional system for forecasting and processing of the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis material causes (Forecast and Processing program for 3<sup>rd</sup> axis Material causes-FP3M) needs to be established. The FP3M should be based on the concept of PMI and participants in this program, like those of the proposed MPP system, are specialists not only from political science and international relations background, but also from applied sciences such as engineering, AI, IT and others. In this way, FP3M can take advantage of the enormous capacity of applied sciences professionals in solving problems through innovative and creative approaches. The remarkable and accelerated development in technical fields with all their ramifications is not matched by a similar development in the field of human theoretical sciences, the management of human life on Earth and the solution of global problems. However, there is a huge gap between them. For example, note the efforts that have gone into innovating and developing the wireless telephone system since its inception, including solutions to very complex scientific problems. If a similar effort were made to manage and address the material causes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis, the bloody and destructive human-made conflicts would be strongly reduced. Besides, the world will witness more constructive and fruitful cooperation between nations to meet basic human needs. However, this was not done, probably, for the following three reasons:

1. The winners through electoral systems in most countries of the world are those who are interested in politics and who are supported by various forces in society. Therefore, the wise and intelligent thinkers have little chance of winning the elections.
2. Absence of incentive, as described earlier by the concept of *Missing Link*, see section 2.2.
3. Lack of (or little involvement) of professionals in applied sciences in policy formulation and interstate problem solving. Note that most of these specialists have high degrees in general intelligence, as the majority of smart students in most countries tend to study applied sciences such as medicine and engineering, and not to study political science and international relations that direct them to be political leaders and decision makers in formulating international policies and in solving problems between countries.

### **The Global Interim Vision (GIV)**

The search for a common vision of the whole world, who is divided into different religions, beliefs and cultures, is a very difficult and elusive question. It may not even be possible for the world's thinkers to arrive at an agreed-upon formula, no matter how hard they try. However, there could be at least a global interim vision. A global council of thinkers from different cultures could be formed by the VGS Council of the Wise to develop common ground for the required GIV that focuses on specific human needs and challenges (3-axes of human needs and challenges), away from ambiguities and differences in beliefs and thoughts. GIV can be adaptable to each specific epoch, during which the orderly functioning of human life on Earth is established.

## The World Transitional Mission (WTM)

The task of the World Transition Mission (WTM) is to work towards achieving the desired GIV. It should be based on the two concepts of PMI and ML between the GTS and the comprehensive application. After examining the basic human needs in life on Earth and the 3-axes of human challenges, with a focus on the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis of man-made disasters, the WTM aims to gradually reduce this 3<sup>rd</sup> axis (gradually reduce the resort to violence). Moreover, it invests in human potential through constructive cooperation between nations to meet their life challenges (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> axis of human challenges). To achieve this goal, the virtual government will design a global project to implement the World Transitional Mission (GP-WTM), Figure 7, with the aim of addressing the causes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis of man-made disasters.

### Basic Programs

Following are a brief description of the basic programs to implement the VGS concept:

#### 1. The Multicultural Persuasive Program (MPP)

A better world means a more peaceful culture where peoples collaborate constructively. The MPP will not interfere with the peculiarities of people's different cultures and civilizations, nor their religions, beliefs, ideas, or ideologies. And the program does not represent human brainwashing or a call for a unified thought. The MPP has one and specific mission: to demonstrate concretely that confronting the psychological causes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis and investing in human potential, through constructive cooperation between people, is a supreme human interest. Therefore, the mission of the MPP will verify, through logical persuasion, that *"this concept is a realistic common factor between the various intellectual and ideological orientations of the peoples of the world."* This proposal will not set up specific mechanisms to achieve this purpose as this is up to the specialists from the MPP Advisory Group. The following is sufficient to present the components and basics of the program:

#### 2. Targets

If those who decide to wage wars and who are responsible for all man-made disasters are the ruling powers in real nations, whether they come through a democratic process or other, then the target group of the MPP is not only those powers, but all individuals in the world starting with basic education for children. The reason is clear: the ruling powers in countries are changing, but there is a need to establish a culture of peace and humanitarian cooperation on a large scale. Everyone must be convinced of the required culture of peace, especially the future decision makers.

#### 3. The program basics

##### i) Persuasion.

MPP is not supposed to use indoctrination, as it is in most media activities about cultures of peace and cooperation among humankind. On the contrary, it will rely on factual and concrete logical persuasion. It will also be based on the actual meaning of the feasibility of implementing the GTS (The concept of the ML). This may be attained by blending cognitive and constructivist learning. Suppose we have a video of a part of the Naval War Scenario in World War II. The video shows the story of a German marine whose warship was hit. He threw himself into the cold sea water with several his colleagues, waiting for the rescue service. However, no help came. After

20 minutes he was very tired in the semi-frozen water. There, considering the countdown to death, he began to remember his child and wife whom they would never see. Imagine what he said in those moments to his leaders and his government who threw him into this fate. One might ask if all the justifications and causes for war are still valid. There was surely an Allied soldier who had experienced the same moments of death and thought with the same sadness about the point of war. Think about the fate of the children of each of the combat soldiers of the two camps, the Germans, and the Allies. Maybe they are now friends. And maybe they marry each other. Soldiers finally discover the deadly tricks of their leaders to send them to war too late. MPP's mission is *to persuade before it's too late*.

ii) The creed of fighting for armies.

One of the main reasons for the outbreak of war between real states is the fighting doctrine of most armies to encourage the killing of others. This shows the enemy or soldier of the other army as a monster who must be killed by the most horrific means. But this contradicts human nature and human values. One of the main goals of MPP is to show that people in nature are anxious for peace and coexistence and that only a small percentage of people are violent, and they suffer from a psychological disorder. MPP may get help from philosophers, psychologists, and thinkers in identifying the disruption that allows those who control international politics to make decisions about wars, killing people, and destroying countries.

iii) A new expressive language.

The MPP is directed to all the peoples of the world and thus its contents should be well understood by different cultures. Therefore, MPP needs a basic and unconventional language. Basic and non-traditional language is not intended as a development of a new language, but rather as a method of expression and concept formation regardless of the language used. Then it can be written and spoken in any linguistic vocabulary and the translation will be instant using advanced artificial intelligence techniques. Expression must be in a clear way so that the expressions carry logical meanings without confusion and misunderstanding. In addition, it must be free from any vocabulary that calls for violence or abuses a person.

iv) The natural evolution of human behavior toward a mature world.

The more time passes, the rate of armed conflict decreases. This can be seen through political history and through the statistics of world wars. This is, of course, thanks to the scientific and intellectual progress that was followed by the economic prosperity of different countries. Therefore, the natural development of human behavior tends towards a mature world, away from violence and armed conflicts and closer to cooperation and integration. This does not mean that the world is not on the verge of more wars and violence, but certainly at a lower rate than before. MPP will help in the positive development of behavior of people of different civilizations. This is achieved, as is mentioned before, by gradually reducing the resort to violence and investing in human potential through constructive cooperation between countries to face challenges (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> axis of human challenges). In this way, MPP may pave the way for the integration of civilizations and the prevention of their clash.

### **The Forecast and Processing program for the 3<sup>rd</sup> axis Material causes (FP3M)**

There are many research centers in the world working in the field of peace support and humanitarian cooperation by forecasting and addressing armed conflicts between states or within

a particular state. Some centers work individually through the agendas of their affiliated countries, and therefore the results of their studies and recommendations go to the benefit of the respective governments. Besides, the research centers and institutes of studies for world peace and those against arms of the United Nations lack comprehensive mechanisms for application on the ground. However, FP3M will work in parallel with MPP and through the ASS and RCDU systems according to a comprehensive mechanism as part of the GP-WTM. Besides, FP3M will have a strong incentive to handle conflicts based on the concept of PMI. Committees of neutral specialists in various theoretical and applied fields will supervise the work of the program to take advantage of the tremendous capabilities of applied science professionals in solving problems in a purely logical way, away from political influences. FP3M will gain greater efficiency and its positive results will be faster as much faster the progress in MPP.

### **The Actual world States Simulator (ASS)**

ASS represents a model of the world in its current reality, including all its states, with a focus on the important and decisive factors and problems that affect life on Earth. It also shows the seriousness of each problem according to its geopolitical region. Moreover, the development of the problem is kept abreast and modified every appropriate period. The simulator exchanges data inputs with MPP and FP3M systems after conducting comprehensive studies of most prominent and influential economic and geopolitical facts in the world and then subject the input results to testing, evaluation and verification. Finally, the approved results will go to the RCDU system for collection and publication.

### **The Results' Collection and Dissemination Unit (RCDU)**

The output results of performance evaluations of MPP and FP3M via ASS are collected in RCDU and disseminated to the real world via two ways:

1. *Directly*, through ICT. The tremendous and accelerated development in communications, multimedia and information technologies greatly facilitates the work of the RCDU and assists it in achieving its objectives. Besides, the proliferation and development of social media platforms and systems helps RCDU' outputs reach most of the geographical areas and population densities.
2. *Indirectly*, through the citizens of the VGS. The citizens of the VGS are parts of the real world in addition to being parts of the VGS. Hence, they constitute a bridge between them.

Free from the national, racial, ethnic, and other determinants, RCDU will constitute a positive pressure force on decision makers in the world to implement effective and rapid reforms. This positive pressure will increase with increasing the number of members (virtual citizens) belonging to the VGS. It also represents a valuable guide for the real world to treat and solve actual problems and face real challenges.

### **The Future Model for the World (FMW)**

A better real world not only means a world of peace and cooperation between countries, but also a world whose future is drawn as people hope. Therefore, after the world reaches an acceptable level of peaceful and constructive coexistence between its states, commensurate with human maturity and wisdom, the VGS's initiative will turn to developing a Future Model for the World

(FMW), in the final stage. FMW will be a model for what the real world will look like in the future as people hope. Even if this hoped-for model cannot be applied at present or in the foreseeable future due to current conditions, it is logical for man to hope to reach it in the future provided that it is gradually achievable after man is able to change his circumstances for the better. The model will represent a new horizon in the path of the VGS, where the Global Interim Vision will be modified into a Flexible Global Vision (FGV) that will be updated to suit the emerging conditions for each specific period of man's future.

The idea of creating the FMW is intriguing and ambitious. At first glance, it appears to be an initiative aimed at envisioning a utopian or idealistic world based on the hopes and aspirations of humanity. However, it must be approached with a realistic understanding of the challenges involved and a commitment to inclusivity, adaptability, and global cooperation. Such a model could serve as a guiding framework for future generations, encouraging progress and positive change on a global scale. It should not be a static model but rather a dynamic one that allows for adaptation and evolution over time. As the world changes, so should the vision for the future. It should be noted that what makes the creation of the model closer to realism and practical realization than at any past time in human life is the current development in the field of human communication through ICT technology that have made the world as a small village! Nevertheless, it's essential to recognize the complexity and challenges involved in creating a comprehensive and universally acceptable FMW. Here are some considerations to keep in mind:

- **Diverse Perspectives:** Assembling a model that reflects the hopes of all people across the globe is a daunting task. Different cultures, beliefs, and values may have conflicting ideas of a better world. A truly representative FMW should consider and accommodate a wide range of perspectives. However, the model should focus on common and clear concerns that the majority of people on earth agree on, such as the importance of world peace, food security, health, education, climate issues, human rights, equality, and others. It must take into account the interconnections between these factors to create a holistic and coherent vision.
- **Global Cooperation:** The success of the FMW depends on global cooperation and collaboration between nations, organizations, and individuals. Diplomacy and collective action will be vital in working towards its realization.
- **Ethical Considerations:** The FMW should be built on a foundation of ethical principles that prioritize human rights, dignity, and respect for all individuals. It should avoid harmful ideologies or practices that have plagued societies in the past.
- **Education and Awareness:** Implementing the FMW requires a strong emphasis on education and awareness. Raising global consciousness about the model's goals and principles is essential to gaining widespread support and commitment.
- **Incremental Progress:** Achieving the FMW may not happen overnight. Gradual and incremental progress, guided by the model's principles, is more realistic and achievable.

The current world is proceeding in a semi-random manner in several matters of human interest, which makes it difficult to treat and control them. Hence, the most prominent features of the FMW are to be as much far as possible from randomness and to adjust the pace of dealing - with the main and critical issues of concern to the world – to be in line with the vision for the future. FMW will be concerned with topics related to the future of humanity as a whole and will address the main



issues affecting the real world, including the hoped-for forms of global political, economic and media systems within the framework of the future model of the world and under the umbrella of the flexible global vision. some of these issues could be as follows:

1. The population explosion that is disproportionate to the economic growth in many countries and the resulting problems of unemployment and forced migration [16].
2. Impulsive and uncalculated technological advancement and its harm to humans. The FMW should anticipate and incorporate potential technological advancements and their impact on society. Technology can be a driving force for positive change, but it also comes with challenges that need to be addressed responsibly.
3. Global warming and depletion of global natural resources. We live in a sustainable world where we should protect the planet for future generations.
4. The shape of international political systems in the future world in view of the current systems whose composition is NOT concerned with the interests of humanity as a top priority. Hence, not letting the fate of the world be determined according to the agendas and interests of some of those who control global political affairs in contradiction with this priority.
5. The shape of the international economic systems in the future world in view of the current systems that allow a limited number of people to own more than half of the world's wealth! The FMW should work for a global economy that is fair and equitable, and that benefits all people.
6. The global media systems in the future world in view of the negative effects of the hegemony of the current global media and its tools, which are linked to influential political and economic forces.

Creating a Future Model for the World is a long-term endeavor that seeks to inspire positive change and a better future for humanity. While the road ahead may be long and challenging, the effort to envision and work towards a better world is essential for the progress and well-being of future generations.

## **Promises and Challenges**

The promises clarify how the VGS could contribute to a more peaceful and cooperative world, however achieving such an outcome would require careful consideration of ethical, technological, and political challenges.

### **Promises**

By emphasizing digital connections, shared values, and a global perspective, the concept of a Virtual Global State (VGS) could indeed be seen as a vision for a more peaceful and cooperative real-world. It has the potential to address some of the challenges and conflicts that have historically arisen from national boundaries, cultural differences, and geopolitical tensions. The world is currently facing a number of serious challenges, and the VGS could provide a new way to address them. It could help to bridge the divides between countries and cultures, promote peace and understanding, and create a more sustainable and equitable world. Based on the accelerating evolution in communications and information technologies, the concept of the VGS, that imagines a new form of global governance, is no longer speculative. Here's how the VGS could contribute to a more peaceful and cooperative world:

1. Less Geopolitical Tensions:

By focusing on shared humanity and common interests rather than national interests, a VGS could help reduce traditional geopolitical tensions that often arise from territorial clashes and competition for resources.

2. **Cultural Exchange and Understanding:**  
The virtual interactions within a VGS could lead to increased cross-cultural understanding. This understanding could pave the way for peaceful coexistence and cooperation among diverse communities.
3. **Cooperative Problem-Solving:**  
A VGS could provide a platform for nations to come together and collaboratively address global challenges, such as climate change, pandemics, and poverty. This approach could foster a spirit of cooperation rather than competition.
4. **Encouraging Dialogue and Diplomacy:**  
The concept of a VGS could provide a neutral space for constructive negotiations and dialogue between nations. Virtual diplomacy could facilitate productive communication and conflict resolution.
5. **Shared Resource Management:**  
The importance on global interconnectedness could encourage nations to work together to manage and preserve shared resources, such as oceans, forests, space and biodiversity. This could lead to sustainable acts that benefit all nations.
6. **Humanitarian Aid:**  
In times of crises, a VGS could facilitate rapid response and humanitarian aid, allowing nations to collaborate efficiently to address disasters, conflicts, and emergencies.
7. **Empowerment of Individuals:**  
The VGS concept could empower individuals by providing them with a virtual platform to contribute to global discussions and decision-making. This could create a sense of possession and responsibility for shaping a more peaceful world. Besides, everyone in the real world, including people without real citizenship, has the right to belong to the VGS and to have its “virtual” nationality. She/He will get the VGS’s virtual ID card and reserve her/his global Identity Number.
8. **Focus on Common Values:**  
By uniting people based on shared values such as human rights, environmental sustainability, and social justice, the VGS could shift the focus from divisive issues to common goals that benefit all of humanity.

### **Challenges**

The VGS concept invites us to imagine a world where collaboration, understanding, and unity take precedence over division and conflict, offering a vision of a more harmonious future for humanity. However, it's important to acknowledge that while the concept holds promise for a more peaceful and cooperative world, achieving such an outcome would require careful consideration of ethical, technological, and political factors. Additionally, addressing challenges like privacy, security, and inclusivity would be crucial to ensure the success of this vision. Moreover, and in addition to governance, the virtual government jobs would involve overcoming other challenges. These include issues related to jurisdiction, legal frameworks and ensuring recognition and legitimacy of the VGS by existing nation-states and international organizations.

While this idea might not fully replace existing geopolitical systems, it could influence how nations interact and collaborate in the future. However, it's important to remember that the emergence of a new world order would require extensive cooperation, technological advancement, and a willingness to redefine traditional norms. Additionally, resistance from established geopolitical structures and potential conflicts of interest could pose obstacles to this vision. National sovereignty, differing ideologies, and geopolitical power dynamics could also pose significant barriers to the establishment of a neutral representative body like the VGS.

## Conclusion

On the one hand, the world is, unfortunately, suffering from lots of wars, assassinations, torture, siege, dictatorships, repression, and many other man-made disasters. On the other hand, the world is, fortunately, full of good people, philosophers, great experts, and respectable thinkers in all fields. So, questions are raised why the world is still suffering and why the worlds' philosophers, experts and thinkers fail to stop, or at least decrease, the man-made disasters to an acceptable level. Of course, there are actual reasons that lead to conflicts among human beings, whether individuals, groups or even countries. This is a reality. Examples are a clash of civilizations, different religions, beliefs and ideas, conflict of influence and wealth, conflicts of the geopolitical border, opposed political and economic systems, illiteracy and inadequate education, and many other reasons that hinder the application of theories of peace and constructive cooperation on reality. To get out of this vicious circle, the proposal makes use of modern technologies to re-process negative thoughts that impede progress toward a better world as follows:

First, it develops two intuitive concepts: the "*Post-Maturity Insight*" and the "*Missing Link*", concretely demonstrating that reducing man-made conflicts and investing in human potential, through constructive cooperation between states, is a supreme human interest. *Second*, it liberates people from the complexities of their national, racial, religious, and ideological differences, with full respect for them, by the idea of establishing the VGS that will help address the world's vital issues with innovative ideas freely and without restrictions. The Virtual "citizens" of the VGS are supposed to develop a *World Transitional Mission* whose task is to work towards achieving the desired *Global Interim Vision*. They will design a global project, as a virtual simulation of reality, to implement this mission and hence, reflect outputs to the benefits of the real world. Being also citizens of real countries, they will create a global public opinion and form a positive pressure force toward an acceptable and a stable level of peaceful world, where military weapons do not remain the basic guarantee of human security in the world. In conclusion, the VGS initiative is hoped to be a first step in the right and long way to a better world. Its work will be continuous, and its results will progress gradually. It invites us to imagine a world where collaboration, understanding, and unity take precedence over division and conflict, offering a vision of a more harmonious future for humanity.

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### **Annex-1: A practical model for the VGS-Implementation Stages and the Timeline.**

The design and implementation of the VGS initiative consists of two main stages, Figure 5. While the first stage focuses on the current conditions of human life (The present), the second stage deals with the future, its challenges, and how the real world will look as people hope (The future).

#### **1. First Main Stage (21 years):**

During the first main stage, the pillars and components of the VGS are built and a global project is designed to implement the World Transitional Mission (GP-WTM), whose task is to work towards achieving the GIV. The first main stage is divided into 4 phases with a total duration of approximately 21 years for implementation, while the fourth phase can continue its work without a time limit in the foreseeable future:

- **Phase 1 (2 years, expected)**

Phase-1 involves the design of an electronic platform [7] and the launch of a global advertising campaign to convince people from all states of the real world to register, join the VGS and get its virtual citizenship. It is free and does not conflict with their real nationality. The registered person will get his own VGS-Virtual National Identity Number (VNN) and print his VGS-Virtual National Identity Card (VNC), Figure 6. Phase-1 will continue until the critical mass of people are registered. In this case, the VGS project can move to the second phase.

- **Phase 2 (3 years)**

Phase-2 includes the free and democratic election of the Council of the Wise from among the candidates who are virtual citizens of the VGS. After that, the Council of the Wise will form specialized committees to develop the GIV, the WTN and then write a temporary virtual constitution for the VGS.

- **Phase 3 (3 years)**

In phase-3 the Council of the Wise will form a steering committee to oversee the free and democratic election of the Virtual Parliament and then the formation of the Virtual Government of the VGS. The virtual government will have its own characteristics in that it will take care of the most critical issues that affect the real world as a whole. Therefore, its formed departments (ministries) - by the virtual parliament - will be compatible with this matter. As an initial and adjustable formation, the following departments can be part of the government:

1. Department for Global Peace Cultures and Conflict Resolution.
2. Department for Global Affairs and Constructive Cooperation.
3. Department for International Justice and Human Rights.
4. Department for the Future of Mankind and Human Well-being.
5. Department for Earth Ecology, Climate Change and Natural Resources.
6. Department for Digital Transformation and Virtual World Technologies.

What is important in the next phase is the design of the Global Project to implement the WTM (GP-WTM), Figure 6, where the project will be a joint task for the first and second departments. The rest of the departments will determine their work by the elected parliament.

- **Phase 4 (13 years)**

Phase-4 involves the design of GP-WTM. The following provides an initial overview of this stage while the design will be left entirely to professionals in related fields and thus can be enriched, modified, and improved, see annex 2 for details. The virtual government will form a Steering Committee to oversee the GP-WTM project with the help of a Main Advisory Group (MAG), comprising of experts in various fields. This phase consists of two sub-phases:

- **The Preparation sub-phase**

The preparation and formation of the project's components may take around 3 years. The MAG sets up a central objective for the project: facing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Axis Man-made conflicts based on the concept of PMI as well as the concept of the ML between GTS and comprehensive application in view of the basic human needs and the 3 axes of human challenges. The steering committee forms two sub-teams, one for the management of the MPP and second for the FP3M. Each team, in cooperation with the MAG, forms its own advisory team for each program consisting of purely professional and neutral members.

- **The implementation sub-phase**

The implementation sub-phase will begin at the end of the preparation sub-phase after forming the MAG and the two managing teams along with their advisory groups for each program. The approximate duration giving concrete results for MPP could be 10 years depending on the work circumstances, but its work may continue as needed. However, the parallel FP3M will gain greater efficiency and have faster positive results as fast as the work of the MPP progresses. Meanwhile, the design of the ASS will be technical only and thus can be as fast as it needs to be.

## **2. Second Main Stage (Initially, 2 years):**

Considering the first stage results, the VGS's initiative will turn to developing the Future Model for the World (FMW), in the second stage. Supervising the development of the FMW is the responsibility of the Council of the Wise considering the views of the virtual citizens of the VGS, and its implementation will be by a working team of thinkers and specialists from various fields.

The model will represent a new horizon in the path of the VGS, where the Global Interim Vision will be modified into a Flexible Global Vision (FGV) that will be updated to suit the emerging conditions for each specific time of man’s future. The duration of the initial implementation of the second main stage is 2 years, but its work will be continuous without a time limit, and it will be broken down into phases at the time. This stage will be concerned with topics related to the future of humanity as a whole and will address the main issues affecting the real world, including the hoped-for forms of global political, economic and media systems within the framework of the future model of the world and under the umbrella of the flexible global vision.

**Annex 2: Additional Figures**

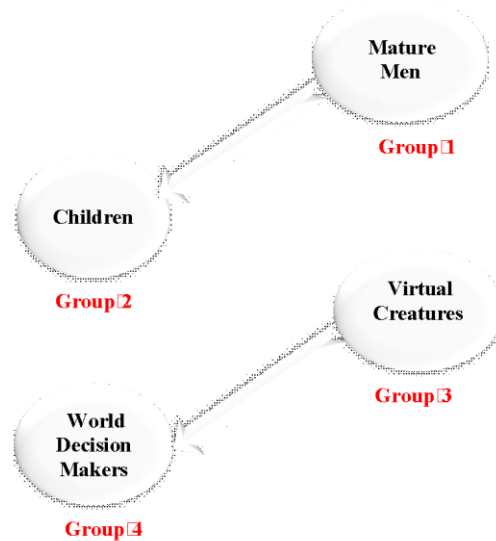


Figure 2: The Post-Maturity Insight (PMI)

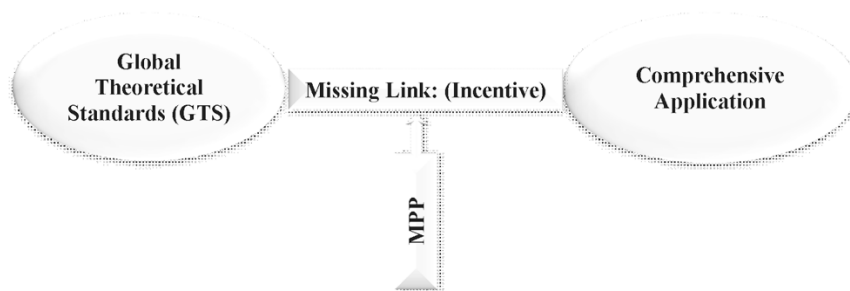


Figure 3: The Missing Link (ML)

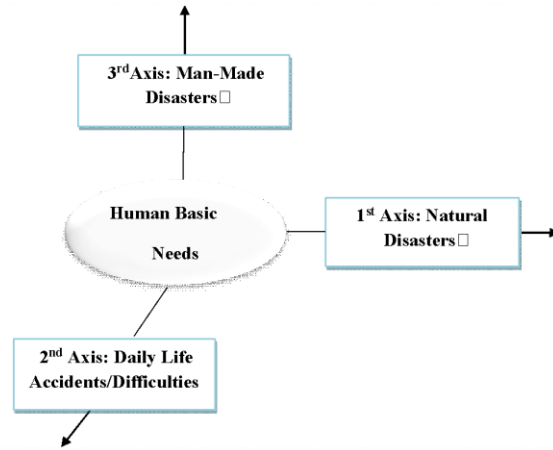


Figure 5: The VGS-Implementation Stages and the Timeline

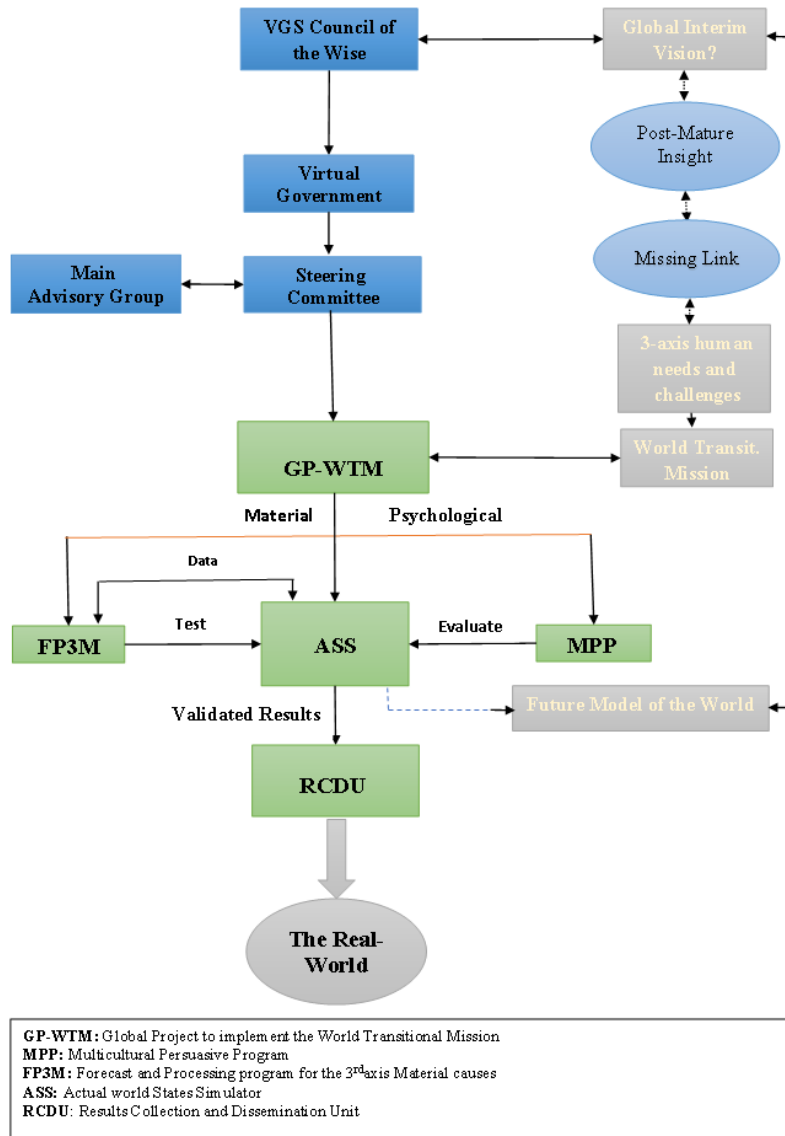


Figure 6: The VGS Preliminary Architecture

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## **Aristophanes in Amsterdam: Karl Kraus at the World Congress Against War**

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### **Abstract**

After introducing the satirist Karl Kraus and some of his writings about peace and war, the article offers a memoir of Kraus's attendance and participation in the 1932 World Congress Against War, which convened in Amsterdam. At the conference, as he recalls it, Kraus met Sylvia Pankhurst, Willi Munzenberg, and other activists and writers concerned with world peace. He distributed an anti-war edition of his journal, *The Torch*, and gave a public reading of a play by Aristophanes that features a comic armistice. In the conclusion of his brief memoir, Kraus regrets that the 1932 meeting in Amsterdam was not "the peace conference to end all peace conferences," and he advises readers that the best kind of war-weariness is that which prevents wars.

### **ARISTOPHANES IN AMSTERDAM: KARL KRAUS AT THE WORLD CONGRESS AGAINST WAR**

As war threatens to spread across Europe, from the Ukraine to Poland, Russia, Romania, Germany, France and England, small consolation will be found in the report on a peace conference held nearly a century ago. "When a world peace conference commences, can war be far behind?" asked Karl Kraus, who wrote the report. Kraus, once renown as a satirist in Vienna, author of the eight-hundred page anti-war play, *The Last Days of Mankind*, attended the



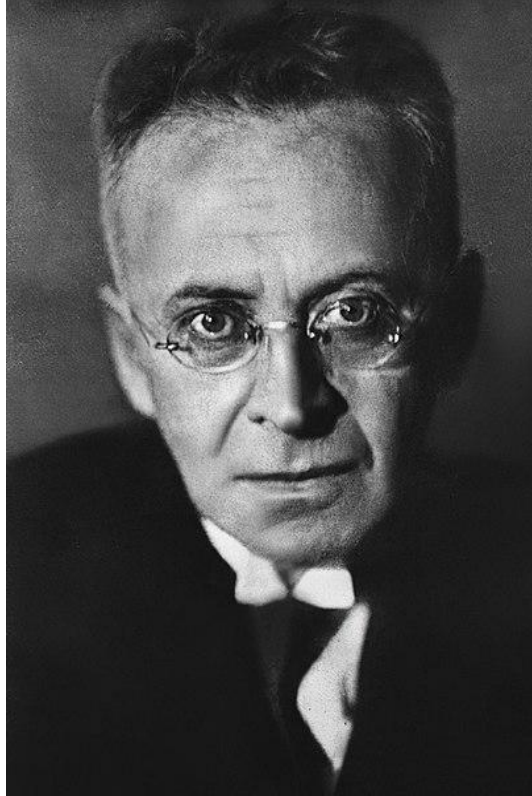
1932 World Congress Against War in Amsterdam, along with a number of other prominent writers.

Kraus's memoir of that World Congress Against War was not printed in his lifetime (1874 - 1936), possibly because he was disappointed with the outcome of the conference. No peace treaties were signed during the meeting - although he offered a treaty to guests there, as his memoir attests. At the time of the conference Kraus was still one of Europe's leading satirists. *The Torch*, the journal he wrote singlehandedly, offered readers biting commentary on politics, the arts, fashion, and rival publications. When World War One began, Kraus wrote anti-war dialogues, often quoting outrageous, self-serving lies spoken by military men, statesmen at war, and reporters avoiding the battlefield. In 1922 he published a collection of these scenes as a gargantuan play titled *The Last Days of Mankind*. The play, praised by prominent theatre artists Bertolt Brecht and Erwin Piscator, has never been fully staged due to its demanding length and huge cast size. Kraus estimated the play would take ten days to perform, and thought it suitable for performance "on Mars," which is to say, there was no place on Earth ready for its epic production.

He sometimes gave public readings of his essays, and of plays by Nestroy, Shakespeare and Aristophanes. He counted among his friends some of the finest writers and artists of the period, including Heinrich Mann, August Strindberg, Frank Wedekind, Else Lasker-Schuler, and Bertolt Brecht. At the 1932 peace conference Kraus met other notable writers and activists, including (judging by his account here) Sylvia Pankhurst, British-born leader of the suffragette movement, and an ardent campaigner against war.

The authenticity of his peace conference story has been disputed by Herbert Quainn, who met Kraus in the satirist's last years. Quainn protests: "After reading an advance proof of the World Congress Against War report, I have to question its provenance. Kraus's Amsterdam peace conference memoir is not mentioned in my monograph, *The Last Days of Karl Kraus, 1932 - 1936*, or any other volume I have read about him. The text lacks his outraged sense humor and his poetry. I admit hints of his sensibility surface in a few lines, enough to confirm Walter Benjamin's judgment that Kraus was that "great type of satirist [who] never had firmer ground under his feet than amid a generation about to board tanks and put on gas masks, a mankind that has run out of tears but not of laughter. In him civilization prepares to survive.' Still, I [Quainn again] cannot unequivocally say the story's author is Karl Kraus. Usually he directed his wry tirades against journalists, army generals, arms manufacturers, diplomats who lied to the public, but not against peace conferences. The Amsterdam memoir never appeared in Kraus's journal, *The Torch*. Perhaps he decided it was not fit to print. The distortions to which speech was subjected by so many of Kraus's countrymen, and other nationalities, led him to print only his own writing in *The Torch*; but it is possible even he did not meet his own standards once in a while."

Regrettably, Kraus is no longer around to comment on the matter. He and *The Torch* and almost all of its subscribers have expired, along with the actors who first performed excerpts from *The Last Days of Mankind* in Berlin and Vienna (1929). Those acquainted with his writing would be delighted to hear the silence broken, to see the satirist return from the dead and speak about his days at a peace conference with Aristophanes. Could this be him speaking?  
(His story begins here.)



Karl Kraus

W ending my way through a crush of Peace Congress delegates, I swerved left -- only physically, my political position hadn't changed -- to avoid a small circle of anarchists. But I didn't see the prepossessing Communist in front of me in time to avoid a collision, which was fortuitous. I lost hold of my copies of *The Torch*, the journals scattered across the floor, covered a few meters of carpet, and Sylvia Pankhurst helped me rescue the fallen books.



Sylvia Pankhurst

"I planned to distribute them, but not quite so randomly," I told her.

She neatly stacked copies of the magazine and handed them to me, along with a copy of her own book, *Save the Mothers: A plea for measures to prevent the annual loss of about 3000 childbearing mothers and 20,000 infant lives in England and Wales.*

"Thank you saving for my books and 20,000 infants."

"Now we need to save 20,000 adults, or is it 20,000,000, from a new war. We've not been introduced," said Miss Pankhurst, "but I would like to know your name. Your journals with the red flame burning on the cover look quite incendiary."

"Karl Kraus, pleased you would consider it incendiary. *The Torch* has been known to incite laughter at wagers of war and the journalists who abet them."

"I know some of those people, I regret to say. Sylvia Pankhurst's my name. I would like to read *The Torch*, but I'm not so proficient in German. I understand the English you speak much more readily. Which pages did you write?"

I knew the answer without looking, since I wrote every page. But instead I said:

"The scenes in this issue quote army generals, statesmen, reporters. You could say they wrote the material for me. The war was theirs, too, their World War One follies are documented here. The words spoken by a character named the Grumbler are entirely mine. They all appear in a play titled *The Last Days of Mankind.*"

"Do you grumble a lot?" she asked.

"Every day," I grumbled, "and are you Pankhurst the suffragette?"

"I was called far worse before women won the vote. Since then I've moved on to other campaigns against war, capitalism, and lipstick. My Communist friends call me Comrade."

"No lipstick. I see you are wearing your own face. Charming nonetheless. May I address you as Miss Pankhurst?"

"It isn't Mrs. if that's what you're wondering. Sylvia is also acceptable. You must be awfully warm holding all those *Torches.*"

"Yes, perhaps their glare should be lowered," I agreed as I placed them on a chair next to hers. I also sat next to her, other side.

"If 2,000 Communists, pacifists and anarchists are willing to sit together and listen to each other for three days in this hall, we know the situation is dire," Pankhurst confided.

"If they can keep the peace despite their differences, perhaps we'll see peace in our time. For three days," I guessed. The men in the row behind us were already arguing over disarmament plans.

At the front of the hall Willi, Munzenberg, the ubiquitous activist, sometimes in Berlin, stood behind a speaker's rostrum and asked his friends to clear the stage. Neatly attired in a white summer suit and bright red tie, Willi called the Congress to order in German, English, French, Russian and Spanish with a multilingual translator's assistance. He welcomed all the delegates, and recognized a few of his friends by name: Maxim Gorky, Albert Einstein, Upton Sinclair, John Dos Passos, Bertrand Russell, Havelock Ellis, Sylvia Pankhurst, Heinrich Mann. I had no objection since I was listed, too.

Aristophanes was not mentioned as one of the Congress guests, but I planned to introduce him in the afternoon. His satire of peace-making was to be performed in a nearby coffee house.

First, delegates from twenty-seven countries heard Munzenberg warn that they might soon be at war with one another, and he didn't mean over the Congress's resolutions. He foresaw continuing economic hardship across Europe, massive unemployment, persecution of Communists, anarchists, pacifists (all present) with fascism on the rise. Noting that progress toward peace requires great patience, he waited for the translator to complete her parts of his speech. "It takes time to secure detente among nations, even among delegates," his translator announced in English, with some hesitation before the word "detente."

"There is no English equivalent for 'detente'?" I asked Pankhurst.

"Mais si, monsieur, 'peace' is possible too," she replied. "D'accord?"

"The situation in Berlin is not promising," Willi continued, "the Communist sector has made every effort to resist the Nazis, who threaten Moscow as well as Germany. I am afraid some reactionary parties now see army enlistment as a solution to unemployment, and rearmament as a means of economic recovery. The returns on peacetime production are low, not appealing to many capitalists."

La paix does not pay.

During the coffee break, a few playwrights, poets, and journalists asked me (as author of *The Last Days of Mankind*) if the end of the world was nearer in 1932 than it was in 1914. Without permission, my answer was printed in a British weekly. Pankhurst later noticed and mailed it to me, so I have a proper English copy:

*"Arms manufacturers have never been happier as Armageddon approaches. Their stocks fly higher than their artillery. The production of disposable goods gives way to production of goods that dispose. The press prints war headlines, mostly war cries today; widows and orphans will cry tomorrow. Artists and writers, present company included, have a little time left to anticipate the disasters of war ahead. If we dare to recall past horrors or foresee future losses, if we imagine the worst in order to forestall its arrival, we are called unpatriotic alarmists. Patriotic alarmists call for war. Our voices are heard mostly by the censors. A fascist government will try to control*

*everything; but so far the Nazis have not taken complete control our language. Nor has our own press."*

A discussion among my friends at the table followed, and also fit into the British weekly's print:

**Upton Sinclair:** "If our writing doesn't lead anyone to oppose the coming debacle, they're not reading."

**Kraus:** " Not reading us."

**Bert Brecht:** "When the Nazis burn our books we'll know we've succeeded."

**Kraus:** " Along with fire we can look forward to a display of bludgeons - the fascist weapons of choice. Nazis bludgeon listeners at every rally, behind closed doors, too."

**Heinrich Mann:** "A storm of troopers led by Mephisto."

**Kraus:** " And what do we have to defend ourselves against them? Only words?"

**Sylvia Pankhurst:** "if we can't vote the scoundrels out, there are marches, rallies, civil and uncivil disobedience, general strikes."

**Kraus:** "Flight, exile, political asylum in Zurich with Joyce and Tzara, if they're still there."

**Munzenberg:** "Rumor has it you're carrying around a peace treaty, Karl. You must read it to us."

**Kraus:** "I will. It's quite a long-lasting treaty, having survived since 425 BC. It was written in Athens by Aristophanes."

**Munzenberg:** "Where is he when we need him?"

**Kraus:** "You can hear him this afternoon at my reading. Four o'clock in Café Crème around the corner."

The newspaper article concluded with a note: "Aristophanes's peace treaty was aired that afternoon," but said no more about it. I have to tell the rest of the story myself.

"I've heard Aristophanes called an immortal poet, but I never took the phrase literally," one classicist admitted to me before the reading. "Will he show up?" Most delegates had no idea who the Greek fellow was, but came for drinks and diversion. The cafe was full. The waiters ran out of coffee cups.

For years I had performed dramatic scenes in Berlin and Vienna -- my own work, satires by Nestroy, Offenbach, Aristophanes, too, but never his play *The Acharnians*, which takes place six years into the Peloponnesian war. An Athenian farmer named Dikiaopolis signs a private peace treaty with Sparta. Not everyone praises him. A hawkish Athenian General outmaneuvered by the peacemaker angrily asks: "What did you do with my war?"

The military man, Lamachos, expects his "woe might make me meet for mockery!" and he is right. Meanwhile Dikiaopolis enjoys a feast of plenty, women kiss him, and Aristophanes's chorus hails the farmer as a hero. I ended with my favorite scene. Holding three bottles of wine in the air, declaring myself Dikiaopolis for a day, I announced: "My treaty. Let's drink to Dionysus, the God of Wine and now the God of Peace." Wine was poured, glasses were raised around the café, and I recited Dikaiopolis's victory toast: "Let this peace last thirty years, and restore the prosperity we once knew. Let at least that many years pass before another war. For thirty years may our fields be green and fertile, so they yield abundant food and drinks of the finest vintage."

"Hear, hear! Cheers! Who's Dionysus? Peace in a bottle! Open another treaty," said the crowd.

Adding new lines to the ancient scene, I continued: "Of course in every crowd there'll be a few teetotalers. Hitler is one. He wouldn't drink with us. But he sent an emissary, a minister of propaganda." Here I unfurled a tiny flag bearing a swastika, waved it around and in my own not quite German accent I said: "The Fuhrer will not join your party. (*The crowd applauds.*) Nor does he approve of that other Greek play with the sex strike that stops *kinder* production. (*Classicist shouts: Lysistrata! Pankhurst adds: Yes! Strike!*) Without kids the Reich would soon be short of soldiers, and might not last a thousand years. (*More cheers erupt.*) Without new soldiers what would become of our army's commanders? We'd have to send them home like your Greek peace petitioner, drink fine wine and live to be old men, maybe happy." (*Crowd: Yes, Long Live Old Men! Pankhurst: Strike for Peace!*)

At this point I threw away the swastika and became Karl Kraus again: "In Aristophanes's satire, peace begins with one man, a farmer negotiates an armistice with Sparta. Must everything begin and end with our leaders, just because they start our wars?"

Munzenberg applauded here, others joined. Then Willi stepped up to the podium and genially dissented: "Aristophanes dreams of one man winning the peace. It's a comic dream, amusing but not practical or likely in our age of mass movements, unions and Soviets. Even theatre requires collective action."

"Kraus performs all the roles himself," noted Miss Pankhurst.

I agreed that the utopian satire of Aristophanes might not completely suit modern needs; but this particular play was first performed during wartime in front of an audience of 20,000 Athenians. A crowd ten times the size of our World Congress Against War cheered for peace in their outdoor amphitheater, united in laughter at the inability of generals and statesmen to resolve a five-year conflict. Yes, there was only one treaty signer and one playwright, but both had an assembly of 20,000 citizens supporting them before it was over. That was the greatest joke of all: a private peace treaty is not so private when tens of thousands applaud it. In my own modest attempts to

reprove misconduct I too had attracted tens of thousands, who welcomed antiwar writing in *The Torch*. Vienna turned red on publications days, as the journal with red covers was opened by readers across the city.

I concluded the Amsterdam reading: "You too, friends, delegates, other-country men and women, can write a peace treaty, a disarmament plan, an antiwar play. Or read mine in *The Torch*. But unless a movement for peace exists, or arises, and you speak for it, your words may only make an impression on the pages of a magazine." All the magazines I brought into the café were taken by guests, possibly even read later on. I bowed, took my copy of Aristophanes, and left accompanied by Pankhurst and Brecht.

The rest of my Congressional term was less eventful, aside from a swim in the canal with companions. I cannot say that the World Congress against War made our future years secure. *It was not the peace conference to end all peace conferences...*

\*\*\*

...**N**or did the end of hostilities staged by Aristophanes end the Peloponnesian War, which continued for another 20 years: his writing against war also continued, in *Lysistrata*, *The Frogs*, *The Birds*, a play titled *Peace*. The war went on and on, and Aristophanes became weary of opposing war. But his plays allowed thousands of spectators to experience the pleasures of peace for a few hours: the treaties, songs and comic relief from war weariness. If we are not yet all war weary, all in need of another treaty, another peace conference, more antiwar satire, we should be. To be war weary means to be weary of murder, weary of lies, weary of poverty and hunger, disorder, forced exile, weary of usurpations and invasions. This weariness may be acquired in times of armed combat, times of terrible deaths and destruction; but it is best to be war weary before a war begins.

**END**

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Joel Schechter is author of books about satire and circus clowns, including *Durov's Pig; The Pickle Clowns; Messiahs of 1933; and Eighteenth-Century Brechtians*. He has taught theatre history and literature at the Yale School of Drama and San Francisco State University.

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## Post War Reconciliation Process in Sri Lanka

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**Keywords:** Reconciliation, Peacebuilding, Accountability, Sri Lanka, Militarization, War

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## Abstract

This article deals with Sri Lanka's post war period, where despite the possibility of reconciliation it was not pursued for various reasons. A window of opportunity arose in 2015 with the election of Maithripala Sirisena as President. However, this was short-lived as defections within his party led to the fall of the government. This article examines the consequences of this election and subsequent developments for the process of reconciliation. We argue that national reconciliation measures are only a smokescreen to avoid accountability for the crimes committed by the SLA and the ex-LTTE cadres during Eelam War IV. It attempts to understand the nature of politics and society in Sri Lanka post Eelam War IV.

## POST WAR RECONCILIATION PROCESS IN SRI LANKA

Reconciliation in post conflict societies has remained one of the challenges of peacebuilding. Northern Ireland and South Africa offer us examples of reconciling competing societal groups in



a post conflict setting. The State was repressive and violent during the years of Apartheid in South Africa and the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Even then both the countries were successful in reconciling the societies with their 'active' civil society groups, especially religious associations. This article deals with Sri Lanka's post war period, where despite the possibility of reconciliation it was not pursued for various reasons. A window of opportunity arose in 2015 with the election of Maithripala Sirisena as President. However, this was short-lived as defections within his party led to the fall of the government. Hence the article examines the consequences of this election and subsequent developments for the process of reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

Questions of accountability about Eelam War IV led to Sirisena's victory in the 2015 elections. Mahinda Rajapaksa's government and ex- LTTE commanders like Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan evaded questions of accountability by the international community. Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP) led United People Freedom Alliance (UPFA) government assumed power in the Eastern Province in May 2008. Following the end of the Eelam War IV in 2009, Muralitharan joined the Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP) and was appointed as the non-cabinet Minister of National Integration and Reconciliation by Mahinda Rajapaksa. This new alliance between the former LTTE and the Rajapaksa government was instrumental in their victory in Eelam War IV. This alliance between the two former enemies was a setback to the process of reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

This article argues that national reconciliation measures are only a smokescreen to avoid accountability for the crimes committed by the SLA and the ex-LTTE cadres during Eelam War IV. It attempts to understand the nature of politics and society in Sri Lanka post Eelam War IV. For reconciliation to be durable, it should benefit society at large, both perpetrators and victims, instead of only the political elite. The protracted ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka was marked by their intense struggle for identity and recognition between the Tamils and Sinhalese. A fundamental aspect of reconciliation is acceptance and recognition of the crimes committed or aided by those in power. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa held public hearings to bring people together and investigated patterns of past human rights violations. (South African TRC, 2003, Vol 6:6, p. 743). The same is the case with Northern Ireland where the process of reconciliation applied to the entire population, both victims and perpetrators. Building the trust deficit involved the entire society.

Acknowledgement of the past atrocities by the parties to the conflict is the key to reconciliation. (IDEA,2003). The civil war between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka led to antagonism, distrust, hatred, and suspicion of the Tamils among the Sinhalese. K.M. De Silva (2012) calls this a "minority complex" among the Sinhalese. Terrorism and a series of political assassinations and three Eelam wars led to a deepening distrust of the LTTE during 1983-2002. The Eelam War IV (2002-2009) resulted in the decisive victory of the SLA over the LTTE. The President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa declared a victory on 19 May 2009 after five months of intense fighting by the Sri Lankan Army. International media estimated that the war led to the death of 40,000 Tamils and the displacement of 290,000 persons with thousands interned in closed camps. (The Guardian. 2009, May 26)

Memorialization is a symbolic necessity in the process of reconciliation. The Sinhalese Buddhists aided by the Sri Lankan government celebrate Eelam War IV that defeated the LTTE. Victory over

terrorism is a narrative that aids War tourism in the Northern and Eastern provinces. LTTE bunkers and tanks are on display and ‘the victory over terrorism’ is celebrated as a major event (Mark Salter, 2015. p.5). Nevertheless, memorialization for the Tamils has remained contentious with the government of Sri Lanka preventing families from remembering the deceased. In 2021, the Mullivaikal memorial at Jaffna University was destroyed upon President Gotabaya’s orders. (The Hindu, 9 June 2011). Trauma is exacerbated by the Sri Lankan officials’ denial of the suffering experienced by Tamil civilians during the civil war and the presence of Sri Lankan army personnel and other forms of surveillance in the Northern and Eastern parts. The Tamils are subject to humiliation as they pass through the victory monuments. Mothers of former LTTE cadres desire that they be allowed to have their lost sons’ pictures in LTTE uniform in their homes but are not permitted as the Sri Lankan government brands them as terrorists (Consultation Task Force Final, 2016, p.91).

Respect for the adversary’s position is an important aspect of reconciliation. During the Eelam War IV, the Sri Lankan Army (SLA) advanced its military campaign into the Vanni by shelling into No Fire Zones (NFZ) and cut off food distribution that resulted in civilian casualties. At the same time, the LTTE held hostage around 330,000 civilians and shot those that fled the War zone. Critics of the War were intimidated and silenced by the Sri Lankan government. (BBC, 2012, March 14) The use of white vans to abduct and make people disappear became prevalent during this time. (New York Times. 2009, Nov 7). The survivors who left the conflict zones were screened for suspected LTTE cadres. 281,621 people were detained in thirty military-guarded camps in the four northern districts of Vavuniya, Mannar, Jaffna, and Trincomalee as of 17 July 2009. This policy was justified on claims that anyone in the camps could be a security threat. (Human Rights Watch, 2009).

Montville (1993: 113) argues that acknowledgement from the perpetrators and forgiveness from the victims about past crimes is essential. More importantly, he maintains that the victims should be reassured that they will not suffer abuse again. The Sri Lankan case suggests otherwise. There is no official acknowledgement by the State of its role and responsibility in violating the rights of its citizens but only denial. On the other hand, there is triumphalism on the part of the government to have defeated terrorism. Ex-combatants of the LTTE are identified by the State as terrorists that has resulted in their marginalization. They don’t find acceptance and are treated with disdain (Consultation Task Force, 2016, p.97). The Sri Lankan Government’s approach to reparations is through development and aid that has facilitated further militarization of the Northern and Eastern regions.

Accountability for War Crimes assumed significance when Channel 4 News broadcast footage from the final stages of the Eelam war IV. Meanwhile, the international human rights organizations like the International Crisis Group, ICRC and Amnesty International documented human rights violations, war crimes and crimes against humanity during this time. The call for accountability gained momentum with the visit of United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon in 2009 three days after the end of Eelam War IV. At the conclusion of his visit, a joint statement was issued by the Secretary General’s Panel (thereafter referred to as the Darusman Panel) and the government of Sri Lanka that underlined the importance of an accountability process. Darusman Panel’s report found potential violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law committed by the SLA, including shelling and attacks on hospitals that caused civilian deaths.

(Darusman Panel, 2011). The panel documented 40,000 civilian deaths and 6000 forcibly disappeared in the final stages of Eelam War IV. (Darusman Report,2011).

In response to the Darusman Panel's report, President Mahinda Rajapaksa commissioned the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) 15 May 2010 touted as a homegrown mechanism to bring about reconciliation on. This was only in response to the Darusman panel and the international community's calls for accountability. Even so, the LLRC report blamed the past Sri Lankan governments' failure to militarily defeat the LTTE. On the issue of disappearances, the LLRC report concluded that the representations to probe into 'alleged disappearances of LTTE cadres who had surrendered to or had been arrested by the Sri Lanka Army was investigated'. (LLRC, 2011, p.128). On the matter of civilian casualties, it concluded that the "security forces were confronted with a situation to respond proportionately to the LLTE attack in rebel held areas" (LLRC, 2010, p.45). The commission cleared the Sri Lankan army of systematic human rights abuses but called for only a few individual incidents to be investigated. More forcefully, it recommended a series of measures to promote post war reconciliation, including the demilitarization of the north. However, questions of accountability were not addressed in the LLRC. It recommended a role for civil society in the form of inter-faith reconciliation and peace committees at district and provincial levels to provide grassroots support (LLRC, 2010). During the final stages of Eelam War IV, civil society came under attack by the state. In 2004, Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) introduced an anti-conversion bill that was approved in January 2009 in the Sri Lanka Parliament. The legislation was supported by the Buddhist Sinhala groups and caused concern among the religious minorities, especially Christians (February 22, 2009. The Sunday Times). These legislations targeted the Christian minorities, especially the churches involved in humanitarian relief in Northern Sri Lanka. This law was a propaganda tool to divide the Tamil and Sinhala societies in the name of religion. Eleven churches and convents were destroyed in the fighting during the Eelam War IV. (Harrison, Frances, 2012, p.115). This was a serious impediment to civil society that weakened peacebuilding and reconciliation. Navneetham Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008-2014) expressed concern at the attacks on religious minorities. (OHCHR, 2013).

The Catholic clergy and nuns in Jaffna engaged with the Commissions of Inquiry like the LLRC gave up hopes on domestic mechanisms. They alleged that recommendations like the singing of national anthem in Sinhalese and Tamil and public apology were not appreciated. (JPIC, 2014 March 4). Christian clergymen from Northeast Sri Lanka called for an international investigation with petitions to the United Nations Human Rights Council as Tamil families in the Northern and Eastern part of Sri Lanka demanded the whereabouts of their sons and husbands.

In March 2014, the UN Human Rights Council adopted resolution (25/1) requested the Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) "to undertake a comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by the LTTE and the SLA.

### **Enforced Disappearances and Accountability**

A special team was established by then High Commissioner of the Human Rights Council, Navi Pillay to investigate disappearances. The Report of the OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL) 2015 has affirmed the enforced disappearances and continued human rights violations. Faced with

pressure from the international community and her visit on the sidelines of the International Day of the Disappeared, Mahinda Rajapaksa, then President of Sri Lanka constituted the Presidential Commission of Inquiry to Investigate Complaints Regarding Missing Persons (PCICMP) called the Paranagama commission in 2013. When Navi Pillay visited the northern city of Jaffna, she met with Tamil families and heard complaints ‘about missing relatives, military land grabs and life without basic facilities.’ The families of disappeared people in Sri Lanka during and after the Eelam War IV staged a demonstration in Colombo. The government in Sri Lanka prevented buses from leaving the Northern town of Vavuniya to join the protest in Colombo. The protesters called for an international probe into human rights abuses and disappearances. (BBC, 31 August 2013).

The Paranagama Commission implicated LTTE for civilian deaths as well as crimes committed during the final stages of the Eelam War IV. Moreover, it devoted so many pages to indict the Darusman panel for the figures cited on civilian casualties during the Eelam War IV and gave a clean chit to the Sri Lankan Army (SLA). The Commission maintained that “the SLA had to fire into the No Fire Zones owing to deliberate operations, tactical encounters, and counter battery fire by the LTTE” and standard of ‘proportionality, distinction, legitimate targeting, military necessity’ was applicable to the LTTE as much as the Sri Lankan government. (Paranagama Commission, 2015). Though it deplored the LTTE’s atrocities, former LTTE commanders like Colonel Karuna were not prosecuted for the forced recruitment of child soldiers. (ICG Report, 2010, p. 24)

### **Election in 2015 and the renewed hopes for Reconciliation**

A change of regime is a crucial factor that can aid or hamper the process of reconciliation. The election of Maithripala Sirisena as the Sri Lankan President on 8 January 2015, renewed hopes towards reconciliation and accountability when his defection from the Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP) was supported by the Opposition. Sirisena defected from the SLFP, then led by Rajapaksa, in 2014 to join an opposition coalition that ousted Rajapaksa. Later Sirisena rejoined the SLFP, took over its leadership and formed a national government with Wickremesinghe’s UNP party. Over the course of his election campaign, Sirisena won the confidence of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and Muslims. His victory renewed hopes towards reconciliation and accountability by the international community. On Sri Lankan Independence Day, 4 February, a special “declaration of peace” in three languages expressed sympathy and regret for all the victims of the civil war, and pledged to advance “national reconciliation, justice and equality for all citizens”. On 25 March 2015, an Office of National Unity and Reconciliation, headed by former President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, with a mandate to ensure progress on the release of detainees and civilian land occupied by the military was taken by the cabinet. In October 2015, UN Human Rights Council resolution on Sri Lanka (Human Rights Council (HRC) Resolution 30/1) was co-sponsored by the Government of Sri Lanka.

The international community was involved within the mechanism set up by the government in Sri Lanka for the first time since 2009. To address the question of disappearances, the Office on Missing Persons (OMP) was constituted. The Consultation Task Force (CTF) of 11 members drawn from civil society was appointed by the Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe in January 2016, to elicit the views and comments of the public on the proposed mechanisms for transitional justice and reconciliation.

Nonetheless, Sirisena government's policies had certain drawbacks. He continued the same approach towards accountability and war crimes as his predecessor. The policy of militarization of the Northern and eastern areas continued apace. The Sri Lankan government did not change its stance on cooperation with international investigation, nor admit the team to the country but engaged with the High Commissioner and OHCHR on possible options for an accountability and reconciliation process. (OHCHR, September 2015). Domestic transitional justice bodies, like the Office on Missing Persons and the Office on Reparations, lost the confidence of victims' families after being undermined by the appointment of members not deemed independent. (Amnesty International, Sri Lanka, 2022). On the investigation by the UNHRC, Sirisena's government requested a one-off temporary deferral, which was agreed to by then United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein.

The international community's hopes diminished as promises made by the Sirisena's government on war crimes and accountability were not addressed. Implementation was missing regarding all the offices set up for the process of reconciliation. Security sector reform and the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) One of the key undertakings in the resolution was security sector reform, including repealing and replacing the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) with new legislation that meets international standards. Instead, the government has floated various drafts that in some cases are worse than the existing law, which remains in effect (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

Meanwhile, defections within the Sirisena's government were engineered by the Rajapaksas. This resulted in a political crisis. The rift between Wickremesinghe and Sirisena was attributed to the policy towards China's investment in Sri Lankan infrastructure projects. (Devotta & Ganguly, 2019). The Presidential elections in 2018 won by Gotabaya Rajapaksa was a huge setback to the process of reconciliation. His government withdrew the co-sponsorship of the UNHRC resolutions and declared "to achieve sustainable peace through an inclusive, domestically designed and executed reconciliation and accountability process". (International Commission of Jurists, 2020).

### **Militarization in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka**

Land has been an important determinant of the conflict between the State and Tamils. Regional Councils were proposed to be created for the Northern Province and the Eastern Province because of the presence of Muslims, Tamils and Sinhalese (Bandaranaike -Chelvanayakam Pact, 1957). In 1965, Dudley Senanayake - Chelvanayakam Pact laid down measures to dispel land alienation in the Northeastern Provinces. However, both the pacts were never implemented (Peebles, 2006). Militarization has continued even after the defeat of the LTTE and the takeover of these provinces by the Sri Lankan state. More importantly, this is done by grabbing land for military establishments, development projects and government organized settlement of Sinhalese in the North and East of Sri Lanka. (ICG, 2012). Militarization is occupation of the North and East provinces with an intent to maintain a Sinhalese Buddhist hegemony and perpetually suppress the demand for a separate Tamil homeland. (Evans, 2018. pp.678-672).

Land Grabs in Mullaitivu, Vavuniya or Trincomalee for setting up military camps has resulted in the destruction of the Tamil community's identity, way of life and progress. (Wigneswaran, C.V. 2021). The local communities on the Jaffna Peninsula resent the militarization that has affected

their local industry, fisheries, horticulture and even tourism. (STP Report, 2016, p.12) The presence of the military is an obstacle to the reconciliation process. Demilitarization is one of the measures recommended by the LLRC and the Consultative Task Force. Military officials oversaw airports, seaports, customs, utilities, agriculture, fisheries, land development, wildlife protection, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Conclusion**

One of the barriers to the process of reconciliation is the question of accountability. The intention of the Rajapaksa government was clear with the fact that a former LTTE cadre, Vinyagamoorthy Muralidharan was appointed as a minister without a portfolio for Reconciliation. It exposed the collusion of the erstwhile foes to unite against the calls for accountability for war crimes. Immediately after the victory over the LTTE, the Sri Lankan government displayed a triumphalist approach. Political instability is a challenge that has not provided an ideal ground for a process of reconciliation.

The state in Sri Lanka, irrespective of the political party in power rejects the involvement of the international community. Most of the Tamils in Northeastern Sri Lanka are beholden to the international community for support and justice, but the State's measures at reconciliation are only in response to international pressure. The Sri Lankan government is ambiguous on accountability and is intent on delinking the process with reconciliation. This clearly indicates that unlike South Africa or Northern Ireland, where despite the conflict, the churches were involved in community building activities, the civil society organizations and particularly the Catholic churches have been subjected to a lot of pressure. The Bishop of Mannar, Rev. Rayappan was questioned by the CID for maintaining that more than one lakh people are missing in Vanni.

The government in Sri Lanka enforces collective punishment on the Tamils for the defeat faced in previous Eelam wars. Revenge and retaliation seem to be the focus as indicated in the language of the Sinhalese leaders. Reintegration of ex-combatants, mostly LTTE into society is fraught with challenges because of laws like the PTA and large numbers of them held in detention. Reconciliation is a long-drawn process that requires the active participation of society and the state. It is used as a smokescreen in Sri Lanka to evade responsibility for the war crimes and crimes against humanity during the final stages of the war. Political instability and the economic crisis have led to the shift of focus from the reconciliation process to solving the crisis. Despite the establishment of the Office of the Missing Persons and the Office for Reparations, Sri Lanka has not moved towards a genuine comprehensive transitional justice policy.

The LLRC and the Paranagama Commissions prove beyond doubt that they are not interested in pursuing reconciliation but a triumphalist approach with no scope for reparation or restitution. The failure of domestic mechanisms can be attributed to the lack of political will. Irrespective of the party in power, there is unanimity about militarization of the northeastern provinces. The UNHRC was requested to delay its report by a few months with a promise of national mechanism. The Military courts of Inquiry (MCI) have not been able to operate as an effective mechanism.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) is used to target political opponents and imprison journalists and the space for civil society has further shrunk. The LLRC was only a response to the

Secretary General's appointment of a panel to probe into the final stages of Eelam War IV. Panaragama Commission appointed by the Sri Lankan government is a counter response to the visit of the UNHRC chief, Navi Pillay on the sidelines of the International Day of the Disappeared in 2013.

Reparations are not human rights oriented nor intended to heal wounds, rather development programmes and aid are perceived by the Sri Lankan government as modes to evade questions of accountability. The LLRC and the Panaragama reports by the Sri Lankan government argue that recognition of the crime, which is a fundamental requirement in the reconciliation process, is not made. There are exclusionary measures like continued militarization and the use of paramilitaries, that perpetuate intimidation and violence.

A UN commission was set up to probe into Eelam War IV by the then Secretary General Ban Ki Moon's visit three days after the War ended. The War in Sri Lanka was celebrated as a victory over terrorism and memorials built to commemorate this. The international community along with the United States, Britain and Germany sought to enquire into the civilian casualties that happened and the plight of the survivors. In numerous reports of the United Nations and the Human Rights Council, it is proven beyond doubt that reconciliation is hampered because of the majoritarian approach that is adopted by the Sri Lankan government.

Zeid Raad Al Hussein, the UN Human Rights Council Chief maintained that the Sri Lankan government failed to investigate, punish, and prosecute crimes committed by members of the security forces. He called for the creation of a hybrid international court to investigate. Sri Lankan government has not been able to build on the goodwill of the international community and embrace initiatives like this. A polarized political environment with a change of political leadership is one of the many reasons for the failure of the peacebuilding process.

The United Nations Human Rights Council including the LLRC had taken note of the disappearances among the Tamils during and after the War. However, the government has failed to redress this issue. Civil society and human rights defenders face harassment and intimidation by the State. After his election in 2019, Gotabaya Rajapaksa followed a policy of denial in the way of orders for destroying the memorial inside the University of Jaffna. This has resulted in a setback to genuine reconciliation as acceptance remains one of the pillars of the process. The victory over terrorism is celebrated as one of the great achievements rather than any settlement or address of the victim's loss of dignity and livelihood.

Land alienation in the Northern and Eastern areas is termed a genocide as it is about destroying the identity and culture of the Tamils. Militarisation after the War has continued apace with land grabbing at a fast pace. Devolution of power to the Northern and Eastern council is dispensed away to hasten the process of land acquisition. The scenario presents a dire challenge to the process of reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

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# PEACE STUDIES JOURNAL

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## **Interview for Peace Studies Journal of Anthony J. Nocella, CPA, MBA**

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Editors Note: The following interview with Anthony J. Nocella, Sr., a banking professional and community banking advocate originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America. The interview was conducted by his son, Anthony Nocella, II (“AN”) one of the editors of PSJ, and provides a life story glimpse into the ravaging inequities and the political economies of social services in the United States with a focus on the intersections of advocacy, housing policy and banking practices. Anthony J. Nocella (“AJN”) is a retired banking CEO who became engaged in foster care critical change work, critiquing the system with perspectives like, “*Foster care without a permanent solution for the child's outcome is “no care”* and other truisms grounded in critical praxis. The life writing interview provides a critical narrative perspective for this Volume 16 of *Peace Studies Journal* as a means to engage critically with those systemic actors who work within systems to critique and change it.

### **INTERVIEW WITH ANTHONY J. NOCELLA, CPA, MBA** *Retired Banking Professional & Foster Care Advocate*

AN: Where did you grow up and how did your neighborhood influence you to get involved in supporting youth caught in foster care?

AJN: I grew up in South Philadelphia in the legendary “Rocky” neighborhood in the fifties and sixties and was interested in and a fan of pro sports. I went to a local parish church and elementary school in that parish. The children in the neighborhood played on the streets all

sports including basketball, baseball, and football, most of which were organized by the children themselves.

Some of my friends were orphans- Smitty was one of those who came from the Hershey School, a large 2,000 student elementary through high school for orphans. The school was founded by Milton Hershey and completely funded by his Trust Deed to this day. The Hershey School is located in Hershey, Pennsylvania Smitty worked hard and was successful. There were several other friends that also went to Hershey School who went into the military or onto college. When they weren't at elementary school, they lived with neighbors who took them in much like the idea of foster care but just for the summer until they were 18 but just about in every case the children had successful outcomes. The Hershey School was for children of lower income and was receiving sub-standard care from their parents. Today it is one of the best private schools from pre-K through 12th grade. During the fifties, it was an orphanage that housed and educated students. It was a far cry from today's foster care housing model.

My cousin Vincent went to the Girard school because his father died. It was for orphans and at the time just for white boys. Today it is Philadelphia college preparatory school. It was completely funded be in 1848 by Stephen Girard who at the time was the richest man in America. In 1968, Cecil B. Moore, through a lawsuit based on the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment desegregated the school. In 1984, girls were admitted to the school. Vincent graduated from Girard and was admitted into Drexel University where he graduated as a certified mechanical engineer.

The system at the time was funded for the most part privately by the estates of philanthropists. The foster care system that is in existence today is for the most part funded by the government and has one significant drawback. The foster care homes are a financial business of "part time care keepers" not "people who care". "Oliver Twist "in 1838, worked in an orphanage workhouse for the profits of their keepers. Charles Dickens worked and lived in such an orphanage. He missed some of his education.

The idea of making a profit from child labor or taking advantage of orphan children is abhorrent. The American foster care model destroys lives for a profit. It is an example of unbridled capitalism.

AN: As a former CEO/CFO of several banks what helpful skills and knowledge did you learn that would be important to share that would help marginalized and oppressed communities?

AJN: I believe foster care is directly related to housing. A bank's responsibility is the community reinvestment of its deposits. This idea was made part bank regulations through the Community Reinvestment Act whose mission was to invest and house the communities it serves including its low income people. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) helps this process by lowering the down payment for lower income borrowers to a minimum level and in some cases the down payment can actually be borrowed, in other words, with almost no money for a down payment someone can own a home. With this situation parents can have a home that they can afford.

I served on the Board of an inner-city school which educated neighborhood children. This was part of a volunteerism initiative of The Philadelphia Saving Society, a bank founded by Benjamin Franklin for the banking needs of “working men”. I served as President in the eighties. We mentored and funded neighborhood youth to avoid the homeless effect of aging out of foster care. I created corporate budgets to obtain donations and run the vocational school. My financial training helped this and other non-profit alternative schools establish funding sources and financial controls that could be shown to donors.

AN: As the cofounder of the mortgage-backed securities market, what is something you learned about that concept that relates to social justice?

AJN: The mortgage-backed securities market in the eighties enabled the financing of homes for low-income individuals. It also allowed for the possibility of financing homes that previously were considered welfare housing. Welfare housing was funded by the government. In the neighborhood, where I lived these homes were called “the projects”. The “projects” was a high-rise apartment with one elevator in a dangerous and gang infested. Group foster care was a better alternative. Foster care is at its best for children who need a good home and a family that cares for them and possibly evolves into a permanent outcome. Much of foster care today has more to do with subsidizing rental housing investments. In the worst- case foster care is just warehousing to the age-out point at 18 years of age that results in prison or homelessness.

Mortgage-backed securities (MBS) financing creates lower down payments and a possible permanent outcome for the children. Permanent homes may facilitate adoption. The permanent homes may facilitate an education or a vocation. MBS may allow an equitable solution for low-income children who want to climb out of poverty. And more importantly avoid prison, drug addiction, and homelessness.

AN: Out of so many injustice issues around the world to focus on why did you donate your energy to youth caught in foster care?

AJN: Back to where I started, growing up in a neighborhood in the fifties where children who didn't have homes were taken in with the possibility of being adopted or being sent to orphan schools that cared for them. The neighborhoods were ethnocentric and racially segregated. This was a neighborhood who looked at other children as being less than the rest of us. It was an American caste grading.

The parish parochial elementary school was run by Catholic nuns whose goal was education and caring for children as a day school and an elementary school. The system of elementary schools was part of parishes but in the seventies began to turn into private school paid education. During the fifties none of the children in our parish paid for private parochial elementary school or high school. This system began to disappear in the eighties. A group of corporate leaders of which I was one, began to realize the effect of the closing of the Philadelphia and Baltimore parochial school systems. There were no public schools. The lack of an educated workforce would be devastating to the economy. We began to

raise corporate and government funds for the parochial schools to prevent a collapse. The system was successful and still exists today.

Then I became interested in what were the next steps to be able to backstop the loss of primary and secondary education. What can we do to vocationally train the children? What can we do to safely house these children? What could I do to help foster children obtain permanency? I joined non-profit organizations for the homeless; I became an advocate of banking community reinvestment.

AN: Where did your values of social justice and human rights come from in your life?

AJN: I grew up in an Italian family in which school education and caring was everything. And I saw so many families torn apart today by divorce and abuse which produced a very difficult future for the children. I felt that maybe I could do something that could help. It really was brought most to my attention by my education by Norbertine and Franciscan friars in high school and then the Christian brothers at LaSalle University. The brothers at LaSalle College had taken a vow of poverty and were dedicated to education based on ethics and morality. It was their example that led me to believe that social justice for children who are impoverished and without parents had to have a better process than the current foster care to prison pipeline. Foster care without permanency(adoption) is not a solution.

I began volunteering at hospitals to help those in need by following in the footsteps of my mother who was a volunteer for over 20 years at St. Agnes Hospital in South Philadelphia. This was a vocational dream for her, it allowed her to provide care for those in need. She worked as the office manager, and I helped her as I learned more about the business side of management. This was the first volunteer work that I did before becoming a member of committees at banking organizations. The first bank that I worked for proudly called itself an “eleemosynary”. It had a mission to serve the community through its activities and by its nature and its Philadelphia Quaker roots. They used this process to help my education to become an executive officer. When asked what my view was of volunteerism I stated that volunteerism is fun but it has psychic compensation. I feel that it contributes to social, cultural, and healthcare. It has priceless personal rewards, and it makes the lives of fellow human beings a little more pleasant. Today, I believe volunteerism is still important with the cost of health care and the difficulty in taking care of orphan children.

The most direct childcare project that I helped found was the Metropolitan Center in Philadelphia in 1970. I first worked in the finance area but then I moved to help minority students bridge the gap between their inferior and poor education to prepare them for a vocational career. The CEO and primary founder of the organization and I visited lawyers, foundations and charitable funds to keep the program afloat during the period of time when government funding had all but dried up.

Another key volunteer activity was founded in Philadelphia by Bill Fishman ,the CEO of ARA. He founded Business Leaders Organized for Catholic Schools(BLOCS), an organization that was interfaith in its structure and prevented the bankruptcy of the Catholic

schools which accounted for more than half of all elementary and secondary school students in the Philadelphia region.

These activities ingrained a belief that we all can do something to help the underprivileged and children who have difficult family situations including housing education and mental health issues.

AN: What is one of the major systems problems with the foster care system?

AJN: Foster care without a permanent solution for the child's outcome is “no care”. The families that take care of children who don't intend to adopt have no concern about the child's education or permanent home. Instead they do further damage, while making financial gain by being paid by state governments. Orphanages were a better solution than foster care is today. Today state governments simply fund the warehousing of children driving homelessness and prisons..

AN: If someone wants to get involved in supporting youth care in foster care what is your advice?

AJN: If someone wants to help youth who are in the “System” of foster care they would do it through “fostering” adoption or some form of permanent housing. Without income at the age of 18 many of these children wind up in prison or become homeless. There needs to be either a government solution or a philanthropic solution to allow these children to have a different outcome. Probably the most serious solution would be to become educated in sociology, become certified to enable you to get employment with Child Protection Service (CPS) –Yes! The only real service applicable today is to help these children in foster care and to some extent create a post permanency world.



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**Book Review: Fr. Jean Boulier's *A Priest Took a Stand against Cold War Anti-Communism (1948): Political Theology for Present-Day NATO Criticism***

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Title: Book Review Fr. Jean Boulier's *A Priest Took a Stand against Cold War Anti-Communism (1948): Political Theology for Present-Day NATO Criticism*

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**Keywords:** Peace, Game theory, Static games of complete information, Nash Equilibrium

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**Book Review:**

***A PRIEST TOOK A STAND AGAINST COLD WAR ANTI-COMMUNISM (1949):  
POLITICAL THEOLOGY FOR PRESENT-DAY NATO CRITICISM* by FR. JEAN  
BOULIER**

This book by Fr. Jean Boulier (1894-1980) was originally published in French in 1949 under the title *Un Prêtre prend position* (A Priest Takes a Stand). A subtitle was added to the translated version for the benefit of those who do not know of Fr. Boulier and his background. The book summarized the political theology of the Christians who were taking the communist side against the North American Treaty Organization (NATO). The book joins another of Fr. Boulier's books, *I was a Red Priest*, that has recently been published by Red Star. Several other of his works are planned, including *Jan Hus*, *Vatican Council II*, *The Worker Priests* and *The New Mass*.

The reason for the current republication of the book after 75 years – and in English for the first time – is that the communist publisher, Red Star, believes that the class forces that were behind

the cold-war anti-communism of Fr. Boulier's day continue to dominant the West. Marxists study and oppose these forces, but the stand summarized by Fr. Boulier, based on Christian authority is also seen as compelling and supportive of the communists. Further, as observed by Red Star, Westerners are open to the anti-NATO Christian argument, which Fr. Boulier's book set forth in its full class character. Pope Francis, for example, in May 2022 characterized NATO as "barking at Russia's door."

Fr. Boulier, a Parisian, was known as the "Red Priest," because of his collaboration with the Communist Party of France (PCF). He had been a partisan during World War II and afterwards was a professor of Christian Legal Principles at the Catholic University of Paris. He was also a leader in the international peace movement. In this capacity he spoke at and wrote about their meetings and congresses in France, Italy and Eastern Europe.

The context of the book's original publication was tied both to the formation of NATO and to Fr. Boulier's personal situation. He had just been fired from his professorship because he was defending the anti-NATO Christians (TS, p. 86) The book rebutted the attacks being made against him and the peace movement. The source of the written material he published as his rebuttal came mainly from a number of earlier articles which he had published in 1946 and 1948. He incorporated them as chapters in the chronological order they were written. The articles reported on the religious aspects of the peace movement events in which he had participated.

In the book's introduction, Fr. Boulier set forth what he saw as the unifying religious themes that ran throughout the peace movement and upon which he had taken a stand. They were, first, a stand against anti-communism. Second, a stand against America's atomic policy because it violated the Christian principles of war and peace. Third, a stand on the side of social Christianity (TS, p. 7).

There were three main peace event reports that became chapters in the book. The first event, from April 1946 was a five-week visit at the request of the Polish government of a delegation of French intellectuals including Fr. Boulier, to multiple Polish cities. In the report Fr. Boulier noted the collaboration he observed of the communists and social democrats in the re-building of their country. He concluded from such observations that the iron curtain was a myth, imposed by the capitalist West to hide the socialist success. He also discussed the political role in the People's Republic of the Soviets, US, Britain and France.

Others on the Polish tour with whom Fr. Boulier worked included the personalist philosopher, Emmanuel Mounier, to whose journal, *Esprit*, Fr. Boulier was a contributing author. In America the Catholic Worker movement, which was also part of the peace movement, was influenced by Mounier's thinking. After Fr. Boulier was attacked in Europe, Dorothy Day came to his defense and that of his American counterparts in her *Catholic Worker* newspaper. Mounier for his part published reports from *Catholic Worker* members in his journal. In 1967 Fr. Boulier published further recollections of Mounier and their Polish visit ("En Pologne il y a vingt ans voyage avec E. Mounier," *Europe*, Feb.-Mar., 1967, pp. 320-343).

Besides the report on the Polish tour, a second article used by Fr. Boulier in his book dealt with a September 1946 visit to Rome at the request of the newspaper *Le Monde Illustré*. In addition to the Communist Party of Italy (CPI), the activity of the Vatican, the Social Democracy and the US role was discussed. Fr. Boulier found the presence of the US military in Rome (and in Paris), to be

heavier than that of the Red Army in Warsaw. In Fr. Boulier's view, anti-communism had been behind the rise of Nazism and it continued to dominate the West.

A third report included in Fr. Boulier's book was about the World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace at Wroclaw, Poland, which was held on August 25-28, 1948. There were 391 delegates from 46 countries. These included 32 from the US. Fr. Boulier delivered one of the speeches which gave a Christian perspective on the peace movement. His speech is included in the book. The Christian perspective that he discussed in his speech maintained that to legitimize what would become NATO's war mongering, the bourgeois state turned on their head Thomas Aquinas, the jurists Francisco de Vitoria, and Francisco Suarez, the scriptures and the papal encyclicals. From his view, the main international peace issue that faced believers was the American-led cold war being waged to take back the advances made by the working class as a result of capitalism's World War II debacle (TS, pp. 85, 93-94).

In the cold war battle Fr. Boulier argued that social Christianity could be good citizens of the socialist order, but they could not accept the bourgeois state and its fundamental law, the one to which, as he put it, all others finally gave in: make money, get rich (TS, p. 77). It followed as Fr. Boulier taught, that in being good citizens, the social Christians were not escapees; but rather they took their place alongside their brothers and sisters in building socialism. The vocation, which distinguished them, was to announce the good news: that the kingdom of God was here and to support the social engineers who had devised a better plan for the production and distribution of wealth. He summarized this political theology: "Christians obey the laws, not only out of fear, but also out of conscience, because the authority that promulgates the law signifies to them the very will of their God" (TS, pp. 76-77).