The Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPACS) is celebrating its 25th birthday in 2013, an impressive achievement for a centre which started, not as the result of a significant external endowment or major grant as so many others have, but because of the vision and determination of a group of university staff and students. This tradition of volunteerism and commitment has remained the backbone of CPACS throughout its life, albeit bolstered in recent years by the establishment of a number of University general and academic staff positions.

Following a three-year campaign by the Staff Student Committee for the Introduction of Peace Studies, University of Sydney (SSCIPS), the Vice-Chancellor approved the creation of the Centre and it was officially opened on 16 May 1988 by the Hon. Kim Beazley, Minister for Defence. Original Council members included students and staff from a variety of University Departments in the Faculties of Arts, Economics, Medicine and Science, and several members from outside the University including Dr Stella Cornelius, the founder of the Conflict Resolution Network in Sydney.
Twenty-five years later, two of the original 18 members are still serving on the CPACS Council – Emeritus Professor Stuart Rees and Roger Wescombe, both formerly of the Department of Social Work. Stuart Rees was founding Director of CPACS, an honorary position which he held until the end of 2006, and also founding Director of the Sydney Peace Foundation which awarded the first annual Sydney Peace Prize in 1998 (see following article for the story of the SPF and SPP). Roger, meanwhile, has been spearheading the development of a CPACS alumni network which would more formally connect the hundreds of students who have graduated from the Centre’s Master of Peace and Conflict Studies program since it began 15 years ago.

Founding President, Professor Peter King of the Department of Government and International Relations, is also still supporting CPACS as Co-Convenor of the Centre’s West Papua Project and Human Survival Project. Current CPACS President, Dr Ken Macnab, formerly of the Department of History, oversees the Refugee Language Program (RLP) which CPACS has hosted for the past ten years, run by part-time Coordinator Lesley Carnus along with a dedicated team of volunteer teachers (see article in this issue of PeaceWrites).

Starting from its base of purely volunteer staff and honorary Director, the Centre has expanded thanks to support from the University of Sydney’s Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, enabling the appointment of three full-time academic staff and one full-time equivalent administrative position.

As the Centre’s first full-time lecturer, I have been coordinating the postgraduate coursework program since 2003. The Centre’s first full-time Director, Associate Professor Jake Lynch, was appointed in 2007 when he initiated the MPACS by Distance, and Dr Lynda-ann Blanchard came on board as a full-time lecturer in 2009 after having been involved with the Centre previously in both a research and teaching capacity. Most recently, we have been joined by Dr Lucy Fiske on secondment from the Centre for Human Rights Education (CHRE) at Curtin University, while Lynda is a Visiting Academic with CHRE at Curtin University, while Lynda is a Visiting Academic with CHRE at Curtin University. Lucy is coordinating the postgraduate research program which recently recorded its seventh doctoral completion. In 2012-2013, CPACS PhD candidate, Punam Yadav, joined our team of part-time lecturers after winning a Faculty of Arts Teaching Fellowship at the University of Sydney.

On Friday 7 June 2013, CPACS celebrated its 25th birthday with a party for students, staff and volunteers in the Posters for Peace Gallery. The Gallery, which features posters and other artwork illustrating the Centre’s theme of ‘peace with justice’, was opened in the Mackie Building by the US Ambassador to Australia, Edward J. Perkins, in 1995. The Centre’s aim was, and still is, to study the prevention and resolution of conflict and the long-term conditions of peace. In its teaching and research, the Centre emphasises the links between theory and practice, as demonstrated by its focus on advocacy campaigns and public events to promote peace with justice in Australia and internationally.

As will be evident from this and previous issues of PeaceWrites, the projects we have promoted, campaigns we have supported and the events we have hosted, CPACS does not limit itself to any particular region or conflict context. Our work goes beyond the study and prevention of war and other forms of direct violence, or the promotion of negative peace, to the ending of structural violence and promotion of positive peace, which calls for a focus on both meeting human needs and respecting human rights.

This is the essence of peace with justice: the pursuit of justice in all its forms – legal, political and socioeconomic – which is necessary to address the root causes of conflict and thus to support a sustainable peace. As such, CPACS inspires a radical critique of the inequalities and injustices embedded in societal structures and institutions which prevent human beings from reaching their full potential. We also analyse the psychological barriers and potential for relationship and community-building as means to conflict transformation. From Palestinians and West Papuans, to asylum seekers and Australia’s indigenous peoples, Sri Lankans and South Sudanese, the Centre’s research and prac-
tice support ‘peace with justice’ by promoting human rights, nonviolence, reconciliation and peacebuilding. These goals mirror those promoted through the Sydney Peace Foundation.

These themes and priorities are also evident in our highly successful postgraduate coursework program, which is supported by a dedicated team of part-time lecturers both on and off campus, along with the full-time academic and administrative staff. For the past five years, the MPACS program has included students located in many corners of the globe – from Africa, North and South America, Europe and Asia/Pacific – who have been able to complete the program by a combination of distance learning and intensively taught units in London or Sydney. We have offered scholarships to students from Malawi and Afghanistan, in addition to the many AusAID sponsored students from such countries as Kenya, Indonesia and the Philippines, and students from Thailand and Pakistan sponsored by their respective militaries. CPACS graduates work in diverse areas of government in various countries (including Foreign Affairs, AusAID and Defence in Australia), in the United Nations, the media, the military, the corporate world and international non-government and government organisations concerned with conflict resolution, peacebuilding, restorative justice, human rights, overseas aid and development.

The survival and impact of CPACS is a tribute to its members, volunteers, staff, students and alumni. The Centre’s success also reflects the enduring relevance of the quest to promote peace with justice and nonviolent alternatives to destructive conflicts wherever they manifest, from the bedroom to the boardroom, to the theatres of war and human rights crises throughout the world. We look forward to the next 25 years as CPACS continues to pursue the values and ‘passion for peace’ instilled by the Centre’s founders.

For further information about the history of CPACS, see:

Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Annual Reports, CPACS, University of Sydney, 1992/93 – 2012.
See also CPACS website: http://sydney.edu.au/arts/peace_conflict/about/history.shtml


Dr Wendy Lambourne is Acting Director and Academic Coordinator at CPACS.

Born in a Bar
by Juliet Bennet

When the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies was approaching its tenth birthday, its founder gave birth to CPACS’ sister organisation: the Sydney Peace Foundation.

Conversing over beer in the Forest Lodge pub, Professor Stuart Rees and a colleague spoke of their frustration that Australia gave numerous awards for sports figures, and occasionally recognition to artists, musicians and novelists, yet “the most precious commodity in the world - peace - was neither recognised nor rewarded”. They also realised that the fight for social justice was futile without making alliances with the people in the corporate world, which controlled the world’s economies.

Stuart subsequently established partnerships with people from the corporate, government and media worlds, with the idea that for at least one night a year they would show interest in peace and human rights. They could attend an award ceremony and celebrate a person who had dedicated their life to the achievement of universal human rights, a commitment to nonviolence and the pursuit of peace with justice.

The first ever Sydney Peace Prize recipient, in 1998, was Professor Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh. Nine years later Professor Yunus received the Nobel Peace Prize. It took that long for Sydney’s wisdom to reach Oslo!

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, Chairman of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, was the next recipient of the Sydney Peace Prize in 1999. He was followed by: Xanana Gusmão, President of the National Council for East Timorese Resistance, in 2000; Sir William Deane, Former Governor General of Australia, in 2001; and Mary Robinson, Former Governor General of Australia.
mer President of Ireland and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in 2002.

When in 2003 the Prize was awarded to Dr Hanan Ashrawi, Founder and Secretary General of the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, the Foundation’s principles were put to the test. The corporate world was pressured by Jewish lobbyists to withdraw its support, yet the Foundation stood by the Jury’s choice. To be sure, the pursuit of peace with justice is not achieved without nonviolent conflict with unjust aspects of the status quo. The “controversial” reputation of the Foundation continued to grow when the Jury selected Arundhati Roy, Indian author, political activist and critic of American capitalism, for the 2004 Prize. This was followed by Olara Otunnu, United Nations Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, in 2005, and Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International, in 2006. Marking the tenth year, in 2007, Dr Hans Blix, Chairman of Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission received the prize.

The 2008 Sydney Peace Prize was awarded to Patrick Dodson, Chairman Lingiari Foundation; in 2009 it was presented to Australian journalist and film maker John Pilger; Dr Vandana Shiva, Indian physicist and environmentalist won the prize in 2010; Professor Noam Chomsky, linguist and campaigner for human rights in 2011; and last year, in 2012, the prize was presented to Senator Sekai Holland, Zimbabwean campaigner for human rights and democracy.

This year the 16th Sydney Peace Prize will be awarded to a humanitarian doctor and founder of the Mae Tao Clinic, Dr Cynthia Maung. Dr Maung, an ethnic Karen, fled her native Burma during the pro-democracy uprising of 1988 and set up the Mae Tao Clinic on the Thai-Burmese border, where each year 700 staff treat over 150,000 people including refugees, migrant workers and orphans.

The Sydney Peace Prize Jury’s citation reads: “Dr Maung: for her dedication to multi-ethnic democracy, human rights and the dignity of the poor and dispossessed, and for establishing health services for victims of conflict.” Dr Maung has advanced the cause of peace in the Asia-Pacific region and has upheld the best humanitarian and ethical traditions of the medical profession.

In the first week of November, Dr Maung will fly to Australia to deliver the annual City of Sydney Peace Prize Lecture in the Sydney Town Hall on Wednesday 6 November. On Thursday 7 November Dr Maung will receive the Prize ($50,000 and a trophy handcrafted by Brian Hirst) at an Award Ceremony and Gala Dinner at MacLaurin Hall, University of Sydney.

Links to online ticket purchasing for the Lecture ($35/$25) and Gala Dinner ($375 per person) are on the Sydney Peace Foundation’s website: www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au. I hope you will join us to congratulate and celebrate the achievements of the courageous and humble Dr Cynthia Maung at one of these events.

Juliet Bennett is the Executive Officer of the Sydney Peace Foundation and a postgraduate research student at CPACS.
Jumping the Queue
by Lesley Carnus

Yes—when the fire’s fury threatens to lick the last layer off your skin
when the bomb explodes as dancers reel and spin
when blood spurts over tender flesh
as machetes chop, slice and dice
your child before your eyes
when dripping water beats a febrile incantation
across your brow for days, for nights unending
while needles poke and prod your intimate parts
of slaughter; and flee you must or die
please take into account a virtue
we Australians do admire—
we love a well-formed queue.

So if it’s not too much to ask, can you please all line up in alphabetical order?

The above poem, Jumping the queue, which I wrote earlier this year, is now “out-dated”. Just a few months ago the airwaves were full of people insisting that refugees were queue jumpers, illegal immigrants, even wealthy country shoppers, who should wait “their turn” in some non-existent queue.

Refugees who arrived by boat were immediately incarcerated and their path to getting their refugee status recognised was one of continuous battles with immigration officers, tribunals and courts. Their lives, if they are released from detention, are impoverished; most are excluded from many of the services available to new migrants such as Medicare, the right to work and education.

After the elections, we shall see which of the parties is given the mandate to enact the policies they have outlined for the future treatment of asylum seekers. Both major parties, in the lead-up to this election, have out-done each other in the level of inhumanity and injustice they will soon visit upon refugees.

Australia has succeeded in many ways in removing itself from the duties and responsibilities associated with our signing the UN 1951 Refugee Convention. The Convention is both a status and rights-based instrument and is underpinned by a number of fundamental principles, most notably non-discrimination, non-penalization and non-refoulement.

The elections are a day away as I write; a day which will see Australia move from a country that has welcomed great masses of people from all over the world, to an Australia that accepts NO ASYLUM SEEKERS on our soil. Refugees will be detained in off-shore camps and if their application for Refugee Status is granted, (as historically approximately 90% are) they will not be allowed to settle in Australia. At the moment Papua New Guinea has agreed to re-settle refugees, but that could change tomorrow. We may even see the re-introduction of the prison hulks of the 18th and 19th century.

Can you imagine a group of refugees being re-settled in a small town or village in PNG; a town probably where unemployment is endemic, housing makeshift, water access poor, health and education limited; to name just a few issues. What kind of impact would the arrival of a group of mainly males have on a community? What are the social ramifications of a policy that does not consider either the well-being of the refugee or that of the PNG citizen? Furthermore, PNG is a country not noted for its sympathetic treatment of the 9,000 West Papuan refugees that already sit on its border, some of whom have lived there for close to three decades.

The refugees in our classes cannot keep up with the number of changes there will be after this Saturday. If elected, Abbott intends to bring back Temporary Protection Visas, which will have a destructive effect on those people already here. Psychologists working with refugees and victims of torture and trauma, advise that it is important in the recovery of victims to be able to counsel: That was the past, you are safe now, let’s find some ways/strategies to cope with this trauma and hopefully move forward.

With no certainty about remaining in Australia, refugees will lose this chance to begin to heal their psychological wounds.

Our classes try to make up in some small way for the unjust treatment of refugees. We hold two English classes and a computer class on Saturdays as well as a Creative Writing class on Wednesdays. Class numbers have dramatically increased this year due to Community Detention Visas. In May, the co-ordinator trained a large group of volunteers from within
the university and the community to work with a refugee on an individual basis. Some further training will take place in September.

One of the major issues facing our students is paying fares to come to classes. Our students travel from Liverpool, Mt Druitt, Lakemba and Auburn, and as they do not have the right to a travel concession, they have to pay full fares. We are planning a fund-raising drive to raise money to help defray this cost.

I imagine that the next few months (or perhaps years) will be ones of increased political action to reverse the direction of policies in the treatment of refugees.

Australia needs informed, compassionate leadership and not policies that punish the victims of war, torture, unfair imprisonment, racial violence, discrimination and exclusion.

The Liberal candidate for the seat of Lindsay even blamed refugees for causing traffic problems and hospital queues in Western Sydney. Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition, described her comments as "shockingly ignorant". In my opinion this is an appropriate response to most of the policies on asylum seekers outlined by both major parties.

STOP PRESS: The policies we can expect from the new Abbott government include re-introduction of Temporary Protection Visas, removing the opportunity to have decisions reviewed in the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT), a stop to the funding of immigration advice to asylum seekers and not informing the public of boat arrivals.

Abbott has withdrawn the proposed policy to "buy back boats" after it was labelled "very offensive" and an attack on his country's sovereignty by an Indonesian politician.

Hon. Scott Morrison has also announced that he wanted police automatically informed whenever asylum seekers were released into the community and further to this, Liberal Democratic Senator, David Leyonhjelm has proposed charging asylum-seekers $30,000 to come to Australia.

I am sure by the time this PeaceWrites is printed, we will see further cruel policies visited on asylum seekers. It seems in Australia, today, we no longer judge ourselves by how fairly we treat the most vulnerable in our society.

In this climate of increased punishment for refugees, a former Labor politician, Jon Stanhope, gave a fearless interview to Ellen Fanning of the Observer Effect, SBS, on 6th October.

As the new Christmas Island administrator, Jon Stanhope lashed out at his party's "sadian" position on asylum seekers. He also believes that the Labor Party should apologise to their constituency for their refugee policies.

Lesley Carnus is the Coordinator of the Refugee Language Program at CPACS.

Humanising the Enemy: Stories of Struggle and Hope
by Wendy Lambourne

Two of today’s most protracted identity-based conflicts are those between Israelis and Palestinians, and between Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka.

Despite a new round of peace negotiations, Palestinians continue to suffer from an unjust occupation and Israelis continue to feel unsafe. The Sri Lankan war has ended, but it is a victor’s peace with little sign of justice to support the ‘peace’. In both cases, structural violence and human rights violations prevail, and there are accusations of war crimes against the more powerful government side, and the former ‘liberation’ groups have been accused of using terrorism as a tactic to achieve their goals.

In August 2013, CPACS was involved in supporting two events which were designed to promote respectful dialogue to explore how relationships between Israelis and Palestinians, Tamils and Sinhalese can be improved. I participated in both events and was inspired by the level of engagement and willingness to struggle to provide a sense of hope despite the pressure of others in their respective communities to maintain the image of the other as the enemy born of many years of conflict and violence. What was striking was how participants in both cases were willing to face the issues honestly and realistically, at the same time as seeing the potential for a different, more peaceful future.

The first of these two events was a workshop on reconciliation ‘Beyond Conflict’ organised by the Sri Lanka Reconciliation Forum in NSW which was held at University of Sydney on Saturday 17 August. Various sessions throughout the day considered the nature of political violence, the role of the diaspora and experiences of other countries in promoting reconciliation during and after violent conflict.

CPACS Council member and coordinator of the postgraduate course on conflict resolution, Abe Quadan, convened a workshop session in which participants were divided into five groups to discuss pre-determined questions relating to the following five topics: diaspora issues in reconciliation; the nature of reconciliation; political reform and governance; law and order, human rights and dissent; and recovering from the trauma of war.

Discussion points in the trauma group included reference to how engagements with military and police evoke traumatic memories and how people fear speaking out because of continuing polarisation in the community. The suggestion was made that people segregate themselves in the different communities because of the impact of trauma and the lack of trust and cultural barriers to communication. The point was made that reconciliation is about the present and the future, and not just about the past. The potential role of music and dance was highlighted, along with the benefits of pro-
The film follows their parallel stories and the places where they converge in their respective communities and families. Their struggle became one of preventing and the places where they converge in their quest to promote peace and hope, showing the friendship and humanity that keeps them going. At the end of the film, Bassam uproots his wife and family to go to the UK to undertake a postgraduate degree in peace studies at Bradford University to further his commitment to understanding and working for peace. Rami, meanwhile, is surprised by his son’s move towards a more humanitarian outlook after doing his service in the Israeli army.

Following the film, a question and answer forum with guest speakers Abe Quadan, Donna Jacobs Sife and Neven Bondokji discussed the implications for building peaceful relationships to end the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

Neven, who recently graduated with her doctorate from CPACS, is a researcher on Islamic movements, Islam and peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and a trainer in youth development. During the panel discussion she argued that religion can be used to motivate violence or to build peace, and had been used by all Palestinian groups for the former purpose. She suggested that justice is not only possible. Neven also made a plea for greater support and recognition for those who are pursuing peace activism.

Conflict resolution practitioner and co-founder of the Palestinian-Jewish Dialogue Group in Sydney, Abe Quadan, talked about the importance of not waiting for a peace agreement before starting to build trust, and thinking of the Middle East as comprising people with hopes for a safe and secure future for themselves and their children. Abe also pointed out that no religion calls for killing, and that political leaders should not be believed when they play on the fears of people. In reflecting on the documentary, he identified that by showing how different views were accepted in the one family the film was modelling what is needed for peace. He proposed that meeting and humanising are essential: as long as there is talk, there is hope.

Donna Jacobs Sife, storyteller, co-founder of Jewish Voices for Peace and Justice, and co-founder with Abe of the Palestinian-Jewish Dialogue Group, also argued that ‘common ground is not necessary for peace’. She cautioned that building relationships and maintaining trust is not easy and that the challenges need to be recognised in order to be realistic. She claimed that many Israeli Jews had not caught up with the fact that they have power now, as the trauma of the Holocaust continues to support a narrative of victimhood. At the same time, they are helping to create a victimhood for Palestinians.

This complex psychological interplay of victimhoods means that no-one takes responsibility and each one blames everyone else, according to Abe. Neven, meanwhile, pointed out...
that convincing people of their vic-
timhood is used for manipulation by
political groups and to mobilise for
violence. Abe argued that one can kill
the person but not the problem, that
war is not helping anyone, and that
someone has to break the cycle. Ac-
cording to Donna, there is nothing
more heretical than building peace.
As explained in one of Donna’s sto-
ries:

The Lion’s Story
One day a boy asked his grandfather a
question, “Grandfather, is it true that
the lion is the king of the jungle?”

“Yes,” said the Grandfather, “it is
true.”

But the boy shook his head in disbe-
lief. “But Grandfather, if this is true
then why are all the stories about how
the lion is defeated by the hunter?”

The Grandfather smiled and answered
the boy. “That will always be the way,
until the lion tells the story.”

More information about Beyond the
Eye of the Storm can be found on the
website, and copies can be
downloaded or viewed for a small fee,
at: http://withineyeofstorm.com/. The
website also provides details about
joint Israeli-Palestinian peace activ-
ism projects including Combatants
for Peace, The Parents Circle –
Families Forum and All for Peace.

Jews Against the Occupation was
formed in May 2003 to give a clear
Jewish voice in support of the na-
tional and human rights of Palesti-
ans and a peaceful resolution of the
Palestinian/Israeli conflict: http://
jao.org.au/; contact@jao.org.au

Contact Ahe Quadan for further infor-
mation about the Palestinian-Jewish
Dialogue Group:
abeq13@yahoo.com.au

Dr Wendy Lambourne is Acting Di-
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Perceptions, Illusions and
Realities: Towards Peace on Earth
by Howard Bell

A model for global peace should include perception management. During inter-
personal, and nation-to-nation discourse, the impressions formed can lead to
human rights breaches and to social justice failures.

The scope for harm from poor communication arises from our collective failure
to produce and implement workable solutions to homelessness, refugee support
needs, and to ongoing violations of democracy.

Often in responding to perceived evil, hostility or threats of violence or insta-
bility of any kind it is easy to proceed in a manner which is excessive, wrongly
directed, misplaced or simply results in not selecting the best available course
of action. Finding an effective solution to a problem, and at the same time risk-
ing associated unintended adverse consequences, can occur in all areas of life.
Examples abound from bullying in school grounds to corporate psychopaths in
the market or workplace and in the political arena when supporting, comment-
ing on, following or resisting government policies, strategies or actions. These
kinds of challenge are frequently encountered. They can even occur in courts
when tribunals of fact are making critical findings in relation to people, organi-
sations, human intentions and their states of mind.

Our world is largely created and shaped on the basis of impressions we form
and our lives are in large measure determined by our reactions to those impres-
sions.

Perceptions and Illusions – “it ain’t what you say it’s the way that you say
it”

Some years ago as part of my doctoral studies in law I undertook field research
which included interviewing a large number of jurors. I was interested to learn
empirically that the appearance, personal style and behaviour of trial advocates
can influence the impressions formed by jurors to an extent that is comparable
to the influence of case content.

This stylistic effect can also arise in relation to other human activities in which
impressions are formed on the basis of information presented to people who
must then decide important issues. This includes decisions on whether to vote
for a certain political party, whether to purchase a particular commercial prod-
tect or to support a government-led initiative of one kind or another. For exam-
ple, popular support for action seen as responsive to the “war on terror”
emerged through political rhetoric and journalistic spin comprising form and
content both of which had significant impact on consumers of electronic media
and readers of print media.

If impression management strategies in the course of forensic communications
are capable of best practice formulation then it must follow that associated
strategies will assist the quality of impressions formed by citizens when being
asked to choose between competing political agendas leading to national and
international action with the potential to lead to a sustainable - or unsustainable
- future of human life as we know it.

In the lead up to federal elections, every voter who goes to the ballot box has
the capacity to elect a government which has the power to either embrace or ignore human rights and social justice in the course of its law making and in the administration of the rule of a law. Yet there is no comprehensive communication management system in place for assisting the ordinary citizen in the formation of impressions vital to the making of his or her crucial decisions on whether to support candidates for political office or executive action by incumbent governments.

The electorate, the community campaigner, the political activist and social justice advocate can all influence consequences as wide ranging as the control of greenhouse gas emissions, the continued imposition of the death penalty, freedom of expression and association, the humane treatment of refugees and persons suspected of serious offences, the mobilisation for war, the prosecution of workplace bullies, the provision of peace-building services to vulnerable nations and the protection of people in our own local neighbourhood against domestic violence, exploitation of vulnerable persons, oppression, abuse and neglect.

Conditions of Peace: Identification and recognition

In many circles we implicitly assume that as a species we achieved a condition of being a civilised society some time ago. We are loath to debate this issue openly other than perhaps in pure philosophical discourse. If, however, we use the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which reached its 60^th^ birthday on 10 December (Human Rights Day) 2008, as a measure of how we are tracking in terms of achieving a condition of civilisation or social justice it would seem we still have a lot of growing to do before we can classify ourselves as approaching a civilised social condition.

The refreshingly simple and enduring UDHR articles - if accorded a voice commensurate with their importance in the politics of justice and peace - can be included in a real way in the evaluation of alternate courses of action as an integral and prescriptive part of conflict assessment and solution planning. Currently, on any global measure, our UDHR compliance as a species striving to achieve civilisation is abysmal. Of the thirty articles contained in the UDHR we see daily and continuing breaches of at least twenty of these with an astonishing absence of respectable protest from governments of developed, well resourced and supposedly educated nations and states. These include the very obvious and simple rights to affordable housing and to an adequate standard of health care especially, on the local scene, for Australian aboriginal people.

Peace Journalism: managing impact of conflict

In media communications, the glossing over of important pieces of detail and background lacking news value, or the requisite threshold sensationalism level, can be a natural albeit unintended consequence of economically-driven information filtration processes. Significant gaps in news stories, as in political intelligence and business briefings alike, can stem from a combination of rhetoric and the way material is filtered through to audiences in our living rooms, our board rooms, our policy and planning forums, on our TV and computer screens and in our newspapers.

One of the current key concepts in peace studies is peace journalism, which is a methodology associated with the reporting of conflicts. Peace journalism aims to create opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict. Associate Professor Jake Lynch, Director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, advocates peace journalism as a way of reporting conflict in a manner which enables the exploration of backgrounds and contexts. The essentials of peace journalism need to underpin the platform on which we are to build any workable best practice system for the delivery of information by media on the war on terror and other issues relevant to the achievement of world peace and our sustainable future.

If peace-building of any kind is to be effective then the condition of peace needs to meet a common and shared vision. Real peace does not require enforcement. It is a new human condition. One that is not free from conflict, rather it is one in which conflict automatically leads into consultative behaviours which become a normal part of day to day life rather than an event or denouement characterised by stress, tension and the attachment of blame.

Where to now?

We learn most constructively from history, when we carefully grade each and every conclusion we reach in our quest to know what really happened. But we must do this in a way that helps us to see more clearly the essential nature of things. This can only be learned through practice that is both honest and linked to accurate perceptions of the raw material we use to build into our impressions of terror, of conflict and of peace.

In this new human condition, the non-viability of military solutions, incompletely linked to inadequate levels of consultative awareness building, will be of historical interest only. Moreover, we will have inched closer to a condition of peace by approaching more closely that genuine global community in which every man, woman and child enjoys the observance of their rights enshrined in the UDHR regardless of where they are on the planet.

Conclusion: a pathway to peace – and to civilisation

All this might seem, to some, like a utopian dream. But if
Peace and Conflict Studies, held the West Papua Project, at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, held the Biak Massacre Citizens Tribunal at the University of Sydney. This entailed the presentation in a public hearing of evidence and testimony from survivors of the massacre to a panel of leading Australian legal figures. These included Dr Keith Suter and Hon. John Dowd, who acted in the capacity of Jurists hearing the evidence with a view of delivering written Tribunal Findings. Mr Nick Cowdery acted as lead Prosecutor, assisted by eminent West Papuan lawyer, Gustav Kawe. Two Senior Counsels, Graham Turnbull and Dan O’Gorman, played the role of defence, critically assessing the evidence. The Tribunal was conducted as a formal legal enquiry within the setting of a university

Howard Bell is a human rights campaigner with Amnesty International and a friend of CPACS.

The Biak Massacre Citizens Tribunal

by Jim Elmslie

6 July 2013 marked the 15th anniversary of a relatively unknown but particularly vicious event in the recent history of West Papua. On that date in 1998 scores, if not hundreds, of West Papuan civilians non-violently demonstrating for independence were killed by Indonesian security forces. They had gathered around a water tower on the island of Biak, believing that the world, particularly the United Nations, would hear their demands and, as happened in East Timor, intervene on their behalf. This was not to be. Rather, the opposite happened. The Indonesian state responded with maximum armed force to make it overwhelmingly clear they would not countenance talk of independence.

To mark this grim anniversary the West Papua Project, at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, held the Biak Massacre Citizens Tribunal at the University of Sydney. This entailed the presentation in a public hearing of evidence and testimony from survivors of the massacre to a panel of leading Australian legal figures. These included Dr Keith Suter and Hon. John Dowd, who acted in the capacity of Jurists hearing the evidence with a view of delivering written Tribunal Findings. Mr Nick Cowdery acted as lead Prosecutor, assisted by eminent West Papuan lawyer, Gustav Kawe. Two Senior Counsels, Graham Turnbull and Dan O’Gorman, played the role of defence, critically assessing the evidence. The Tribunal was conducted as a formal legal enquiry within the setting of a university.

The Tribunal was both an extraordinary and harrowing event. A massacre that has largely slipped through the cracks of history – the official Indonesian version is that only one person died – was played out in detail, and from many various points of view. Testimony from survivors recalled the horrendous acts of torture, rape and sexual mutilation they had suffered, and of the murders and other atrocities that they had observed. This evidence was heard in the hushed confines of the gracious John Woolley Building lecture theatre before an audience numbering around 100 – academics, lawyers, activists, students, citizens and a sizable group of West Papuan observers.

Currently, the Jurists are assessing the evidence presented and deliberating on their judgment. As part of Prosecutor Cowdery’s closing submission (see www.Biak-Tribunal.org), he made several suggestions for further actions that may be undertaken to address the issues raised. Namely it is hoped that this will form part of the Tribunal Findings and allow this bloody event and its victims to be appropriately marked on the historical record and the perpetrators of these actions identified. The Tribunal Findings, when they are brought down, will be widely publicized. Organisers of the Biak Tribunal are continuing to seek financial support to cover costs of the event and for the publication and promotion of the Tribunal Findings. If anyone can assist financially please contact the event coordinator, Dr Jim Elmslie, (james.elmslie@sydney.edu.au)

Jim Elmslie is a visiting scholar at CPACS.

Heuristics, Influence and Voting Virginity

by Blake McDermott

On 7 September, 2013, I will be losing my voting virginity. Losing one’s voting virginity is part of maturation, but involves a responsibility that I believe too many disregard. This article argues that the majority of Aussies risk not making an informed and reasonable voting decision, and outlines some of the reasons why.

In general, people choose to become informed about the topics that they enjoy. Seeing as the majority of the population (including myself) find politics as enjoyable as being punched in the face, people are disinclined to research their voting decision to the extent that they should. The cost of this is that instead of basing our voting decision on the facts, we base our voting decision on judgmental heuristics. Robert Cialdini defines judgmental heuristics as mental shortcuts. They allow for simplified thinking which will work well most of the time, but can occasionally leave us open to costly mistakes. An example of a judgmental heuristic is the belief that ‘price is proportional to quality’. Although this rule may often be true,
there are many instances when it is not, and one risks paying a lot more for something than it is worth. By relying on heuristics, one is likely to make an unreasonable voting decision.

One of these heuristics is the need to demonstrate consistency. The Canadian psychologists Knox and Inkster (1968) did a study on those who placed bets at the racetrack. Once someone had placed a bet on a horse, that person felt much more confident about that horse’s chances of winning than they did before placing the bet. It seems that once we make a decision, we try to stop worrying about it, and have a tendency to ignore those facts that question the validity of our decision. What this means for voting is that once people decide on what party they support, they are not apt to change. Consequently, people who vote for a party may do so simply because they have always voted for that party. Unfortunately, however, voting for what party one has always voted for assumes that a particular party has, and will always be, best for Australia – this is simply not the case.

Many people will be making gross generalisations about a party leader based on the leader’s attributes, identity, or stance on a particular issue. In the US, there is little chance of a non-Christian being elected into office simply because by not assuming that identity, a candidate would not gain enough votes to ensure a democratically elected victory. However, to identify a good candidate solely based on what religion they profess is simply not wise. A political candidate should be assessed by the impact of their policies on a wide variety of topics, not just certain ones. Not doing so would be like proposing marriage to someone based on nothing but a shared interest in cheesecake. This heuristic has the advantage of simplifying an extremely complex decision, but does so at the cost of well-reasoned thought.

Humans, however, cannot be blamed for not interrogating their beliefs to the extent that they should. Due to one’s identity needs, and need for consistency, interrogating one’s own beliefs can be and usually is a painful and difficult process. Furthermore, for the most part, one remains ignorant of one’s own biases, which makes self-interrogation even more difficult. In addition, there can often be serious consequences for someone believing something other than they do. Even in modern Australia, there are those who would face rejection from family, friends, and their community for holding a particular point of view. We must therefore understand that a certain degree of ignorance is understandable and forgivable.

What I have qualms about is how politicians – knowing about and taking advantage of most people’s need for simplicity – make issues and consequent action appear simpler than they actually are. Considering how much he talks about boats, one would be forgiven for thinking that Tony Abbott used to be a pirate. His position of ‘stopping the boats’ has preyed on the Aussie population’s fear of ‘the other’, and has dehumanized refugees in order to justify tough – but immoral – measures. If one listens to Abbott’s message enough times, one can begin to believe that a ‘tough stance’ on refugees is paramount for Australia’s well being, when that simply is not true. As Milgrim’s experiments demonstrate, human beings are too trusting of those in authority. One of the reasons Aussies do not get to develop informed views on the important issues is that those in authority do not explore or discuss topics to the extent that they should; instead they hammer simple solutions to steer judgemental heuristics - a far easier and more rewarding task than rigorous argument.

If all electoral candidates got an equal opportunity to advertise in the media. However, this is not the case. Australia allows parties to receive campaign contributions in the form of financial gifts from corpora-

One could argue that each party has an equal opportunity to advertise in the media. However, this is not the case. Australia allows parties to receive campaign contributions in the form of financial ‘gifts’ from corpora-

All in all, in losing my voting virginity, there is an incredible risk that I will be taken advantage of. There is a large risk of a STD (Silly, Thoughtless Decision), which requires a high degree of self-awareness to combat. Furthermore, an intelligent voting decision requires knowing how propaganda – not reason – is trying to influence us into making a particular choice, and taking that into consideration. All of these factors mean that a wise voting decision is not easy. However, I am going for it, and am hoping that my second time will be a lot less complicated.

Blake McDermott is an MPACS student.
Does Australia Need a Peace Museum?

by Peter Herborn

The Australian War Memorial (AWM) contains Australia’s largest war museum and Darwin hosts one of the newest. Opened in 1941, the AWM has become one of Australia’s most important museums. Undoubtedly, war has shaped Australia’s national consciousness and critical historical scholarship of war experience should be encouraged. Arguably, Australian popular culture has taken a nostalgic and militaristic turn. For an increasing number of people Anzac Day has become the defining moment in Australian history and a pilgrimage to Gallipoli and other battlefields has become a patriotic duty. Even peace is seen through the lens of war and unending preparation for war. As Australians move into the twenty first century they need a deeper understanding of peace and alternatives to war.

The First World War was sold as ‘the war to end war’, but it was merely a stage in the development of a war system that has developed more destructive weapons. As the saying goes, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. It is not enough to mean well, action must be based on knowledge and wisdom. The hubris of the victors and other unfinished business contributed to the Second World War during which new benchmarks of violence and depravity emerged. With the first use of nuclear weapons the stage was set for the Cold War and proxy wars between the superpowers. The military-industrial complex that Dwight Eisenhower warned us about has grown relentlessly. Opportunities for peacemaking after the implosion of the Soviet Union were missed and the ‘War on Terror’ has replaced the Cold War as the justification for continued diversion of attention and initiatives away from more substantial security issues such as climate change, competition for resources, poverty and militarization. The proposition that ‘if you want peace prepare for war’ has been undermined by the experience of the last one hundred years.

Peace is a five-letter word but do most Australians have a full understanding of what it means? Almost everyone appreciates the negative senses of the word peace as the cessation of war and R.I.P. the peace of the grave. For some people peace is a negative concept, the absence of war and direct violence. Johan Galtung found it necessary to coin the phrase ‘positive peace’ to specify a fuller sense of the word. If we aim to promote peace, then we need to be clear about what it is we are advocating.

We can define concepts in an abstract disengaged way, but through experiential learning we can make them personally meaningful. Some years ago I took a group of peace studies students to the Sydney Jewish Museum. John, a survivor of the Holocaust took us around. Nothing I could say in the classroom about racism or the Holocaust could approach the impact of John’s personal testimony, the sculpture and photographs in the Children’s Museum. We need good museums and dedicated people working in them to make concepts real. If we are to achieve a deeper understanding of peace we need museums with a mission to present peace in an interesting and engaging way. Australia has the elements of a peace museum network, but it requires a lot of work to reach the standards set by peace museums in Japan, France, Switzerland, Norway or Sweden. The Sydney Jewish Museum, the Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre in Cowra New South Wales, the Myall Creek Massacre Memorial and the Sydney Peace Prize archive includes nominees and other stories that can be exhibited and related to social justice, human rights and environmental sustainability.

Do Australians want a peace museum? Probably not. Our needs and our wants are usually different. We often want more of what we already have. What we really need is surprise and challenge. If we are to survive and prosper in the twenty-first century we need to challenge the mindset that led us to rush into the invasion of Iraq. Peace activists are often derided as being impractical and idealistic, but it would seem that the advocates of violence are the ones that have become disengaged from the reality and complexity of human society and its environment. Like a good chess-player a grounded realist considers all the alternatives, looks at the position from the opponent’s point of view and analyses a multiplicity of scenarios. We were led into war by idealists for whom a moment was a long time and thought, a painful process.

Australia has a strong museum system which contributes to an understanding of peace and a culture of peace. However it lacks an institution with a primary focus on peace. A proud history...
of nonviolent resolution of conflict by Australians is being ignored in the current preoccupation with military history. As concepts and exhibitions jostle for resources, peace-related exhibitions need to have a secure and permanent home. A peace museum can provide the synergy that comes from the concentration of resources on a theme, offering both an alternative historical narrative and vision for a nonviolent future.

An International Slavery Museum is located in Liverpool in England. It is a critical and challenging museum. It can afford to be because we now live in a post-abolition period. Slavery, of course, re-emerges in new guises but it is no longer regarded as natural or morally acceptable. War is a barbaric cultural practice, which humanity could possibly abolish in this century. However it continues to be regarded as ‘natural’ and ‘inevitable’ and even as the means of achieving peace. If peace is the end and war is the means, then a very clear idea of peace is an urgent necessity. The end justifying the means has always been a dubious ethical argument. Gandhi recognised the means as emergent ends. Australians badly need to understand peace achieved through peaceful means.

Peter Herborn is a CPACS Council member and chairs the Peace Museum subcommittee.

“‘You must be the change you wish to see in the world.’”

- Mahatma Gandhi
As I began my field research, I was interested in the stories of the refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp. Three months ago, I went to Kakuma Refugee Camp to conduct my fieldwork. Actually, it was quite an experience seeing the multitudes, mostly children (they form 53% of the camp population), looking and waiting for help. I was struck by the sense of helplessness and immobilization, the resigned, life-less look. Many of the survivors talked about their problems in a far removed sense, and with no displayed emotion. My time in Kakuma seemed to go very fast. By the time it drew to a close, I felt like I had not yet begun. I wondered what it would take for me to feel that I had accomplished anything worthwhile. It seemed I was getting more questions than answers, and there was that unrelenting nagg-ing feeling that whatever anyone could do to help alleviate the situation there would only be like a drop in the ocean.

As I came to the end of my stay in Kakuma, interestingly, I began experi-
Working with Somali Refugees in Kenya

by Pam Hartgerink

“When a Kenyan policeman sees a Somali, he doesn’t see a person, he sees money” – just one of the many stories we heard of harassment and extortion by Kenyan police of Somali refugees in Nairobi, Kenya. These and other issues were raised by Somali refugees in consultations as part of Project RESPECT, a project I have been involved in for the past year. Project RESPECT (Refugees for Empowerment, Strength and Protection by Engaging Communities Together) is a capacity-building project to support the Somali refugee community in Kenya. It seeks to protect them against sexual and gender-based violence and help them develop effective responses to trauma. The project is funded under the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship’s Displaced Persons Program for one year. It is a joint project between the Centre for Refugee Research (CRR), University of NSW – the lead agency; NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), and UNHCR support in Nairobi and other urban areas. Project RESPECT initially intended to implement the project in Dadaab. However, owing to UNHCR concerns regarding security in Dadaab (both for refugees participating in the project and project staff), it was eventually decided to work with Somali refugees in Eastleigh, an area of central Nairobi with a high proportion of Somali refugee residents. Official estimates put the number of refugees (including those not registered) in Nairobi at 80,000-100,000, predominantly Somali, but unofficial estimates are higher and Somalis in particular are often not registered with UNHCR. Eastleigh is an area of great disparity with thriving businesses, vibrant informal trade areas and entrepreneurial wealth, contrasting with high levels of deprivation, lack of infrastructure and frequent crime. Refugees in Nairobi do not receive material support from UNHCR, so need to fend for themselves, and there are very limited support services available. As they are not legally allowed to work, this leaves poor refugees susceptible to police harassment, while more wealthy refugees can pay the required bribes or purchase Kenyan ID. According to UN data, women in Eastleigh are more likely to be the breadwinners among the poorer refugees. Many women and girls try to eke out a (Continued on page 18)
of CPACS
The January visit hadn’t been entirely wasted, however, as we had employed a local Project Co-ordinator and made contact with a medical clinic providing medical services to Somalis in Eastleigh as well as running support groups for women and young men. Fortunately the Project Co-ordinator was able to recommence working for the project prior to our arrival in mid-June, and worked with the clinic to organise the consultations and training to be held there. The clinic also organised the participants through their women’s and men’s support groups.

Separate consultations for 50-60 Somali refugee women and 30-40 men were held using the CRR Reciprocal Research methodology over four days. The young people who facilitate the support groups at the clinic interpreted for and supported the Project RESPACT facilitators during the consultations, although as many participants had lived in Kenya for quite a long time many spoke at least some English. The majority of the participants in the women’s consultation were quite young (from late teens into 20s) and many had come to Kenya as refugees with their families some years ago. On the whole, the young men were a bit younger than the women, and some had more recently arrived in Kenya.

The consultation process encourages participants to tell stories of their and their community’s experiences, raise issues of concern to them and their community, and identify ways in which they can address these issues. The issues which were raised included traumatic experiences in the fighting in Somalia, in the process of fleeing to Kenya, and in refugee camps; and abuse, harassment and discrimination in Kenya, particularly by police. Abuse of women and children, including sexual abuse, were also significant issues, as were gangs including criminal activity and drug use among young men. Poverty and deprivation and the difficulties of supporting oneself and one’s family in Nairobi were also highlighted, and are issues that lead to considerable abuse, particularly of women and young people. Despite the difficult issues being discussed, the atmosphere was very positive, and participants were very engaged, actively involved and respectful towards each other.

In response to the issues raised and discussions with the groups about training needs, we conducted a series of one and two day workshops in the following week with smaller groups of people who had attended the consultation. These were Trauma and Healing, Men and Rape, Community Development, Violence in the Home, Human Rights Documentation, and an Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (particularly requested by the clinic staff). Again the groups were very engaged and appreciative of the training.

The project includes some funding for the community to conduct small-scale projects for the next six months unless further funding is obtained. Ideas for these projects were discussed during the consultations and training, and include a monthly picnic for women in a secluded venue incorporating sports and music; visiting schools to talk about sexual abuse issues (including working with school principals, teachers and parents to set up this process); and developing an additional women’s support group.

Work is ongoing from Sydney to support the Project Co-ordinator and young people to further develop and implement these projects, and a small team will provide more training in Nairobi in late September.

While being a lot of hard work (the timing of which was not always compatible with study commitments!), and frustrating at times when the politics of the situation prevented us from implementing the project as planned, it has been an invaluable experience and an honour and privilege to work with the Somali refugees in Eastleigh. The participants in both the consultations...
and training were wonderful to work with – engaged, bright, articulate and passionate about helping their community, and the Somali doctors who run the clinic are an inspiration. The project has also demonstrated the dynamic nature of working in this field and the need to be very flexible and keep adapting what you want to do to meet the changing circumstances, without losing sight of the fundamental aims of the project and within the constraints of the funding and time-frame.

Postscript: After this article was written gunmen attacked Westgate Mall in Nairobi on Saturday 21 September, killing at least 68 people and injuring nearly 200 more. One of the Australian Project RESPECT team members was in Eastleigh (Nairobi) with Somali project participants when news of the attack came through. She reported the Somali women immediately said, “Please let this not be Al-Shabaab!” However Al-Shabaab, a Somali Islamist group, later claimed responsibility and said that the attack was in retaliation for Kenya’s military involvement in Somalia. Apparently threats to Somalis in Kenya began circulating soon after on social media. Once again the project has had to be postponed, and we are fearful that the repercussions for Somali refugees in Kenya of this tragic and horrific event, as well being deeply concerned for all those affected by it. It is also of crucial note that two of CPACS’ academic staff, Dr Wendy Lambourne and Dr Lucy Fiske, were in Nairobi on a research trip at the time of the attack and fortunately left unharmed.

References


Pam Hartgerink is an MPACS student and works for the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS).

Daniel O’Connell – 19th Century Non-violence Leader

by Hilary Roots

As students of non-violence we regard Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Aung San Suu Kyi as the icons of such thought and behaviour. But to whom have these icons turned for inspiration?

When visiting Ireland recently, I learned that Gandhi’s icon was Irish emancipation leader, and lawyer, Daniel O’Connell.

The quiet, rural, decidedly beautiful Ring of Kerry, seems a strange place to come upon a powerful wad of Irish history. Yet here in a peaceful national park stands the ancestral home of a man the nation hailed as ‘The Great Liberator’. O’Connell, born in 1775 and one of ten siblings, was taken under the wing of his childless uncle, giving him the chance to pursue legal studies and to later inherit the uncle’s manor house and Derrynane estate. Having become a barrister and a persuasive orator, O’Connell championed the cause for equal rights and religious tolerance for Catholics – at that time, in the early 1800s, banned from being members of the British Parliament that ruled Ireland, after the Act of Union created the United Kingdom in 1800.

Forceful words were not enough. O’Connell, like Gandhi, went through his period of confrontation with opponents, arrest and imprisonment. He instigated peaceful protests and mass meetings that came to be known as ‘Monster Rallies’. They eventually bore fruit, resulting in the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, which repealed the British anti-Catholic legislation and allowed him to take his rightfully elected Parliamentary seat.

In this year of the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King’s famous “I have a dream” speech, it’s worth recalling O’Connell’s letter of appeal addressed to the “People of Ireland”, dated 11th February 1844. It reads:

Fellow-countrymen,

Once again I return you my most heartfelt Thanks for the Peace, Quiet and good Order you have observed; and I conjure you by the Country we all love, and even in the Name of the God we all adore, to continue in the same Peace, Quietness and perfect Tranquility.

I tell you solemnly, that your Enemies, and the Enemies of Ireland, are very desirous that there should be a breaking-out of Turmoil, Riot, or other outrage. Be you, therefore, perfectly peaceable. Attack nobody. Offend nobody. Injure no person.

If you respect your Friends – if you wish to gally your Enemies – keep the Peace, and let no single act of Violence be committed.

You are aware the Jury have found a Verdict against me. But, depend upon it, that I will bring a Writ of Error, and will not acquiesce in the Law as laid down...
Is Global Civil Society Simply a Western Construct?

by Farhad Arian

The concept of Global Civil Society (GCS) has attracted significant attention in academic, policy-making and practitioner circles since the end of the Cold War. GCS is commonly understood as a non-state, non-market sphere in which non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social movements, activist networks, and other value-driven actors play a key role in promoting democracy, human rights, and other universal values. While the modern idea of Civil Society (CS) has its roots in Western philosophy and emerged during the European Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, the concept of GCS re-emerged during the revolutionary events of the late 1980s in Eastern and Central Europe and became more globally influential in the post-Cold War era. However, apart from its universal character, GCS is still viewed by some scholars as a purely Western construct rather than a global phenomenon. In this paper, GCS will be evaluated as a universal concept rather than a Western construct in terms of its theoretical and practical foundations.

Theoretical Universality of GCS

Since the end of the Cold War, GCS has theoretically become a global phenomenon in terms of its robust ethical foundations. The concept of GCS is based on a range of universal moral norms and globally accepted values, providing people in all parts of the world with adequate ethical space to enjoy universal values. GCS is a vast, interconnected and multilayered social space, encompassing many thousands of self-directing NGOs and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) that enable citizens of various countries to enjoy universal values of human rights, democracy, gender equality, and many more. Universal ethical values provide GCS with theoretical foundations to spread global ethical values among various communities regardless of their race, religion, language, and ideology. As such, GCS is theoretically a universal concept rather than a Western phenomenon in terms of its globally accepted ethical values.

In addition, GCS is theoretically a global concept because the United Nations (UN) Charter recognises the universal role of GCS organisations in socialising and promoting universal values. The UN Charter’s articles 70 and 71 legalise the universality of GCS with emphasis on multi-dimensional cooperation between the UN bodies and INGOs. As a result, in the post-Cold War era, many governments have rewritten their national laws in ways that facilitate the substantial engagement of both CS and GCS organisations with governmental institutions in promoting democracy, human rights, and other global values. For instance, in transition from communist to democratic regimes, countries like Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic enacted new democratic Constitutions that pay special attention to the legalisation of the activities of GCS organisations. Thus, the concept of GCS has theoretically become universalised since the end of the Cold War.

Practical Universality of GCS

In the post-Cold War period, GCS has practically become globalised as INGOs operate in various parts of the globe and cover a wide range of universal issues. GCS organisations in opposition to, or cooperation with, national governments, focus on a variety of issues, including economic liberalisation, human rights, democratisation, humanitarianism, gender equality, health, education,
refugees, and many other issues of central importance. As such, despite the fact that most INGOs are dominated by the West with their headquarters located in Western Europe, North America, or Australia, GCS is practically a universal concept due to its global functioning and trans-border activities. Thus, the promotion of democracy and human rights is closely associated with transnational activities of GCS organisations because these universal issues can easily be translated into practice to support the practical universality of GCS.

Additionally, the emergence of GCS has significantly facilitated the spread of democratisation. GCS organisations have increasingly been involved in the democratisation processes of non-Western countries, and acted as democratising agents providing under-represented people with undeniable opportunities to ask for their socio-political rights. For instance, in the late 1980s, INGOs actively supported democratic revolutionary movements in Eastern and Central Europe where they had less experience of democratic governance in their history. Subsequently, GCS has practically helped many societies across Asia, Latin America and Africa to experience higher level of political representation through which local populations have been enabled to oppose their state institutions to stop the implementation of unpopular governmental policies. Therefore, as a result of the broader engagement of INGOs with the post-Cold War democratisation processes, GCS has practically become a popular universal phenomenon, accepted by both Western and non-Western societies.

Similarly, GSC has played an important role in globally promoting and protecting human rights. The common universal character of GCS and human rights paves the way for INGOs to broadly engage with the promotion of human rights as a means of reassuring the global practicability of GCS. INGOs regularly participate in the international decision-making processes on human rights issues and consistently press for states adherence to human rights in ways that may not be possible within domestic settings. This is mainly because in the post-Cold War era, drawing a line between the domains of GCS and human rights is extremely difficult as these two fields are closely associated with one another in terms of their global practicality. It is therefore a valid argument that the common character of universality of GCS and human rights enables INGOs to act globally for the intention of effectively promoting human rights.

Critiques of the Universality of GCS
Apart from robust theoretical and practical foundations supporting its universality, the concept of GCS is hotly contested among some academic, policy-making and practitioner circles. This is particularly because GCS is not only described differently in various parts of the world, but also is open to a variety of interpretations in terms of its theorisation and practice.

First of all, the concept of GCS is hardly contested in terms of the complexity and ambiguity of its definitions. One of the most cited definitions of the concept is that GCS is the sphere of ideas, values, institutions, organisations, networks and individuals located between the family, the state and the market, and operating beyond the confines of national societies, politics, and economies. This definition is extremely complex as it broadly covers a variety of issues rather than simply defining GCS in terms of its goals, trends, and functioning. Thus, despite constant attempts by scholars to define GCS in a comprehensive way, it still is in the lack of a unified and systematic definition.

Also, GCS is a contested concept because it is easily interpretable as a particular Western construct rather than a global phenomenon. There is a strong trend among some scholars and policy-makers in the West that GCS is the spread and universalisation of Western liberal values. For them, the 1980s socio-political movements in Latin America and Eastern Europe were two obvious examples of the universalisation of Western liberal values, especially CS, democracy and human rights, which further increased in the post-Cold War era. As a result of particularising the concept of GCS to purely Western values, not only the universal character of GCS is underlined but also the applicability of GCS in non-Western societies is seriously questioned.

Lastly, apart from its reflexive, dialogical and deliberative character, GCS is broadly contested because of its non-democratic nature. Many GCS organisations, working for the global promotion of democracy, lack democratic accountability and transparency. Operationalizing internal democracy in many INGOs is extremely difficult as they simply voice concerns about promoting democracy across the globe, but do not necessarily need to have internal checks and balances through democratic ways. As such, due to the lack of internal democratic credentials and legitimacy, GCS is broadly accused of undermining democracy either by weakening the authority of the only really democratic institution, the nation-state, or harbouuring non-democratic practices within themselves.

To conclude, in the post-Cold War era, the concept of GCS has become enormously popular as a means of globally institutionalising and promoting democracy, human rights, and other universal values. In spite of having deeper roots in Western philosophy, GCS as a re-emergent phenomenon has broadly become globalised since the democratic revolutionary events of the late 1980s in Eastern and Central Europe. Therefore, regardless of the critiques of its opponents, GCS has largely been accepted as a univer-
The Case of Taiwan amongst Leaders of campaign and the ruling party. tion and policy, but also the election guides not only the passage of legisla-
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The cabinet system of average coun-
ties, in simple terms, is for the leader of the county's largest party to serve as Prime Minister, simultaneously serve as cabinet head, and select cabinet members from among lawmakers. In parliament, the Prime Minister leads the lawmakers and cabinet members of his party to openly debate the opposition party in concave and guides not only the passage of legisla-
tion and policy, but also the election campaign and the ruling party.

There are a number of benefits to this kind of system. The leader of the country has absolute power and shareholders absolute responsibility. Thus, the legislative process is very transparent. When the opposition party forms a shadow cabinet such as a shadow finance minister, shadow secretary of defense, shadow education minister, etc., it not only debates the ruling party in parliament, it also monitors the ruling party. The shadow cabinet is essentially preparing to become the ruling party at any time so, even if the opposition suddenly becomes the ruling party, it will be less likely to have shortages of policy experience or talent.

However, in Taiwan, the role of Prime Minister is divided among four people, the President, the ruling party whip in parliament, the ruling party chairman, and the cabinet head. In addition, there is also the President of the Legislative Yuan, who should maintain neutrality but is involved in inter-party coordination, which makes it a five-way relationship. What this five-way relationship creates is everyone wanting to maximise the power they possess while shouldering the least responsibility. Since the powers and responsibilities of these five people do not match, they have never stopped pushing their responsibilities on each other. This is also probably why the public feels powerless when it comes to politics. The electorates work hard to elect candidates yet the government does not meet expectations.

Furthermore, according to the present system, if members of the cabinet are not selected from lawmakers, then ruling party lawmakers in reality are just a rubber stamp. There is absolutely no difference between 80 and 8 people. Their only job is to escort the Legislative Yuan. Ruling party lawmakers are not members of the cabinet, the opposition party also does not form a shadow cabinet, and it cannot monitor, and can only boycott deliberations.

Therefore, for a clear political situation, the fewer relationships in the five-way relationship is the better. If these relationships cannot be reduced, at least the clear defining of powers and responsibilities would be a display of assuming accountability. Whether parliament should be a voting instrument or whether the rules should be changed to allow cabinet lawmakers and the shadow cabinet to debate openly in Chamber, as the result of the unclear framework of those roles in constitution, that would depend on how far the incumbent government wants to take the cabinet system between the conflict of party interests and national interests.

In addition, the most contentious roles are those of the party chairman and party central committee. These people work for the party and are not public servants, are not paid by government nor were they elected by the people. In an authoritarian era where parties lead the government, party servants oversee public servants so public servants chosen by the people have little effect and no discretion but must be responsible for accepting the baptism of votes. This kind of system causes the defeat of civil liberties and the subjugation of civil rights to the party.

Now, if Taiwan wishes to get rid of authoritarianism, it must define positions for party personnel. If they only draw wages from the party then their role should only be that of electoral machinery and party employee. If party personnel possess decision-making authority in national affairs, they should be incorporated into the public servant system to clearly define their powers and responsibilities. If the party chairman or party central committee can lead parliament and the cabinet, why should electors bother to elect the President and parliament? So, not clearly defining party positions and public positions is the reason of authoritarianism lingers.

As a digression, the ruling party Presidential candidate should seek to be-

Conflict of Roles amongst Leaders of Government and Ruling Party: The Case of Taiwan
by Hui Chin Lai

Selected Bibliography


Farhad Arian is an MPACS student and a Research Analyst at Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education.
come Cabinet head before election. It is truly questionable that the ruling party candidate wishes to command the country’s government as a party’s chairman but without being part of government’s servants. This conflict of roles happened in the 2008 presidential election.

The people like the spirit of economic daring and action during the Chiang Ching-kuo era but this does not mean the people also wish to return to that era politically. The past order of party, country, and people should be reversed to people, country, party. If the future ruling party, in addition to concentrating on the economy, is willing to give up violence and establish a governmental system of the people, by the people, for the people that is stable in the long term, then a government that can represent the people is crucial for the Taiwanese people after 16 years of enfranchises.

Hui Chin Lai is a part-time student in the Department of Political Economy and an Executive Member of a cultural foundation think-tank in Taiwan.

Staying Positive Against All Odds in Afghanistan

by Mujib R. Abid

In the face of a fanatic insurgency, growing bigger and more ambitious by the day, and only a year before the foreign troops withdraw from the fragile country with little economic foundations and a trembling political society waiting out a highly anticipated political transition coming up next year 2014 – with expected ballot rigging and a corrupt electoral process – it is hard to stay positive about the future of Afghanistan. Yet I can’t help but argue and pester how the better days of Afghanistan are yet to come.

Am I a delusional idealist, a fanatic rationalist crazily in love with his country, or a pragmatic scientist relying on facts and findings? How far can the promise of mineral resources, a possibly awakened new generation, and the hope of peace with the Taliban, go?

While traditionally a ‘rentier state’ in Hossain Mahdavy’s terms, Afghanistan, at long last, has the opportunity to build a strong economic foundation of its own which could potentially turn the country into one of the richest in the world. Stretching across Afghanistan, all in all, the country’s mineral resources are valued at three trillion US dollars. The country’s vast, and newly discovered lithium reserves in Western Afghanistan, identified by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), are valued at a trillion US dollars. Lithium is used in batteries of electrical devices – iPhones, torches, laptops, and all sorts of gadgets – and is in very high demand. It does not hurt either to think about the future of automotive hybrids and oil efficient vehicles. Other untapped riches include gold, iron, coal, copper, natural gas, and precious stones indigenous to the mountainous country traversed by the Hindu Kush and touched by the Himalayas of the subcontinent.

Pentagon cables have referred to Afghanistan as the ‘Saudi Arabia of Lithium’ with a mining sector as big as Bolivia – the biggest exporter of the scarce lightweight metal in the world. The promising resources would, if handled correctly, not only transform the economy of the country but also alter the face of the war. Needless to say, Nigeria and DR Congo teach tough lessons about the ‘resource curse’ and the inflammatory effects (be it on the ongoing insurgency or the corrupt government) of such untapped reserves in developing countries of the third world with little mining experience or infrastructure on which to rely. Outsourcing the mines to multinational corporations is also a daunting task requiring skill, human resources and machinery. The Aynak copper mine, one of the biggest in the world located only 40km south of Kabul, is contracted out to the consortium China Metallurgical Group (MCC), but has proven very controversial amid allegations of corruption (the Afghan Mining Minister was dismissed after he apparently received USD30 million in bribes), inefficiency, successive blame-games, and a savvy behaviour by the Chinese due to their total disregard of the project timeline or contractual obligations – sometimes by Kabul as well. Nonetheless, these riches can and should attract large investments.

And then there is the 65% of the country’s population who are under the age of 24, in a country where life expectancy is projected to be 64 years. This is a blessing in disguise. And maybe the resurgent Taliban partially disrupted the moulding and acculturating process of this generation. But it is never too late. They’re waking up and they’re ever more pragmatic, invested, and awakened. A lot of it has to do with education. Today’s Afghanistan has a plethora of private schools, universities (students are en-

Mujib Abid standing in front of the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF)
roling in Afghan postgraduate schools for the first time ever), training centres and vocational courses where millions study. Education had never been privatized or found in this abundance before. As of 2013, 10.5 million students go to 16,000 schools, in a country of 31 million. About 37% of the students are girls. In addition, the youth are involved in associations, civil society organizations (interestingly one of the most vibrant in the region), movements, and awareness campaigns, which should culminate in a monumental takeover from the politicians of yesteryear with bewildered backgrounds in conflict, identity politics, and dogmatic ideological loyalties. That being said, the new generation is still vulnerable and prone to the ways of the previous generations. The quality of the education is always questioned. And even worse, the majority of Taliban foot soldiers are under the age of 25.

Despite the potential for a vast mining economy and the promise of a progressive new generation, is the elephant in the room the question of insurgency? As the bloody war (pointless in its very essence) rages on to its twelfth year, it has become vividly clear that battling your way to victory is impossible in Afghanistan. It is said by the conflicting parties and well-documented by the media how the parties are no longer after a military win – the US gave up on that prospect last year. A negotiated peace agreement, most parties involved argue, provides the only way out. Sure the road to a negotiated peace deal has been bumpy, disappointing, and at times frustrating, but progress has also been made. Processes such as this one tend to take longer. Recently during the Eid days, the Taliban repeatedly emphasized their aspirations to maintain shared power, willingness to compromise, and the urge for a new beginning. Yet the leader of the second biggest insurgency group Hekmatyar (the product of a US pet project in the 1980s) in a similar message threatened a minority group and vowed revenge on Hazaras and Shi’ites.

Most critics and Western media – echoing what the public wants to hear rather than fulfilling the task of a robust civil society – propagate Afghanistan as a country bound for failure and heading to erosion. That couldn’t be farther from the truth. Such projections do little justice to ground realities and Afghan history. But overlooking the challenges, and there are quite a number of them – some pretty formidable – is doing us a big disservice. It is acknowledging the fledgling situation, showing off the progress, envisioning a modern future, and staying positive that will get us there.

Muğf R. Abid is an MPACS student supported by a scholarship from the Sydney Peace Foundation.

Two Close Peoples, Two Distant Neighbours*: A Personal Reflection

by Burçak Gürün Muraben

Honey, it’s four in the morning and I commend you on the perfection of your lip liner, it will not budge! But of course you would go for the brightest and reddest of reds. Had to be satin again, I see. But you have a penchant for red with those huge lilies embracing your nether regions. You are one of us darling, absolutely besotted by scarlet, crimson, red! We say Turks (and Kurds) love red, well the Armenians apparently do too.

And that cap, I do want it, I truly do. My old English high school just off Taksim Square in Istanbul used to have caps with a badge which read “post tenebras lux” (light after darkness). Is it nostalgia? A friend explains: “That long and lanky lady, the blonde border security officer, shows Yerevan’s Russian heritage. She is made for that cap, that’s why it looks so good!”

It’s 4am. We are at Yerevan Airport for Attila Durak’s exhibition of photographs – Ebru: Reflections of Cultural Diversity on Turkey. Two of the panelists are not with us because they have diplomatic passports. Turkey and Armenia have no diplomatic relations, so only tourist visits are allowed.

Uncle Migirdich moves like a crab, sideways and wobbly, oozing a cloud of cheap vodka and Ararat, the top notch Armenian cognac. Not a single mammal escapes his generous attention until he closes in on the rather cantankerous passport officer who will not have a bar of anything disorderly. A quick glare and Migirdich pulls himself together.

We are at NPAK (Armenian Centre for Contemporary Experimental Art), at the panel discussion for the opening of Ebru. Attila Durak, Fethiye Çetin (author of “My Grandmother”, co-author of “The Grandchildren” and attorney for the family of Hrant Dink – a famous Turkish-Armenian journalist, editor in chief of the bilingual newspaper Agos, murdered in 2007), Takuhi Tovmasyan (author of “The Grandmother” and a collection of her family recipes) and Ayşe Gül Altıncıkanal (author of “The Grandchildren”) are the speakers. Salpi Ghazarian, the director of Civilitas, is the moderator (www.civilitasfoundation.org).

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The room is bursting at the seams with an anxious, uneasy crowd.

Attila Durak argues that ebru (multi-coloured water-marbling on paper) is a much better analogy for multiculturalism in the nation state than mosaics. It’s not. In mosaics, the pieces are separated from one another, they do not interact. He says our identities are written on our bodies and heading to erosion. That being said, the national identity politics, and dogmatic ideological loyalties. That being said, the politicians of yesteryear with bewildered backgrounds in conflict, identity politics, and dogmatic ideological loyalties. That being said, the new generation is still vulnerable and prone to the ways of the previous generations. The quality of the education is always questioned. And even worse, the majority of Taliban foot soldiers are under the age of 25.
says he was curious, he wanted to know more about people. He talks about getting to know “the other” and about reconciliation. 44 ethnic groups speak 33 languages in Turkey. This is Ebru’s 27th exhibition.

Fethiye Çetin says: “We didn’t know about 1915 as we shed tears for overseas victims”. She talks about her time in jail and that even the bravest female activists would only whisper the word ‘Armenian’. But the internalised taboo doesn’t exist anymore. The debate is loud and clear. She explains the transition from “my ancestors would not have done anything bad” to the publication of “The Grandchildren”, which is about her personal story of discovery that her grandmother was Armenian.

Grandparents live different lives resulting from different choices. Takuhi Tovmasyan’s grandfather is left with three children when his wife dies. It is a struggle to find a new bride willing to look after three children, so nobody is game to tell the new bride (also called Takuhi) how many children her husband has. When she finds out, she says three would have been completely fine, had she been told from the beginning, but the deceit is unacceptable, so Mardik, the eldest, has to leave. This decision haunts the young bride for life after young Mardik disappears during the deportation. Tovmasyan says the Armenian issue should be shared along with its stories: “We both live with thorns under our feet, we should help one another get rid of them. Why do we delve into the past? For the future, of course. We are crying together, so we can laugh together. We share the pain.”

“One half of me was apologising to the other,” says Fethiye Çetin.

“I felt my identity forming there and then. I caught myself using derogatory terms like ‘as heavy as a non-Muslim corpse’ on the one hand, and suffering them on the other. Turkish identity is being redefined.”

Ayşe Gül Altınay says Islamised Armenians were completely forgotten and that they wanted to tell their stories in ‘The Grandchildren’.

“Our own identities are up to us to define, a pluralistic identity is a freeing experience. If Hrant Dink were alive, he would have been here with us. Now it’s up to us to bring him along in spirit.”

Question time starts with a middle aged man showing a map in which Eastern Turkey is called Western Armenia. Harsh questions find tender answers.

“There is no innocence, but we should repair the cracks. Ebru is a humble effort to confront the suffering we have caused. There is no way it can be completely forgiven, but we should find ways to work around it. We have made some progress. We are not the Turkish state; we are working towards the process of forgiveness. We want to talk together, walk together.”

A middle aged lady takes the floor.

“I cannot forget what happened and I won’t, but what can be done? I don’t have much money and have a modest house but have a big heart. I am ready to do anything to end this hatred. My humble home is open to the grandchildren. We want to talk together, walk together.”

A young girl says in a trembling voice that she wants to meet her peers on the other side of Ararat. “No one can stop me,” she says. An elderly man says he is grateful for the effort: “You came all the way here, thank you”. At the end of the panel discussion, I see Fethiye Çetin in the arms of the lady who said her home was open to the grandchildren. Warm embraces reflect the essence of this trip.

In Yerevan, the girls Vartuhi and Bercuhi walk hand in hand naturally, as do the boys Hagop and Migirdich. It brings back memories of my youth in the streets of Maraş and Erzurum.

The following day we visited Echmiadzin, the religious heart of Armenia, to have a look at the churches. We then went to Khor Virap, a few hundred metres from the Turkish border. Armenians are the true stone artisans. An old Istanbuliot, Diran Lokmagözyan, breathed life into these beautiful churches with a rendition of Hayr Mer (an Armenian hymn).

Our last day had the most somber agenda: the genocide memorial. The museum was closed for a public holiday. There is a stone wall, with the locations of the 1915 tragedies guiding you to the memorial and making you more solemn with every step. I was moved when I saw Gürün, where my surname comes from, and then
During a recent visit to Istanbul in Turkey, I found myself closer to the action in Taksim Square than I had expected. Although it was just after about a month of regular protests and police involvement leading to some violence, the previous week had been very calm, and the hotel staff assured me that everything was fine. So, it seemed that I was still “exercising extreme caution” in DFAT’s terms if I merely ventured across the Galata Bridge and into town to meet some friends at a café.

Given that Istanbul was the only city on this trip where I literally knew nobody, I was very grateful for the contact, and to be able to hang out with locals. I ordered a lemony drink and began asking my new friends all about their jobs and what brought them to Turkey. As we were talking, I glanced at the shelf behind, and noticed a pile of leaflets announcing a rally to be held the next day. I took a flyer, noted the place and time, but contrary to my usual practice, it was in order to avoid being there. My new friends agreed that I could do more for the cause by staying safe and joining in the online campaign than getting physically involved.

Then, as we were wandering down the cobblestone street and considering where to go next, we came across some people running down the hill quite quickly, in the way that I imagined a stampede might begin. I didn’t know which way to turn, and was reminded again that I am not good in emergencies. My new friends ushered me into a nearby bar, but not before I was exposed to a faint gassy smell, and my eyes began to water.

Once we were safely inside the bar and things had quietened down, my new friends started telling me stories about the situation so far. They lived very close to Taksim Square and had heard the events unfold quite literally before their teary eyes. One guy reckoned he had been gassed by proxy about 20 times in the past month. As we sat there, small groups of people walked past the window with mouths and noses covered by gas masks, handkerchiefs, and interestingly enough, swimming goggles. We did not wear them because, well, we didn’t fancy the idea of wearing swimming goggles in a bar.

The inconspicuous Mount Ararat has been a separator for long enough. I hope we live to see the day it unites these two close peoples, two distant neighbours.

(*) Title of Hrant Dink’s book

Swimming Goggles, Lemons and a Clanging Noise
by Aletia Dundas
the most horrendous houndings, attacks and abuse simply for standing up for peace and justice for the Palestinians. Faces familiar from visits they have paid to CPACS like Anna Baltzer (USA), Ilan Pappe (an Israeli who relocated to the UK), Peter Slezak (Australia) and Jeff Halper (Israel) are amongst 25 contributors whose stories track the inner journey of Zionists awakening to the humanity and the plight of Palestinians. There’s an intimate quality to the book that answered many questions for me about why it is so difficult to communicate with some Zionists; why that conversational tug-of-war is so entrenched; how hard it is for those trapped in it but that many sense something is not right.

Avigail Abarbanel, who edited the book, says she did not even know the word Palestinian when she was a child. “All I was told was they were Arabs and they hated us” she described in a personal interview. Outlining in the book how her shift took place, Avigail tracks small moments of connecting with Palestinians as
people – moments that only really made sense later. One was being invited as a teenager to do “something for our country”. That something transpired to be HAGA – rounding up Palestinians who stayed in building sites overnight to work saving them having to spend hours queuing at checkpoints to go to and from work each day in Israel in an attempt to scratch a meagre living. “I remember feeling let down and disturbed and that it was wrong somehow”, writes Avigail resolving never to go back. Another moment occurred on a bus as a young soldier, noticing a Palestinian man being humiliated by the military police: “I felt a pang of pain and sympathy for the man. He was clearly harmless and was being singled out for no other reason except that he ‘looked Arab’” (Abarbanel 2012: 149). These small moments of empathic connection contributed to her conversion to anti-Zionist activism after reading The Iron Wall by Avi Schlaim. The book awakened Avigail’s rage at the injustices faced by the Palestinians. She marched on the Israeli Embassy in Canberra to hand back her citizenship. The consequence was that her mother was cut off all contact. I had no idea how brainwashed many Israelis were, or the personal cost of maintaining their beliefs, values and identity, that to admit any iota of empathy for Palestinians is almost personal annihilation. In her introduction Avigail writes “I am curious to know how they” (the 24 other activists writing in the book) “were able to break out of a powerful prison of belief, tradition and identity; a belief system that taught all of us that Palestinians are our mortal enemy and that any sympathy towards them amounts to a complete betrayal of our people, not to mention an existential threat to the state of Israel” (Abarbanel 2012: xvii).

Avigail like myself is a psychotherapist, so I particularly enjoyed her assessment of the commonality shared by her fellow activists. They all share, she believes, the quality of “emotional resilience” that “means the ability to tolerate uncomfortable feelings without avoiding them or trying to make them go away. It means that people are able to act according to their values and do the right thing, even when they experience fear, guilt, insecurity, turmoil, confusion and pain, and even when some of these feelings are reinforced by outside opposition or even persecution. Emotional resilience also includes the ability to tolerate the experience of being disapproved of, disliked and rejected by others, sometimes even by relatives and close friends” (Abarbanel 2012: 283).

So that is what Jake and Stuart are demonstrating right now – emotional resilience against the endless attacks in The Australian newspaper and from senior politicians like Liberal Party Deputy Leader Julie Bishop, the Australia Minister for Foreign Affairs plus the threat of legal action. So firstly I want to thank them personally for taking the flak.

And secondly I want to encourage you, me and all of us who support CPACS to show some compassion for those trapped in the cult of Zionism.

Thirdly to encourage us all to feel confident that BDS is the right thing not only for the Palestinians but for Jews and Israelis trapped in a “prison of belief, tradition and identity”: “What we’re talking about here is a pretty powerful state of denial, not unlike an addiction. And when an addict is hurting him/herself and others it takes people of courage and emotional resilience to stand up and say “no”. As Avigail writes in her afterword, “(e)motional resilience is a prerequisite to the ability to assimilate a new truth and to be intellectually honest” (Abarbanel 2012: 286).


by Stuart Rees

Doran's treatise makes very clear the links between so-called free market economic policies and the fascination with violence and war which characterises so much of American foreign policy. He makes the link with particular reference to the invasion and destruction of Iraq and the collusion of those US allies who were also committed to a deceitful version of freedom.

That version of freedom, says Doran, is to ‘make the rich richer by making the poor poorer, and to be available when a country not only resists, but could potentially impede the very foundations upon which the system depends. That is why Iraq not only had to be militarily invaded, but thoroughly destroyed.’

In a brilliant analysis, peppered with rich empirical evidence, Doran shows how the

by Frank Stilwell

Erik Paul writes about the structural violence engendered by modern states in a somewhat similar manner to Noam Chomsky excoriating the US Administration for its concentration and abuse of political economic and military power. The approach is detailed, wide-ranging and relentless in its sustained critique. In Paul’s case, the focus is particularly on Australia – the ‘deputy sheriff’ for the US in the Pacific region – but it broadens out into a more general analysis of ‘the construction of east Asia’ and the awesome prospects for superpower rivalry and war in the region.

An earlier version of one of the chapters – on the violence that is embedded in many aspects of Australian society, including victimisation, poor mental and physical health, crime and incarceration, racism and the politics of fear, appeared as an article in this journal (JAPE, No. 63, 2009). This is the most ‘micro’ level of analysis. The more ‘macro’ level in the book looks possible so governments can boast a surplus, irrespective of the costs to vulnerable citizens.

Any student of peace needs to be able to articulate the alternatives to those economic policy makers who tolerate little criticism, despite their massive failures. Just ask the unemployed in Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Greece, the UK or the United States about the benefits of the free market; and I’ve made no reference to the developing countries who are told so often that their salvation depends on their cooperation with the very policies which have created poverty, violence and misery elsewhere.

This timely book reminds us that the goal of peace with justice depends as much on analysis of the human costs of economic policies as it does on our advocacy of universal human rights. But that universality does provide the value base for those socially just perspectives which should have enabled leaders, in Australia as well as in the US, to think differently about Iraq or other countries which don’t comply with US wishes.

The ‘thinking differently’ about economic policies should be central to any Peace Studies curriculum. I hope it is. Placing Doran’s book on the curriculum should be a priority. The next step is to encourage students and staff to read it and practice thinking about ways to make the world safe for people and not for capitalism.

Stuart Rees is the Chair, Sydney Peace Foundation.
Model Global Parliament Program

by Pera Wells and Chris Hamer

A series of Model Global Parliaments has been started under the direction of Pera Wells, a former diplomat and a former Secretary-General of the World Federation of United Nations Associations. The program has really taken off like the proverbial rocket. Two exciting MGPs have been held in recent months, the first at the Victorian Parliament House in Melbourne, and the second at the Old Parliament House in Canberra. Brief descriptions of the events are given below. The students involved have been enormously enthusiastic and energetic. This concept really seems to capture the imaginations of the young people, and we are hoping we can export it to the world.

What is a Model Global Parliament? The participants act out or simulate a democratically constituted global forum in a parliamentary setting, debating motions on how to deal with global issues and problems. The members are assigned to represent both geopolitical regions, and existing globally significant non-governmental networks to work together in identifying global problems and seeking practical and attainable solutions to them.

We see it essentially as an educational platform for students to learn to think and talk together about global issues, using parliamentary procedures. It is an imaginative creation, quite separate from the United Nations or any other international organization. It is intended to enable students to explore new ways of addressing the evident gaps in democratic global governance arrangements and to present, contest and enact ideas about how to shape the future for the benefit of a better world for all living things.

The Second Model Global Parliament at Parliament House, Melbourne

Members of the Model Global Parliament in the Legislative Assembly chamber, Parliament House, Melbourne
A message was read out from Benjamin Barber, Founding Director of the Global Interdependence Movement in New York:

“In an interdependent world the only effective citizens are interdependent citizens. You are already there. Thank you all for what you are doing, and what you will do in the weeks and months ahead.”

The students representing regions around the world as well as non-state global networks presented and debated motions under agenda items relating to peace and disarmament, global economic interdependence, global communications, human rights, the globalization of energy and creative arts. Motions were debated on various matters. Quite a few of the motions were not adopted, for various reasons.

The MGP decided to:

• set up a subcommittee on the Global Peace Index to take into account different cultural and political emphases about peace and questions of economic and other forms of violence
• establish a Global Indigenous Advisory Council
• call for the expansion of the mandate of the Global Partnership for Effective Development as established at Busan into an intergovernmental and organizational co-ordinating body for international aid dispersal
• call upon the international community to take proactive measures to improve labour conditions in sweatshop industries of the global apparel industry and develop robust institutions and policies to monitor and safeguard labour safety standards to aver accidents
• recognize the importance of languages as representations of the World’s diverse cultures, and proposed to establish a Global Society of Languages.

In a concluding feedback session, it was widely agreed that the MGP had been very valuable for all participants. It was recommended that another MGP be convened.

Third Model Global Parliament, Old Parliament House, Canberra Saturday 27 July 2013

The third session of the Model Global Parliament was convened in the House of Representatives of Old Parliament House on Saturday 27 July 2013. It was co-sponsored by the Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU, the Museum of Australian Democracy and the World Citizens’ Association (Australia).

Students from the Australian National University, Canberra University and Monash University, coming from over 30 countries around the world, participated in two training sessions held at the Crawford School, ANU and then engaged each other in debate at the Model Global Parliament on the three agenda items that the students had chosen as a priority when they registered to participate: Education, Environment, Human Rights.

Wonderful people contributed to the students’ training program: David Miles Connolly on how to use parliamentary procedures for decision-making; Peter Wilkins on how to perform as a parliamentarian; Dr Dominique De Stoop on cross-cultural negotiation skills on human rights issues; Professor Bob Carter on political emphases about peace and disarmament; Dr Dominique De Stoop on cross-cultural negotiation skills on human rights issues; Professor Bob Carter on political emphases about peace and disarmament; Dr Dominique De Stoop on cross-cultural negotiation skills on human rights issues; Professor Bob Carter on political emphases about peace and disarmament; Dr Dominique De Stoop on cross-cultural negotiation skills on human rights issues; Professor Bob Carter on political emphases about peace and disarmament.

At the opening of the Model Global Parliament, Ms Nighat Kurshid, President of the Crawford Student Society Association introduced Ms Daryl Karp, Director of the Museum of Australian Democracy who spoke about the historic significance of the House of Representatives. Ms Kurshid then introduced Prof Tom Kompas, Director of the Crawford School who spoke about his research interests and read out a message from the Chancellor of the ANU, The Hon Gareth Evans which said:

“The world’s political system is manifestly not coping very well with the speed of change, the complexity of interconnections between events, and the ever-growing need for effective collective action.”
The inspiration to set up a Model Global Parliament to enable university students to define, debate and reach conclusions about the action needed on global issues is timely and has my full support. I have read the digest of reasons students participating in this event have given for why they believe there is a need for a Model Global Parliament. I am impressed by your visions and values, and intrigued in particular at the thought of such a Parliament framing a code of global ethics.

I am delighted to congratulate all of you who are participating in this Model Global Parliament. I encourage you to generate evidence-based data, develop rigorous analytical skills, be prepared to tackle complex problems from multiple angles, and try to produce constructive solutions that have some realistic chance of being implemented. Enjoy a lively debate, and I look forward to receiving your communiqué.

Prof Kompas introduced The Hon Bob Brown who spoke about environmental issues and Professor Bruce Chapman who called attention to the ethical implications of students receiving their education in developing countries, who then took their skills and experience to developed countries. Mr Steve Killelea spoke about the Global Peace Index, followed by a debate on the need for a Model Global Parliament, addressed by Prof Chris Hamer, author of the book “A Global Parliament”.

Following her media career Jane built an innovative PR and Public Affairs Consultancy specialising in ethical campaigns in the public interest. She has worked on and coordinated a number of highly successful campaigns for human rights and social justice. Including the fight for the survival of Land Councils in NSW, the un-banning of the drug ru486 and the removal of the Family Planning Guidelines which mirrored the infamous US Global Gag, support for Nelson Mandela before his election and compensation for asbestos victims.

Jane has spoken widely on issues relating to women, children and media and advocacy and lectured at universities around Australia. She has also held a wide number of directorial positions, including as Chair of the International Aid Agency, ChildFund, Chair of the Interim National Accreditation Council on Child Care, Chair of the Australian Consumers Council (advisor to the Federal Minister), Federal President of the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance, and on the Council of the National Gallery.

Jane was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia for services to women, media, development, and the community.

Emeritus Professor Stuart Rees continues his role as Chair of the Foundation.

The Foundation and the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies are thrilled with Jane’s appointment. Jane already has a deserved reputation for showing courage in public life. That quality augurs well for her leadership of the Foundation.