

SPEAKING PEACE INTO BEING: VOICE, YOUTH AND
AGENCY IN A DEEPLY DIVIDED SOCIETY

Anne De Graaf

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2018

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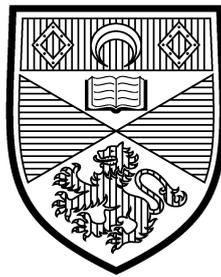
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Speaking Peace into Being:
Voice, Youth, and Agency in a
Deeply Divided Society

Anne de Graaf



University of
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews

2017

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I was admitted as a research student in September, 2010, and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in May, 2011; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2010 and 2017.

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Abstract

This thesis asks how voice enables youth to claim agency within divided societies, and what are the implications of this in terms of conflict and peacebuilding? It is an analysis of the significance of young people's voices to international relations. The research is framed in terms of human rights and human security, children's rights, and recognition theories. Its aim is to draw conclusions both about the nature of voice and agency, or power, and about how the framing of the present research in this area impacts the ability of the discourse to take into account the significance of listening to those who are marginalized. From these starting points the thesis will explore questions such as the following: In what ways do children have a voice? If young people had more of a voice, would it make a difference? Does having a voice lead to power? If so, does this create a culture of respect for this voice, and in turn an increase in the speaker's ability to claim agency? Does increasing participation have an impact upon people's likeliness to resort to violence? These aspects are important because they contribute to knowledge and frameworks for peacebuilding in post-conflict areas and the link between voice and violence may provide a key to reducing youth violence in post-conflict areas, but most significantly, hearing young voices could contribute to a sustainable peace, envisioned by and cultivated by the very generation that must own that peace if it is to become lasting.

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Acknowledgments

This thesis has been a journey. And as on all journeys, the kindness of strangers made all the difference. As these strangers became friends, the thesis took shape. On these pages, their voices resonate, together with my own.

I am deeply grateful to my supervisors, Professors Alison Watson and Ian C. Taylor, for their useful suggestions and insights. Without them, this thesis would have remained merely a dream. Now it is a reality. Professor Watson guided and encouraged, bringing her vast knowledge and intelligence to the table, pushing and pulling me to realize my potential more fully. I will always treasure the memories of our discussions.

My beautiful family has supported me in many-splendored ways. Thank you.

Friends, strangers, family, you are too many to name, but in particular, I wish to thank (in alphabetical order) Joel Antonie, Karen Barense, Monika Bartoszewicz, Irina Belova, Dolores Booij, John Bowden (deceased), Razia Bux, Tammy Lee Gertse, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, Ela Goksun, Daniël de Graaf, Erik de Graaf, Julia de Graaf, Patrick Hayden, Jonathan Jansen, André Keet, Peter van Krieken (deceased), Reid Larson, Roger Mac Ginty, Hemayel Martina (deceased), Marijn Mado, Siobhan McEvoy-Levy, Tim Murithi, Jeffrey Murer, Alissa Reinach, Oliver Richmond, John Samuel, Giorgia Santamaria, Leonard Suransky, Ian and Alison Thompson, Chiara Tulp, Arnout van der Vorst, Kieran van der Vorst, Ravi van der Vorst, and Valerie Zwart for their encouragement, knowing conversations, helpful comments, smiles and suggestions.

Research for this thesis was funded by the Russell Trust Fund and my sweet husband.

Dedication

To Erik. *Siempre.*

Chapter 1: Introduction—The Place of Young People

Introduction

I have spent the past fifteen years travelling to South Africa several times, and crisscrossing sub-Saharan Africa, and also Eastern Europe and the Middle East, listening to children's voices. My interviews have resulted in several novels, for adults and teens. I have had a baby thrust into my arms in Mosul, and I have held the hand of a Srebrenica widow as she told me about the night before her son was taken away by Mladic. But in many ways, meeting Imbali marked a turning point. This particular trip was for a teen novel about AIDS survival, commissioned by a Dutch publisher. Imbali was a girl I interviewed—abandoned by her mother and grieving the loss of her grandmother, staying with friends, she suffered regular sexual abuse and had contracted AIDS. When I returned home, I found myself creatively blocked because of meeting children like her with no hope, no voice, no agency. I remain, to this day, haunted by Imbali's eyes, and driven to better understand how someone so young and strong and brave could bear such adult-sized burdens—viewed as a victim and voiceless.

I have already explored these themes in my own writing, in my books, and in future research for those, including additional interviews with former youth combatants in Liberia. These young men and women prompted even more questions. After my teen novel (called *Son of a Gun*) and an adult novel about child soldiers were published, I found myself speaking at universities and military academies about my books and experiences. That is when I knew I wanted to teach.

Three years after meeting Imbali I began the academic journey of trying to understand her plight, this time from the viewpoint of the social sciences. During the past eight years, that path has led me through a master's dissertation and into this PhD thesis, back to South Africa, and home again, to The Netherlands. This is how I identified a research gap and began exploring a topic worthy of academic attention, as three threads untangled themselves from the knot of grief I carry in her name.

Voice, youth, and agency

Imbali was young, but carrying adult-sized burdens. She had a voice, but no one was listening, or seemed able to listen. As someone constructed as a victim, her vulnerability appeared to block out the possibilities of agency, and any potential ability to make a difference in her own life or the lives of others. Imbali's voice was not the only one to move me. During that difficult trip interviewing orphans with AIDS, what I assumed was the exception, became the rule, as different versions of Imbali's story were told to me again and again. One young girl taking care of her siblings said, "The neighbor lady brings us one meal a day. At night, her husband comes for payment." Despite past trips to post-conflict areas, this was my first introduction to the extreme vulnerability of young people who had lost their parents, endured grief, and lived in harsh poverty, just to find themselves trapped and abused by the very adults who should be protecting them. However instead of young people's voices being heard, often they are

spoken on behalf of, as they are treated as marginalized groups. And what is said often benefits those doing the talking.¹

Even though young people, and the potential to safeguard their futures, remain a staple of the rhetoric surrounding the need for peace in deeply divided societies (Magnuson & Baizerman, 2007; Oberschall, 2007), in reality their presence, and the potential that it represents, is often overlooked (Bray, 2010; Burman & Reynolds, 1986). Since the Second World War, the international human rights regime has assumed an increasing significance, with human rights and human security becoming paramount (Donnelly, 2003) in many of the policies that states purport to follow. As a result, a wide variety of UN resolutions exist - including, as will be discussed later, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (UNICEF, 2014) - that cover a plethora of rights issues, such as sexual violence, refugees, political, personal, and community security. The postwar liberal framework is based on protecting human rights, and it seems to propose that the individual is paramount (Freeman, 2011), but in reality, we see that many groups are marginalized, and often whole segments of a state's population, such as women and young people, have their rights being recognized only late in the day. Thus, for example, sexual violence in wartime has only become a focus of research for human rights legislation during the last 20 years (Ishay, 2008).

¹ In a thesis about voice, it needs to be acknowledged that the academic voice can often seem restrictive. However, as this writing now turns to the business of creating knowledge, the language of academia may provide a tool, or an observation tower for viewing the bigger picture. So the tone becomes more removed and distant, but also less general and emotional. This, in itself, may indicate a gap in language, a missed opportunity, and thereby, a gap in understanding within the social science of International Relations.

There are many contributing factors as to why these rights only became acknowledged at such a late date (Darby, 2009), including who has voice and power within the post-liberal world (Richmond, 2010b) and who does not, as well as the distributive paradigm of justice (Young, 1990). Specifically, the minimal amount of recognition received by these issues is indicative of an emphasis within IR scholarship on the perpetrators of violence, rather than on its victims (Watson, 2008).

Although the UNCRC is the most widely accepted piece of human rights legislation in history (Franklin, 2002), in reality such widespread acceptance only serves to highlight the inadequacies that continue to exist in the international human rights regime among marginalized groups in general, and for children and youth, in particular (O'Neill, 1988). One key area of examination is the way in which we recognize the abuses that have taken place, and continue to do so, part of which has been addressed within the UN liberal peace methodology regarding the notion of truth and reconciliation. Much attention has been given to processes of truth-telling, a measure that enables those who have been affected by conflict to tell their stories, and hopefully process their trauma, and this will be referenced later in the thesis. Effectively, the human rights regime appears to advocate for the legitimacy of listening to the voices of those involved in human rights violations (Wilson, 2001), making voice a central tenet within the liberal peace.

This thesis focuses upon one example of a truth-telling process: the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which presented a new

model for transitional justice, and has generated a significant amount of debate (Du Toit & Kotze, 2011). The fieldwork of this thesis takes place in South Africa, so the TRC plays a particularly significant role in positioning voice within the context of peacebuilding. Several of the interviews that I conducted focused on the legacy of the TRC, and in Chapter 6, a person who was both participant and researcher, involved in the TRC is quoted and referenced in terms of moral imagination (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2009). As my fieldwork reveals in Chapter 5, people look back at the TRC with both longing and a sense of betrayal, and look forward to a time when heard voices may provide a framework for fairer and more just TRC models. The South African case is important in terms of youth because that country's constitution recognizes the role of youth and provides a far-reaching program of rights for youth. Such models might proactively seek out the voices of young people. It should be noted, however, that although the case study is South Africa, other examples will be used to demonstrate global significance. Despite the extensive rights framework that exists, sustainable peace in post-conflict areas and deeply divided communities remains elusive. This thesis will argue that in attempting to achieve long-term sustainability, the voices of young people often go unheard, their agency denied, and opportunities to vocalize their views are not given, thereby weakening the peacebuilding process.

Within this thesis, the terms *voice*, *youth*, and *agency* will be defined and redefined, proving that such concepts are both contested and subjective, with the aim of illustrating how these terms are used in different ways, depending on the context. Different cultural contexts determine different definitions. Arguably, the

least contested should be the definition of childhood, which the UNCRC clearly states. However, this definition is in reality a highly Westernized one (Stephens, 1995). In a similar way, the definitions of voice and agency will also reflect Western notions of these ideas (Spivak, 1988).

Chapter 1 highlights the foundational aspects of the thesis. It introduces the research, discussing the research question, the proposed contribution of the thesis, and its theoretical and methodological approaches. The place of human rights, human security and the liberal peace will be examined in order to embed this thesis in current research and demonstrate rigor. In addition, there will be a consideration of issues and definitions of terms such as *respect*, *youth* and *peacebuilding*, and the parallel paths of gender and generation. In addition, the human rights literature regarding youth and identity will be explored, especially the CRC, as well as the concepts of voice and identity, and their connection with violence. Evidence, methods, and fieldwork will also be discussed briefly, followed by a chapter breakdown for the entire thesis.

My own academic voice, it has been noted, has a different ring to it. This is probably because I have developed a (fiction and non-fiction) writing style over the years, which stresses conflict and details, as a means of drawing the reader in. I prefer active verbs to passive, and I try to avoid adjectives and adverbs, and minimize the use of words like *whereas*, in order to bring the language more to life. I write differently than the average authors of academic journal articles, but I believe the mix of academic rigor and greater accessibility creates a text that is more favorable, in terms of impact. Examples of authors who have crossed the

academic divide into the realm of literature with a broader readership include Carolyn Nordstrom (latest book *Global Outlaws* [2007]) and Cynthia Enloe (2011). They have made their research available, indeed attractive, to academics and non-academics alike. Although I do not presume to put myself on their level, I would hope that my slightly different voice would find acceptance in a thesis that is, after all, about creating a space for various voices, without compromising the research itself. I have taken great care to embed my research in primary sources of academic standing, so that this more accessible voice might also find academic favor. Although creative writing may not be precise enough for the analysis required, I wish to explore a middle ground of sorts as something perhaps unique to my own voice. In so doing, I will make sure my writing is as clear as possible and embedded in previous research.

Research question

This thesis ultimately has one key question: **How does voice enable youth to claim agency within divided societies, and what are the implications of this in terms of conflict and peacebuilding?**

The thesis is an analysis of the significance of young people's voices to international relations. The research is framed in terms of human rights and human security, children's rights, and recognition theories. Its aim is to draw conclusions both about the nature of voice and agency, or power, and about how the framing of the present research in this area impacts the ability of the discourse to take into account the significance of listening to those who are marginalized.

In terms of positioning, this thesis builds on the literature in several social science fields, but especially peacebuilding (Richmond, 2002, 2010a, 2011; Mac Ginty & Williams, 2009), psychology (Murer, 2011a), and sociology (Hart, 1997), as well as generational studies (McEvoy-Levy, 2001; Watson, 2009), and feminism (Enloe, 1989). Theoretical references are rooted in recognition theorists such as Honneth (2007), Arendt (2003), and Fraser (2008). In addition, human rights authors (Turner (2006), Donnelly (2003), and Ignatieff, 2001) have helped supply a framework based on human rights and human security, the concepts of which are further enhanced, explored, and understood by means of recognition theories. From these starting points the thesis will explore questions such as the following: In what ways do children have a voice? If young people had more of a voice, would it make a difference? Does having a voice lead to power? If so, does this create a culture of respect for this voice, and in turn an increase in the speaker's ability to claim agency? Does increasing participation have an impact upon people's likeliness to resort to violence? Moreover, what do the answers to these questions mean in terms of the wider IR discourses that have sometimes marginalized such voices and the actors to which they belong? These aspects are important because they contribute to knowledge and frameworks for peacebuilding in post-conflict areas and the link between voice and violence may provide a key to reducing youth violence in post-conflict areas, but most significantly, hearing young voices could contribute to a sustainable peace, envisioned by and cultivated by the very generation that must own that peace if it is to become lasting.

The direction these generational questions point toward resembles a parallel path with the development of feminism and a growing awareness of gender issues. In the 1970s, feminist standpoint theorists asked "Where are the women?" By asking this question, women then appeared as diplomats' wives, as prostitutes on military bases, etc. (Enloe, 1989). This thesis proposes that by asking the question, "Where are the children?" we can begin to see more clearly the variety of roles that children play, whether in war (e.g., soldiers) or in peace (e.g., peace movement marchers). In turn, once we begin to see them, we can begin to hear their voices. In this exploration of the positioning of children's voices, it may be revealed that once young people participate, and have a voice that is heard, they gain power, and ultimately respect, and the world comes to understand and to include them in decisions that may affect their lives (a stipulation of Article 12 of the CRC). Thus, in examining the role of voice and its relationship to agency, this research attempts to examine the social and policy mechanisms that are already in place and how they may be falling short. Also, just as gender issues once met and broke through the glass ceilings of neither seeing nor hearing women, eventually entering into mainstream IR considerations, so too may generational issues prove to become yet another way to extend the disciplinary boundaries of IR.

In the course of this research, both secondary and primary sources are cited and an epistemological framework is established upon which to pose (and potentially answer) questions that may not be addressed in current IR literature. These questions concern the impact of youth and what they say within the worlds of conflict and peacebuilding, and the significance of this.

Proposed contribution

This thesis aims to contribute to the existing discourse, both theoretically, and in policy terms for peacebuilding and conflict resolution. By seeing, hearing and understanding more about the potential contribution of youth to IR, by comparing and contrasting methods of creating listening and speaking spaces, by listing examples of youth agency in conflict and peacebuilding, and by examining the nature of their existing and potential contribution to peacebuilding efforts, it will become possible to draw conclusions regarding the significance of incorporating youth as a category within existing theoretical frameworks. This may help solve problems such as youth violence, and open a listening space for young people by means of tools for helping build a sustainable peace, such as generational impact studies, so that policy in post-conflict areas might become more inclusive of young people.

Perhaps what is even more significant, however, is that new models may also be formulated for assessing existing policy frameworks (such as the CRC as it applies to [EU] countries that have adopted it as law), and new means may be developed for measuring the effectiveness of the human rights regime vis-à-vis children. The voices of youth may also provide a path to developing significant tools for designing future projects in post-conflict areas, and assessing present ones, as well as contributing to the more general research on expanding the rights regime for marginalized groups. This is in keeping with the wider literature surrounding evidence-based research at the grassroots level that has already proven useful in providing a framework for peace (e.g. Sriram, [2007],

Mac Ginty [2011], and Pugh [2005]). As Richmond notes (2010b, p. 665), “Local agency has led to resistance and hybrid forms of peace despite the overwhelming weight of the liberal peace project. . . . in other aspects the everyday points beyond the liberal peace.” Given the impact of the liberal peace on the existing rights framework, before considering the theoretical, methodological, and empirical approaches that this thesis takes, it is instructive to contemplate the liberal peace and its impact in more depth.

Human rights and the liberal peace

The word *respect*, from the Latin *respicere* (“to gaze at, look at, regard, consider”), suggests that you actually *see* the person who is standing beside you. This research attempts to unveil young people in such a way that they might be seen as those who have always been in our midst, but who now may be further heard, and understood, as well as seen, so that out of recognition (and this will be examined more closely through the lens of recognition theories), there might grow respect. The word *respect*, itself, means to face, or to look towards; to treat, or regard with deference, esteem, or honor; to feel or show respect for; and to pay attention to, or observe carefully. Human rights may be interpreted as resting on the need for human dignity, couched in respect. So, in what ways are young people afforded respect, really seen and heard? And in what ways are they not?

What follows is a conversation of sorts, as the voices of those whose research has preceded that of this thesis, have provided a verbal foundation or embedding, for further understanding the complex interrelationships between human rights,

youth, liberal peacebuilding, and human security. In this way the research of this thesis becomes situated within the abovementioned context, thereby clarifying its potential contribution, and extending the body of research further.

Youth and liberal peacebuilding

In any discussion about young people, one of the first concepts in need of definition is that of *youth*, which is, among other restraints, culturally dependent. Later in this chapter more definitions of youth will be discussed, including the definition chosen for this thesis. But within the context of the liberal peace, it is important to acknowledge certain influences. According to McEvoy-Levy (2013), *youth* is defined “as those people who are customarily considered ‘not yet adults’ by their societies” (p. 296). This reinforces the concept that these definitions hinge on cultural expectations, and cannot be measured according to Western standards, despite the fact that they still often are.

So, despite the greater power of adult elites to police the boundaries of political action, those who are “not yet adults” possess and utilize different forms of power as well, that they express through a range of armed conflict-related and strategic peacebuilding activities.” (McEvoy-Levy, 2013, p. 297)

This introduces the idea that a space for youth agency is always there. The question is how such space is utilized, and the answer depends on the culture being studied, and upon its construction of childhood. According to McEvoy-Levy,

International peacebuilding often seems to favor pacification within the general population, prioritizing the prevention of direct violence while not pursuing justice, attacking some forms of culture as violent, but not others, and leaving structural violence systems intact while promoting neo-liberal economics and western-style democracy.

Youth-targeted capacity-building programs of economic development, health care, and conflict resolution training are, like other aspects of the “liberal” peace project, potentially subject to dynamics of orientalism and neo-imperialism. But, local, grassroots, “culturally sensitive” forms of peacebuilding also often reinforce elder power and exclude youth and their interests. (2013, p. 297)

As noted above, peacebuilding may be done in the name of future generations, but it rarely involves them directly in the decision-making processes. According to Richmond (2010b), “The reinvention of IR and of peacebuilding entails a shift from international prescriptions to local resistance, to liberation, and so to emancipation” (p. 692). This local resistance may often be put up by the young people as they seek their own forms of freedoms, and in this way, young people can exercise agency, but it may go unseen, or unheard. Examples include peer teaching, when young people lead and teach other young people. What also happens is that adults might interpret the agency in negative terms, within a context of violence alone, and not understand its full potential. For instance, they may see a child soldier commander and not realize that the intelligence, charisma, courage, and leadership skills necessary for this position will also serve the needs of peacebuilding.

In this way, a vast store of potential peacebuilding capacity, led and realized by young people, goes untapped. There is a certain gap in the literature with regards to attention to and the documentation of the positive contributions of young people in society, which can evolve into an increasing “securitization” of the issue of youth (McEvoy-Levy, 2013).

So, within the liberal peace model, with the so-called securitization of the issue of youth, comes their increasing marginalization. They are listened to even less, their participation drops even further, as they are used as token participants in peacebuilding processes, at best, and may be spoken on behalf of, or may be even completely ignored and patronized, at worst. In Chapter 3 this discussion will be addressed in more detail, as various ways in which the “youth bulge” may have an “upside” are explored. In Chapter 4 I will introduce a revised typology for examining the scale of tokenism, being spoken on behalf of, ignored, humiliated, and marginalized. Too often young people are only seen in one of two lights: victims or perpetrators. But just as there are many shades of behavior among adults, so too, young people can display the entire spectrum of behavior.

Sometimes the same young people who are seen as agents of violence, may play multiple roles, which include peacebuilding leadership. Seldom are nonviolent (or violent) youth identified as full actors in peace settings, political constituents or participants in setting up frameworks for redressing violence. Although urged to act as peacemakers, they are not often granted the skills or included in the responses to conflict in terms of governance and political measures (McEvoy-Levy, 2013).

In this way, the rhetoric that includes references to young people and their futures within a society adapting to changes they may have brought about does appear attractive, but is rarely sustained. This pattern repeats itself through history, despite a growing awareness of youth agency and various examples will be discussed and further referenced throughout this thesis. Even in more recent times in the summer of 2013, the cycle of excluding youth after revolutions repeated itself in both Egypt and Turkey. Youth took to the streets, but after their revolutions, the people in power were those leftover from the previous regime. Within a global order that is supposed to consist of stable liberal democracies, the general assumption may be that if there are too many young people, they disrupt political stability. In this way youth are politically scapegoated for failed reconstruction, failed revolutions, and failed peacebuilding plans (McEvoy-Levy, 2013).

Contemporary peacemaking is different for every conflict. Mac Ginty (2011)

issues several warnings with regard to the liberal peace:

Many orthodox and problem-solving approaches to revising the shortcomings of peace intervention seek to redistribute power. For example, they may seek to enhance local responsibility and encourage “local ownership” and participation.

But such power redistribution is often marginal and does not involve a fundamental rethinking of the meaning and location of power. It often is a superficial exercise that encourages local actors to conform to norms and practices established in the global north. A key aim of this book is to encourage us to think about how different groups interpret power. (p. 45)

Local ownership should include all segments of the population, especially young people, who have a vested interest in the future of their societies. How young people interpret power is linked to their sense of agency, as power and agency are closely related. This thesis proposes that participation leads to voice, which leads to respect, which leads to agency and then to power. Chapter 2, *Voice and Agency*, will attempt to unpack these concepts. Interpretations of local power may be completely different, or invisible even, to outsiders' eyes. A prerequisite, however, is safety, but as with the term *power*, human security can mean different things to different stakeholders.

Human rights and human security within the liberal peace

Human security can be broken down into several categories such as personal security, political security, environmental security, and community security. It provides a framework for further understanding the culture of human rights. This thesis now turns to a discussion of human security and liberal peacebuilding and where young people fit within this paradigm. This will further enable an exploration of how the potential of youth voice and agency may or may not be realized within current peacebuilding practices.

To start with, the role of individuality and the individual within human security and liberal thought needs to be explored. According to Begby and Burgess (2009), although the concept of human security is certainly rooted in individual rights and their political priority, human security is also a call to study the needs of concrete individuals in the practical settings of their lives. Wherever there has been prolonged conflict, certain material needs take precedence. These include:

freedom from persecution and the threat of violence; and freedom from poverty, hunger, and sickness. But as human security marks a distinct broadening of the liberal agenda, it also accommodates the idea that the “needs of human individuals to be part of larger communities is among their *basic needs*, inasmuch as it is through membership in such communities that individuals derive their basic sense of self and the value-sets around which they organize their lives” (p. 99).

The role of the individual in liberal peacebuilding, and indeed in the post-liberal peacebuilding framework of today’s world, is further discussed in terms of local contributions of everyday diplomacy. Richmond (2011) stresses that it is not enough to simply want to involve local populations, but rather a consideration for the “everyday” must also be paramount. He draws from examples of Bosnia, Kosovo and Timor-Leste to show that both a “deferment of and to the local, and a retention of powers amongst the internationals can be very problematic” (p. 108). In these countries, local tensions slowed down or blocked reform, as did some international peacebuilding efforts. Richmond states, “In all these cases attempts have been made to involve the local, while simultaneously depoliticizing it by failing to deal with everyday issues” (p. 108). Local actors see state-building as “undermining their right of self-determination and human rights; as portraying a lack of respect for their cultural norms; or as examples of either hegemonic or ideological Western conditionalities. These indicate serious dilemmas which the post-liberal peace might avoid via its concern for the everyday” (p. 108).

This can have serious ramifications for young people in these societies. As a marginalized group, when their voices are not heard, let alone taken into account or actively sought, then they may seek alternative ways of communicating. This is especially so in a post-conflict setting.

Richmond suggests that members of the international community could instead, “ask of disputants at the many different levels of the polity there might be, what type of peace could be envisaged, what and how care might be provided, and what is needed to understand, engage and support everyday life?” (p. 108).

This falls under the scope of moral imagination (Anderson, 1983; Johnson, 1993; Carolus, 2010; Gobodo-Madikizela, 2009), which will be discussed at the end of this thesis. But informed perspectives, especially among young leaders, could make valuable contributions to policy decisions on security, institutional building, democratization, rule of law, human rights, marketization and development. If this takes place within the context of responses to the root causes of the conflict, then peacebuilding occurs at two starting points, i.e. not just in stopping the violence, but also establishing a greater understanding of a local and everyday peace.

Richmond also refers to a conversation, and the importance of having the practice of discourse in place before a post-liberal peace might be realized. Implicit in this process is the need for both listening spaces and speaking spaces. Meanwhile, it is important to include representatives of various local actors, including young people. Such an approach represents everyday issues and the

solidarity of individuals, communities and social movements. Richmond states, “Recognition implies empathy, care, and thus, reconciliation, but the latter cannot occur before the former, and little can be achieved without a contextual understanding of the everyday” (Richmond, 2011, p. 109).

Again, *recognition, empathy, care, opportunities* are all terms that take on a fresh perspective when considered through the lens of youth participation. It means asking the questions: Who are the local players? What is the everyday? Where are the young people, and what do they say? This will be further explored in Chapter 3, *Youth and Agency*. Similar questions were asked about women in the 1970s, and this may be a point in the path of generational rights that runs parallel with the slightly more advanced path of gender rights.

Gender and generational concerns

The analysis of gender and the generational can be traced along similar directions. Watson (2008) explains the background of gender in IR, as a backdrop to marginalized groups in general, and young people, specifically. She makes the point that gender studies “paved the way for other critical analyses of actors and identities that have been marginalized from mainstream literatures” (p. 196), citing cultural feminists such as Cynthia Enloe:

Based on the notion that the personal can be political, Enloe reveals that private choices can impact the global political system in significant ways and to ignore them means also to ignore a fundamental element of the international system.

Indeed, factoring private choices may change how international politics is examined. . . . (p. 201)

Watson adds,

Thus, work on gender has itself opened up a larger discourse regarding other marginalized groups. For example, race remains little discussed within mainstream IR, and issues of generations have only recently begun to be examined.

... Crucially, gender allows an examination of the international system with a different lens, and a consideration of people as fundamental to IR as opposed to marginal to it – and this is perhaps the greatest lesson of all. (2008, p. 204)

As the marginalized, both as individuals and as groups, begin to appear on the edges of the IR field, they come into focus and their voices become heard, as was the case with women. This unveiling of a previously unseen perspective took place under the auspices of standpoint feminism. In tracing the path of standpoint feminism, similar pitfalls and objectives may be identified on the road to greater enhancement and realization of youth rights.

It should be noted that Enloe's voice, as such, was very different than the academic style of the time, yet her research resonates through the decades. From an academic style point-of-view, what some might consider as an unusual voice in this thesis strives to present the dilemma of (a lack of) listening to young people in a similar manner.

I refer to standpoint feminism in this thesis because it provides a potential path for generational studies that may run parallel with gender studies. Heywood (2011) quotes Tickner (1992) and describes standpoint feminism as a theory in which the world is understood from the unique standpoint of women's experiences. Standpoint feminists hold that what women sometimes experience at the margins of political life, grants them a unique perspective on social issues and insights into world affairs. This perspective is neither superior, nor more accurate than that of men, but it does provide valid additional insights into the complex world of global politics.

Standpoint feminism asks the question, "Where are the women?" In asking the question, the women appear. These range, for example, from the previously invisible contributions that women make, to shaping world politics—as domestic workers of various kinds, migrant laborers, diplomats' wives, sex workers on military bases and so forth (Enloe, 1989). This exercise widens our awareness and highlights the under-representation of women in leadership roles, at the national and international levels.

In similar ways, the literature around standpoint feminism points the way for highlighting the ongoing presence of young people, both in peacetime and war. In asking the question, "Where are the children," they appear, as factory workers, children of diplomats, criminals, peacebuilders, students, consumers, child soldiers, voters, and witnesses of genocide. Recent research has uncovered the use of children in a variety of roles, not just as victim and perpetrator. In Chapter 4 of this thesis, *Voice and Youth*, the role of youth participation as a means of

claiming agency is explored as a potential preventative measure for youth violence. But the international legal manifestation of youth voice can be found in the example chosen by this thesis, the CRC.

Youth and identity

CRC Article 12

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted in 1989. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC) was adopted in 2000. When the role of children in conflict is discussed, it is often limited to child soldiers and armed conflict. Many assume this is the purpose of the CRC, to prevent forced recruitment of children in conflict situations. And although it has served as a basis for prosecuting warlords and other adults who have forced children to serve in wars, the CRC is also a foundation stone in international humanitarian law and international human rights law. As such, it is the most broadly accepted piece of human rights legislation in the world. According to Doek (2011), But the CRC is much more than a human rights convention for the protection of children. The recognition of the child as a human rights holder is reflected in, for example, the provision that children are entitled to exercise their rights in accordance with their “evolving capacities” (Article 5). Furthermore, according to Article 12:

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child (emphasis added).

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has issued detailed guidance for the implementation of these rights. All children, including those affected by armed conflict, should be provided with “meaningful” opportunities—which need to be understood as a process and not a one-off event—to exercise their right to freedom of expression, which “relates to the right to hold and express opinions, and to seek and receive information through any media,” and their right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly—for example, forming student organizations. Children should be considered not only as objects of protection but also as individuals who can be *agents of change* (emphasis added) by exercising their human rights. Examples of this can be found in their participation in truth and reconciliation commissions in Liberia, Sierra Leone and South Africa.

Other rights are also important for the protection of children affected by armed conflicts—such as the right to have a birth registered and have a name, and the right to acquire a nationality and to know and be cared for by the parents (Article 7). (p. 11)

Although much of the above text highlights what often gets overlooked, what is significant are the parts in italics, with my own emphasis added: That children be allowed to form their own views, state these views, and that these views would be given weight—this is about voice and agency. These concepts will be further explored in Chapter 2.

Having established the human rights young people are entitled to, according to the CRC, it is time to further examine definitions of youth. Defining such concepts lays a foundation for the research that follows.

Definitions of youth

Any study of young people shares the common challenge of multiple definitions, varied according to historical, political, and cultural contexts. As previously introduced in the section on youth and liberal peacebuilding, depending on the culture, the youth are considered older in some parts of the world than in others. This is important to keep in mind when researching youth and attempting to apply knowledge about youth from one situation to another. And there certainly is no one legal definition of children within international human rights and humanitarian law. One example that illustrates this dilemma concerns the recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts. The CRC Protocol I contains Article 77, which prohibits the recruitment of children under the age of 15. Yet, the ILO Convention 182 prohibits the recruitment of children and defines them as persons under the age of 18. Meanwhile, the state parties to the OPAC are prohibited to recruit children under the age of 16.

While the United Nations (UN) defines youth as people aged 15-24, youth are, in reality, a heterogeneous group (Kemper, 2005). When they are classified as participants in armed conflicts, however, this exacerbates the problems of finding a common definition because it forces children to assume adult roles and functions. Another complicating factor regarding the ages of youth combatants is that aid is often earmarked for children, aged 18 and under, for example. This

means young people who were children when recruited, but have grown older than 18 during the conflict, do not benefit. To complicate things even further, many NGOs and international agencies use their own definitions. The World Health Organization (WHO), for instance, distinguishes between three different categories: adolescents (10–19 years old), youth (15–24 years old) and young people (10–24 years old). However, defining age chronologically reflects a research bias towards Western notions of “normal” childhood, which are rooted in biomedical theory and assigns a development stage to a particular age range (Newman, as cited by Kemper, 2005, p. 8). More and more though, the definition of “childhood” or “adolescents” must account for the functions of youth in a socio-cultural context, not just a particular age range.

In addition to the example mentioned above of former combatants, another example will be further explored in Chapter 5 of this thesis, *South Africa Fieldwork and Analysis*. My fieldwork reveals that in South Africa, many young people under the age of 30 deal with adult-sized problems and responsibilities, with their parents dead, dying or absent, and their younger siblings relying on them for food and school fees.

When the issue of youth definition is examined within the context of post-conflict societies, a vast potential is uncovered. McEvoy-Levy (2006b) states: But in many African countries, the term *youth* may apply up to age thirty-five or forty. The second reason for using the age twelve to thirty framework is that many human beings who are defined as children in international circles are in fact household heads, combatants, and laborers crucial to their economies. At the

same time, they are not politically enfranchised. But they may have specific needs, interests, and identities, *rights to voice* (emphasis added), and contributions to make. (p. 134)

So, for the purposes of this thesis, the terms “youth” and “young people” include children and teens of all ages, as well as men and women in their twenties, more specifically, people aged 19-30. The term “children” refers to people aged 18 and under.

In any discussion of the definition of youth, it is necessary to acknowledge how the question of age also influences the issue of victimization of children. The notion that they are simply victims is sometimes irrelevant, especially in war-torn societies. What is relevant is responsibility. Brocklehurst (2006), cites Nordstrom (1999),

It is both dangerous and unrealistic to look at the abuse of children, in war, in another country, in another context as if that were somehow different and more barbaric than the patterns of abuse that characterize our own everyday cultures, in peace and war.

Brocklehurst adds,

... Responding to children as inert victims may further disable them. The major implication is that children should be *active agents* (emphasis added) in negotiating their protection. Returning to an early issue of contained childhood, it is apparent that other aspects of survival, including children’s resilience are only now being explored. (2006, p. 47)

In reality, however, often the legal instruments that are supposed to protect “youth” are ineffectual against the social, political and economic forces enticing them to participate during war (Kemper, 2005). Rule of law is difficult to apply because of cultural contexts, and the inability of the international community to enforce such measures. There is no bite behind the bark so to speak, no military body set up to punish those who break international law. Sometimes, as in the case of the Congolese warlord, Thomas Lubanga Dyilo (who was the first case tried by the ICC and was brought up on charges of recruitment of children), criminals are arrested and brought to The Hague to stand trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC), but such cases are rare, and the trials complicated and prolonged.

Age, cultural contexts, and agency

As has been previously mentioned, cultural contexts are key when addressing the issue of defining youth. Indeed, the word *youth* is a relative term, used to refer to different age groups, depending on the culture.

Part of the problem lies with the infantilization of certain areas of the world. Brocklehurst (2006) points out, Focusing on the plight of the child is a technique frequently employed in the reporting of international news and foreign conflicts. Crises in faraway places intrude on our consciousness through the work of the media. The children whose faces and terror are zoomed in on, are part of what Erica Burman (1994) describes as the iconography of emergencies, or disaster pornography.

Children's faces demand responses. . . . Pictures of starving children dominated the film footage of the Ethiopian famine in 1985. (p. 17)

But when children are simply seen and not heard, this can be an act of robbing them of agency. According to McEvoy-Levy (2006b), the active agency of youth in a variety of military, economic, and social arenas is already visible as a means of creating and acting for peace. Yet these young people have little or no impact within conventional political arenas. Rather, those in power in these places are "adult elites who make political decisions, sign peace accords, write history, and distribute aid. So, all of these spaces of youth interaction are also spaces of marginalized voices" (p. 145). Despite this silencing of youth political voices, young people still manage to construct their own identities, as well as narratives in their everyday interactions that involve themselves in and create politics.

In this way, although identities and agency may be something young people create for themselves, influenced by others, they may still make choices and shape their own lives, thereby realizing their potential as agents of change. The fact that young people are involved in so many overlapping spaces of war and peace argues for a more pro-active soliciting of youth voices during any peace-building project. As noted below, the actions of youth have important impacts at every stage of an armed-conflict and peace-building continuum, as they play roles in both conflict and post-conflict scenarios.

The contours of postwar society are influenced by the roles of these youth in social and economic life—their crime, poverty, homelessness, labor, fulfillment of the routine tasks of caring for others and traveling to school, and formal and

informal peace-building work. As social, political, and economic agents, then, youth are a multidimensional force. But the roles that youth play in creating social understandings of conflict, through their actions and through their narrations of their actions, are not well understood (McEvoy-Levy, 2006b, p. 149).

In many ways then, young people are pushed out to the edge and, in the end, they often remain at the edges of conflict and peace societies. But this does not mean they do not exercise agency. When a segment of the population is marginalized, shoved aside, ignored, sometimes violence is considered the only alternative, as it becomes an act of communication in its own right.

CRC and voice

Before violence, however, communication can often occur through voice. When having a voice is guaranteed, as is stated in the CRC, and in particular the voices of young people, in order for there to be agency, these voices must be listened to. How might a society adopt measures enabling its young people to better speak up and speak out? Roger Hart is a sociologist who has written extensively on involving young citizens in community development and environmental care, as well as youth participation in their own healing processes as psychological patients. This concept will be referred to in more detail in Chapter 4, *Voice and Youth*. Hart was commissioned by UNICEF in 1992 to conduct extensive research on the levels of children's participation around the world, and related consequences for the respective societies involved. In Chapter 4 an analysis is

provided explaining alternatives to Hart's participation model and an explanation of why it is used in this research.

In his book, *Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care* (1997), Hart expands on his theory concerning the importance of involving young citizens in the growth of their societies. Though his writing is particularly focused on community development and environmental issues and youth participation therein, the general theories and notions on which his writing is based is applicable to other fields in which youth participation is of importance. Hart addresses conceptual issues such as the CRC as follows:

The CRC offers two complementary views of children: less powerful and less competent than adults and therefore in need of certain kinds of protection, and oppressed or constrained and hence needing more opportunities for self-determination. It is also believed that giving children more of a voice in their own self-determination will improve the protective aspects of the CRC. (p. 11)

And yet, the identities adopted by young people also affect their levels of voice and agency. Hart says,

Nevertheless, to the extent that children develop identities, a feature common to all of the theories is that identity is a social process rather than something uniquely within individuals. An understanding of the social world and an understanding of oneself are constructed in a reciprocal manner, influencing and constraining each other. (p. 28)

He warns that as identity patterns emerge with time, a few generalizations can be made, as cultural variations in identity and self-concepts vary on an individual basis. This means that any structures for participation that would enable youth voices to become better heard, must allow flexibility for children and adolescents to explore and develop their identities and actions in the world in ways consistent with their own cultures. In Chapter 4 of this thesis, Hart's Ladder of Participation (1992), based on Arnstein's (1969) work on adult participation, will provide a basis for the typology I have developed, the Vortex of Voice and Violence. This is rooted in my own research, and provides a means of measuring participation among marginalized groups such as youth.

The need for young people to define their own identity was demonstrated in the fieldwork for this thesis, as will be described in Chapter 5. Every young person I interviewed was clear about which South African language they spoke, thereby identifying with that particular linguistic group. Hart claims that only after a strong sense of identity has been constructed within young people, only once they feel they belong and own a community, so to speak, can they be expected to act effectively on behalf of themselves and of their community. He suggests then, that participation projects with children initially focus on the construction of expressions of their cultural identity, with a great emphasis on music, dance, and theatre. In creating these events, the children face the history of their culture and the roots of their possible poverty and discrimination. In this way they may develop a voice.

A young person's identity will contribute toward their ability to claim and receive both voice and agency. Young survivors of conflicts, however, have a unique spectrum of influences forming their identity.

This thesis will now turn to a brief discussion of common identity, collective identity, and how young people align themselves—or not—with a group identity, and how this affects their agency. Part of one's identity involves seeing oneself as a person who can or cannot make a difference, and this helps determine the extent to which someone may bring about change. Having an identity—when a person knows where they come from—helps them know better where they are headed.

Common identity and collective identity

For young people who have survived conflict, the memories of those raising them will influence their identity. Bad memories of one's culture influences the way in which that person will raise their child once relocated in another culture. People with good memories of their own culture will use that culture and be influenced by that culture. People with bad memories may shut that part of themselves out of the child-rearing process. A person's circumstances can influence their identity to such an extent that they may exclude themselves from their culture and exclude their children from that culture (Berman, 2010).

The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor has contributed to the fields of political philosophy, the philosophy of social science, and intellectual history. In his article entitled "No Community, No Democracy" (2003), he discusses several

topics, including collective identity and collective agency, and common identity and common agency.

Taylor begins the paper by discussing the rise of the modern, democratic nation, a nation founded on the principle of, what he calls, collective agency. Though he states that the term already existed before his reference, he claims that it has taken on a new meaning. He concludes that collective agency now indicates “an entity which could decide and act together, to whom one could attribute a will.” Though this entity is based on the principles of the majority rules, Taylor argues the need for a “strong form of cohesion” (p.17).

Taylor then continues to ask a very important question, the answer to which forms the foundation of modern democracy. This has ramifications for this thesis because Taylor’s imagined communities (Anderson, 1983) describe the groups and consequent identities that young people form so that they may exercise agency. Taylor writes,

What is the feature of our “imagined communities” by which people very often do readily accept that they are free under a democratic regime, even where their will is overridden on important issues? The answer they accept runs something like this: You, like the rest of us, are free just in virtue of the fact that we are ruling ourselves in common, and not being ruled by some agency which need take no account of us. Your freedom consists in your having a guaranteed voice in the sovereign, that you can be heard, and have some part in making the decision. You enjoy this freedom in virtue of a law which enfranchises all of us, and so we enjoy this together. Your freedom is realized and defended by this law, and this whether or not you win or lose in any particular decision. This law defines a community, of those whose freedom it realizes/defends together. It defines a collective agency, a people, whose acting together by the law preserves their freedom. (2003, p. 19)

Taylor outlines that through collective agency, one somehow convinces oneself of a kind of freedom; one somehow accepts a manner of belonging, a bonding with one's co-participants in this agency (p. 19).

In order to demonstrate how Taylor's ideas strengthen the argument in favor of youth agency, in the following quote, I have substituted in italics "young people" or "youth" for the word "subgroup," as Taylor's insights shed further light on understanding the links among young people's voice, violence, identity, and agency.

If, for example, *young people* of the "nation" consider that they are not being listened to by the rest, or that the rest are unable to understand their point of view, *young people* will immediately consider themselves excluded from joint deliberation. Popular sovereignty demands that we should live under laws which derive from such deliberation. Any *youth* who are excluded can have no part in the decisions which emerge and these consequently lose their legitimacy for him. *Young people* who are not listened to, are in some respects excluded from the "nation," but by this same token, they are also no longer bound by the will of that nation. . . . In other words, a modern democratic state demands a "people" with a strong collective identity. Democracy obliges us to show much more solidarity and much more commitment to one another in our joint political project than was demanded by the hierarchical and authoritarian societies of yesteryear. (pp. 21-22)

Taylor goes on to describe the level of trust that is required to keep this collective agency intact. Mistrust, he claims, "threatens to unravel the whole skein of the mores of commitment which democratic societies need to operate" (p. 23).

Taylor discusses the need for common identity, which in turn may lead to exclusion. He uses several examples, including ethnic cleansing, apartheid, the

treatment of *gastarbeiters* in Germany (but also in other parts of Europe, such as The Netherlands), and to some extent, he seems to question French commitment to a secular society, or *laïcité*. Concerning ethnic cleansing, Taylor claims that this is the more brutal example in which a group cannot, or is not allowed to assimilate into the reigning cohesion, before it is brutally excluded. Another example is apartheid.

Certainly, during the fieldwork conducted for this thesis in post-apartheid South Africa, this issue was raised repeatedly as young people and adults spoke of exclusion. Whether it was the Afrikaner student who could not get into university because affirmative action favored non-whites, or the Xhosa student whose English was not fluent enough to enable her to express herself, or the mixed-race man who said he used to be not white enough and now he is not black enough—they all expressed a sense of betrayal. They shared a deep-rooted frustration and sense of injustice, a precursor for the prevalent violence that has become South African youth's way of crying out. This crying out often manifests itself in violence connected with a certain collective, or group, identity.

Youth violence and group identity: Understanding radical protest

Jeffrey Murer researched over a three-year period the subjects of youth and youth violence in his “European Study of Youth Mobilisation Report: Listening to Radicals: Attitudes and Motivations of Young People Engaged in Political and Social Movements Outside of the Mainstream in Central and Nordic Europe” (ESYM). Based on this research (2008-2011), he highlights the 2011 youth riots

in England and investigates the motivation of the young people involved (2011a; 2011b).

Murer refers to the 2011 looting as a form of agency. During the period of intense rioting, there was also intense looting. Murer claims that in an odd form, looting was the youth group simply expressing their agency, and notes that they grew up in an environment that measures people by the money they have and the job they hold, and that society seems to measure one's success by the material objects they have and display. Having neither jobs nor money, these young people in 2011 resorted to looting to gain access to those material goods, and thereby claim agency (Murer, 2011b).

What Murer notes was confirmed in my own fieldwork, introduced later in this chapter, and discussed more fully in Chapter 5. The similarities demonstrated by my fieldwork include these issues of materialism as a form of agency, and indeed, as a way to boost young people's self-perception, especially when they feel that they are not being listened to and are misunderstood.

Escalating levels of violence, as well as linking violence as a form of communication to levels of participation have been introduced in this chapter and will be discussed further in Chapter 4, *Voice and Youth*. But for the purposes of this thesis, this is an important thread woven throughout the research and confirmed in both the evidence, theories, and methods adopted for supporting these concepts.

Introduction to theoretical and methodological approaches

In terms of its potential theoretical contribution, this thesis aims both to describe and to understand, in a qualitative manner, the agency and impact of youth within the existing IR discourse. Fundamentally this thesis is grounded within the theoretical framing of human rights. In addition, it will draw from the literature on recognition theories and social constructivism to consider how youth are presently framed. This will be elaborated further in Chapter 2.

Language plays a significant role in such framing (Fierke, 2010); the language young people use is a form of action that is constitutive of the world in which they live (Ignatieff, 2001). The field of IR includes extensive literature on the role of language in conflict (Wodak, De Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart, 2009; Wright, 1998), but significantly less on the language of peace (Schaffner & Wenden, 1995). This thesis proposes that as young people speak their worlds into being, i.e. exercise agency, their ideas may be utilized in practical peacebuilding initiatives, as well as drawing wider attention to youth and the social nature of their identity. Those ideas, however, can only be utilized if the voices of young people are actually listened to.

Listening is therefore a key element in this process. If the question: *What do the youth say?* is asked, it then becomes possible to listen to children's voices, to create a space for young people's voices in assessing policy, and to create a place where these voices are listened to. When the following question asked of young people is, *What do you need?* or *How can we work together?* then youth empowerment takes place. In examining these issues in more detail, this thesis

will explore their significance, as well as considering the roles – historical and contemporary – that youth have played.

An important aspect of this research is the exploration of how young people might participate in peacebuilding, might contribute to a more sustainable peace, or in other words, might speak peace into being. What are the consequences of decisions being made by adults working with young people when youth narratives are judged as attractive and expected, or disappointing, unexpected and dangerous or risky? The theoretical frame of recognition theories creates a space for listening to individual youth narratives, and as a means of analyzing their words in terms of social impact, both locally and for the international community. In this way, youth policy, both its assessment and design, can be compared and contrasted.

At this point, it must be acknowledged that it is one thing to write about listening to youth, but it is something altogether different to actually do so. This was one of the challenges I set out to confront during the fieldwork for this thesis.

Fieldwork

The case study for this thesis is South Africa, but other examples will be used to demonstrate the global significance of these topics. The following topics are addressed in greater detail and referenced in Chapter 5. Although South Africa is not a post-conflict society in terms of having survived a war, it is a deeply divided society. With eleven official languages and deep scars from the apartheid era, which ended a generation ago in 1994, it provides a plethora of identities

and perspectives and opinions about whether or not young people have a voice, as is guaranteed in a constitution (1996) that so strongly favors and protects the rights of young people.

In order to practically evaluate the nature of voices within a divided society, a number of methods were used. First, I conducted semi-structured interviews which included those with young people and adults involved in youth issues such as youth justice, reconciliation, counseling, children's rights, as well as youth mentoring, peacebuilding, and education. Quotes were collected, as well as examples of when youth narratives were (or were not) used as tools of policy assessment and project design.

Second, examples of youth agency, both positive and negative, were also gathered. Another reason I chose to conduct my fieldwork in South Africa was because of the country's history of youth involvement. Due to the historical anti-apartheid involvement of youth as resisters, I knew that on paper, at least, the youth might be more welcome to play active roles in certain aspects of society than in the EU, for example.

It should be noted that there were certain ethical issues needing to be addressed concerning the use of material that involved interviewing minors: permission from teachers, guardians and the young people themselves. This was, in itself, a sign of respect. And when at all possible, I obtained this permission. However, perhaps ironically, the most vulnerable young people had no one to sign these forms for them, and they spoke for themselves alone. This ethical aspect was

discussed in detail beforehand with the University of St Andrews School of International Relations Ethics Committee, and the University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC), who understood my dilemma and cleared my research.

Thesis chapter breakdown

This chapter has introduced the three strands which will be further unraveled in this thesis: voice and agency (Chapter 2); youth and agency (Chapter 3); and voice and youth (Chapter 4). Chapter 2 begins with a discussion of the theoretical backbone of this thesis, and moves to definitions and examples, and concludes with a discussion of agency, power, and violence. Chapter 3 examines the liberal peace and youth roles, then moves on to a summary of historical perspectives on South African youth, agency, and voice. It continues with an exploration of recognition and various perceptions of youth, then moves on to discuss examples of agency, and how a so-called youth bulge can have both an upside and downside. Chapter 4 provides the methodology of the research, investigating and building on ways of labeling and measuring youth participation, and its link to violence. In Chapter 5, the fieldwork for this thesis will be described and an analysis provided, highlighting four main themes that emerged. This is followed by an exploration of the role of the concept of “Other” when viewed through the prism of agency and voice. The concluding Chapter 6 ties up these threads and points the reader towards an unexpected direction, as youth become the case study for other marginalized groups who could use increased participation as a means to claim voice, and voice as a means of exercising agency. In so doing, this thesis attempts to provide a framework so

that peace may be spoken into being by not just youth, but all marginalized groups who find themselves voiceless.

This initial chapter ends with a question about the roles of young people and their voices within fractured societies. In addition, a query has been raised with regard to the IR discipline itself and what it does to gatekeep.² This query wonders whether one of the reasons young people are not listened to is not just because of who they are and what they say, but the way in which they say it, because of the language they use. Western scholarship asks certain things and hears answers only in certain ways, mostly when couched in academic language and peer-reviewed journals, both arenas where young people are not (yet) welcome.

This thesis is about my wanting to look at what this relationship between voice, youth, and agency really is. I based this on extensive readings and my past experiences and writings that gave me this idea, which was then influenced further over time. I went in search of Imbali and other young people with and without voices, with and without agency, hoping that their wisdom about how to deal with a deeply divided society might help me deal with my own. Might South

² It should be said, that though this history of arguing in favor of youth inclusion exists, it is limited and remains on the edges of mainstream research. For example, such considerations and issues would not be found in standard IR textbooks. As it is, gender and LGBTQI issues usually appear at the end of introductory texts, if at all, but considerations of youth, voice, and agency remain for the most part, absent in introductory IR texts. (See Mingst & Arreguin-Toft, 2011; Mingst & Snyder, 2011; Jackson & Sorensen, 2007; and Baylis, Smith, & Owens, 2008.)

Africa have some answers for an increasingly polarized Netherlands, or indeed, an increasingly fractured Western Europe, torn apart along religious and cultural faultlines (Galtung & Webel, 2007)? But most of all, I wanted to listen to the children's voices.

Chapter 2: Voice and Agency

Introduction

This chapter addresses how the concepts of voice and agency are intertwined, and how this intertwining takes on a special significance whenever the voices of marginalized communities are denied. An unheard voice can demonstrate powerlessness, an inability to exercise agency that will be explained further in this chapter. The concepts of voice and agency, though buzzwords that are increasingly being discussed (Tripses, 2004; Cornwall, 2010), are in fact quite contested (Parpart, 2010). Agency can mean different things in different circumstances (Klugman, Hanmer, Twigg, Hasan, McCleary-Sills, & Santari, 2014; Parpart, 2010); and with regard to voice, although there is a great deal of discussion about marginalized voices, and efforts *are* being made to hear marginalized voices, (see, for example, Klugman et al. [2014] on amplifying women’s voices; and see Narayan, Patel, Schafft, Rademacher, & Koch-Shulte [2000] for the World Bank’s collection of experiences of the poor), it is important to examine how this is done, and who is actually listening. If those with marginalized voices are merely being “allowed” to speak by others, then this only implies a continued state of gatekeeping. (See, for instance, Verloo’s [2005] critique on the Council of Europe’s approach to promoting gender equality.) As a result, voice and agency remain contested due to the questions concerning who has a voice and who has agency, both of which depend on the power structures that exist—whether from a local, national, or even personal perspective (Bourdieu, 1979; 1986; 1991; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989; Bourdieu & Wacquant,

1992). Moreover, whether or not a voice has power depends not only on having the ability to speak, but also on the opportunity to be heard, something again that is contingent on the listener (Dreher, 2009), and on the potential power wielded by that listener. This thesis maintains that only certain voices are listened to, and only at certain points. The focus of this chapter is namely on the voices not heard, and the systematic denial of recognition.

When focusing on unheard voices and the systematic denial of recognition, it is important to consider “recognition theory” (Honneth, 2014). This chapter will utilize recognition theory to begin to build the theoretical framework that underlines this thesis. Recognition theory is significant in the human rights literature because it begins to address the question of which groups are most marginalized and why. This also will be discussed, relating to questions concerning voice and human rights. This chapter will then include an analysis of hidden transcripts as a method of resistance (Scott, 1990), and resistance as a demonstration of agency, or power (Moore, 1998). It specifically looks at the vulnerability branch of recognition theory. Vulnerability is important because children are often seen as actors without agency, and a consideration of vulnerability and under-recognized people leads to questions of voice. The chapter then turns to a discussion of power and how voice can be used and whether it is hidden or not. In other words, what people are saying and what they are not saying all tie in with how voice is used as a way of coming up against power. As will be explained in this chapter, hidden transcripts can subvert standard power structures if the so-called powerless create their own contexts

for voice and agency. Given young people's vulnerability, they often find different ways of resisting, and in this "local" process, it is important to realize that private resistance is a form of exercising agency (Scott, 1985; Hollander, & Einwohner, 2004; Mac Ginty, 2014).

Thus, within the theoretical framework indicated, this thesis does two things: 1) in methodology terms, it exposes the actual voices of the interviewees and 2) it focuses on whether in policy terms, young people's voices are heard. As part of hearing these voices, this chapter points toward the fieldwork in Chapter 5, and explains how clustering takes place around the qualitative interviews. This clustering exists because I interviewed mostly people with a certain level of education. This thesis addresses issues of sustainable peace, and it was important to interview people in education because of the research relationship between people in education and sustainable peacekeeping. I deliberately chose to utilize the snowballing method (Beuving & de Vries, 2015) because by doing so it recognizes that I interviewed a certain set of people in a certain cluster (in this case education), which reinforces the relationship between academic research, peace education, and sustainable peacebuilding. This will be explored further in Chapter 5, but is introduced here as an indication of why it is important to focus on which voices are heard and those which are not. In addition, this thesis addresses whether in policy terms children's voices are heard, while in methodology terms this thesis exposes these voices, using the voices themselves, giving them a platform through which they might be heard. Recognition theories reinforce this process, which is deliberate as it highlights

the relationship between voice and agency and the significance of considering children's voices and participation.

The theoretical framework linked with this methodology serves to connect voice and agency with the concepts of recognizing individuals, exploring identity and difference, and hearing individual voices as a means of people realizing a fuller experience of human dignity. This chapter then turns to a discussion of the concepts and definitions of voice and agency, as well as how they are viewed in the existing body of literature. The concept of agency implies that of power, thereby adding to the discussion throughout the thesis. This chapter looks at various interpretations and definitions of voice and agency, or power, as well as drawing on practical examples to illustrate the terms' meanings. This is done in order to answer the questions of who exactly has a voice and who does not (Honneth, 2012), and how might agency, or power, and voice be related? Voice is specific to particular individuals, so the chapter begins with an examination of voice, before looking at agency, and ends with exploring how recognition links the two.

As a means of answering these questions and examining how voice can be used to exercise agency, the linking of voice, agency and hidden transcripts is an original way of bringing together the already existing research on these topics. This includes the importance of what is *not* being said, both among young people, and among adults concerning young people. This research asks, is there a

distinction between voices not found (in that subjects have yet to learn to speak up) and voices not heard (the systemic denial of recognition)? This builds on and can be embedded in a discussion about power, including ideas of social and cultural capital in the form of resistance (Scott, 1990; Bourdieu, 1991; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989; Bordieu & Wacquant, 1992). This chapter also examines the role of voice within Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs), as voices of victims contrast with voices of survivors and perpetrators in unique ways once this speaking space has opened (Plaatjies, 2011; Wilson, 2001). The chapter then goes on to consider the history of student activism, and explores the links between voice, violence, and nonviolence, as it examines the actual levels of agency voice may bring about with citizen participation (Tufte, 2013). The list of five examples illustrating how voice and agency may be linked and studied concludes with a consideration that (voice-based) identity, and not religion, is a major source of influence in “them and us” mentalities.

This thesis now turns to the utilization of recognition theories as a means of establishing a theoretical framework for the thesis, as recognition is a key concept in the process of relating voice and agency, or power.

Recognition theories and human rights

Voice, agency and youth, when viewed through the prism of recognition theory and human rights, reveal a surprising range of potential issues with which to draw conclusions regarding everyday peacebuilding. Recognition theory will be used in

this thesis to unpack the relationship between voice and agency. This helps to explain how the mechanisms by which youth are listened to and can contribute enable youth to claim agency within divided societies, thereby building on what this thesis has previously posited in terms of the consequent implications with regard to conflict and peacebuilding.

Recognition theories cover a wide range of topics, and here the thesis will refer to the theorists Turner (2006), Hayden (2012), and Arendt (1958). Turner's vulnerability theory is but one strand of human rights theory, and the issue of vulnerability will be examined further in this chapter. Another strand looks at what Hayden (2012) calls the "politics of sociocultural recognition." He claims that a:

recognition approach, which views rights claims as grounded on the vulnerability of the human condition, can show how rights are emergent in political action and that the ability to claim and exercise the human right to health is contingent upon recognition of diverse sociopolitical statuses. (p. 569)

Although Hayden is referring here to the human right to health, the framework he erects for recognition theories can be applied equally well to other violations of human rights among marginalized groups such as young people. He describes how inequalities "are exacerbated by social discrimination and political exclusion on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and language" . . . and "such inequalities have a profound impact on the unequal enjoyment of this particular right (and indeed of human rights generally)" (p. 570).

Following Hayden's suggestion, this thesis explores how recognition theories can help us grasp the ways in which social, economic, and political statuses are codetermined. It should be remembered that at the core of these theories is the aim "to get human beings to recognize other human beings as creatures worthy of their respect, concern, and care" (Turner, 2006, p. 41).

According to Hayden, a recognition theory approach to human rights:

reflects both on the vulnerability of the human condition and on what being fully human really means. This approach allows us to see human rights as sites of political struggle over what makes us the same and what makes us different from one another – struggles, in other words, for due recognition of our always precarious human status. (2012, p. 571)

Recognition theories are grounded socio-politically in the philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel (1977). Yet the ethics and politics of recognition, including the concept of the struggle for recognition, are relevant for normative theorizing about international politics (Haacke, 2005). This relevance is particularly apparent when considering the normative substrata of human rights claims as well as the day-to-day struggles of those seeking recognition of their human status on the simultaneously local-national-global terrain of contemporary politics.

The ability to exercise rights depends on the existence of recognition relations through which individuals self-reflexively acquire their distinctive identities, needs, abilities, and talents (Honneth, 2012). This contrasts with the conventional "liberal" view on human rights, which reflects an overly abstract understanding of

the rights-bearing subject as possessing certain natural or “inalienable” rights prior to, and independently of, all forms of social recognition (Forsythe, 2009). Yet as Hannah Arendt (1958) has stated in her critique of such human rights idealism, rights can be exercised only within relationships of mutual recognition. As demonstrated by the paradigm case of the stateless person – the ultimate outsider – rights claims remain politically irrelevant or ineffective if they are unheard and unseen by others who do not recognize the claimant as sufficiently human.

This is a key point for this thesis. The different strands of recognition theory described above highlight a certain route that links youth, voice, and agency with recognition. To “be human” is not a “self-evident” or natural fact; it is a sociopolitical condition that comes from being recognized by another as human. According to Arendt, being human is an interpersonal status that we mutually guarantee to one another through recognition in a public realm, characterized by the conditions of plurality and frailty (Arendt, 1958). This is particularly relevant due to the vulnerability of children.

This links the discussion of recognition theory and its various strands to vulnerability. It also helps answer the research question regarding how voice enables youth to claim agency within divided societies, and what the implications are in terms of conflict and peacemaking. In my own observations among young people I have witnessed their apparent lack of agency as a vulnerable segment of the population. This lack of agency is apparent because, when they are seen and

heard and considered fully human, when adults around them accord them this status, young people, despite their vulnerability, are able to exercise agency. As part of my research, one example which came up often at the end of my interviews involved the young people I interviewed telling me how much stronger they felt after telling their story. Additional specific examples will be discussed in the fieldwork chapter (Chapter 5).

The place of children was something that Arendt (2003) recognized too. She describes the agency attributed to school children during the U.S. Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s in the following terms:

However, the most startling part of the whole business was the Federal decision to start integration in, of all places, the public schools. It certainly did not require too much imagination to see that this was to burden children, black and white, with the working out of a problem which adults for generations have confessed themselves unable to solve. (2003, p. 203)

Arendt asks, "Have we now come to the point where it is the children who are being asked to change or improve the world?" (2003, p. 204). This question implies agency as during this case, for example, children were thrust into the media limelight as tokens. Although tokenism, as such, does not imply agency, as will be discussed further in Chapter 4, tokenism is better than being ignored or humiliated.

An example from my own research is when the South African government requires young people to be present during information-gathering sessions

regarding youth policy, but then no one comes forward with money to pay for lunches or transportation to and from the meetings. Indeed, the rights discourse is problematic regarding the UNCRC because it is not really about the rights of children, but about the obligations of adults. So then the claim can be made that youth from the communities were invited, or even worse that these young people show up and are not asked what they think about the issue. This ties in neatly with Arendt's political theory, which offers two insights crucial to recognition theory. She says, firstly, that we must appear, in speech and action, before others in a world of plurality in order to become fully human; and secondly, that plurality itself is constitutive of both equality and difference (or distinction) (Hayden, 2012). It should be remembered that the fact that humans have both the capacity for speech and action constitutes a common political world where we may appear to one another and disclose our distinct identities, that is, "who" we are. Arendt claims that the process of reciprocal recognition is such that it is the basis of human dignity. Dignity is based on worldly experience, and dignity is at the heart of human rights.

In another strand of recognition theory that can be linked to vulnerability, Honneth (1995) suggests that rights claims may be driven by the experience of suffering disrespect – the denial of due recognition of one's equal worth and particularity. He extrapolates from Hegel's argument about individual self-realization: "Built into the structure of human interaction there is a normative expectation that one will meet with the recognition of others, or at least an implicit

assumption that one will be given positive consideration in the plans of others” (p. 44).

My research raises the questions of how young people are seen, and if they are seen at all, let alone heard. Regarding the struggle for recognition experienced by all marginalized groups, it is more a struggle for justice on behalf of those who are vulnerable (Darby, 2009). This is because they fight against the act of others silencing and ignoring them, turning them into something less human, and as such, less deserving of humane behavior.

Vulnerability can also be viewed as a suspension of a person’s status as being fully human—who counts as a subject of justice, who determines the procedures for admitting and adjudicating justice claims, who is included in or excluded from a given political community, and indeed who is “human” (Fraser, 2008). One cannot become a subject of justice without being recognized, that is, seen and heard as an equal member of the political community. Misframing, or wrongly excluding some individuals or groups from making claims, can thus be construed as a form of misrecognition (Fraser, 2008). In other words, being able to claim standing with regard to a given issue is dependent upon mutual attitudes of recognizing others as having, or being entitled to, an equal voice and representation.

This is important because when young people are listened to as individuals, claim a voice, are given a voice, or become no longer voiceless, they exercise greater

agency and cross the bridge from victim to survivor, passive to active, taker to giver. In order to make these links even stronger, this thesis now turns to a more thorough examination of recognition theories and the human rights framework by means of exploring vulnerability theory.

Human rights and vulnerability theory

During the course of my fieldwork, I listened to young people and heard them demonstrate courage and wisdom in statements like, *"This isn't the life I chose,"* when referring to the heavy burden of caring for HIV-infected parents and younger siblings while studying. This is something demonstrated too in other research such as that by Carpenter (2010), who describes the plight of children born as a result of wartime rape. Although it might seem that agency and vulnerability have a directly inverse relationship, often the opposite is true. A young person still has a voice, even if no one happens to be listening. In the same way, a young person still has agency in the midst of their vulnerability. This thesis argues that rather than take a rights-based approach that focuses upon the legalistic dimensions of the attainment of civil and political rights, or of economic and social rights, a human rights-based approach, based upon qualitative research and an evaluation of the boundaries of youth agency in a post-conflict setting is preferred. This thesis argues that, in theoretical terms, the best way of pursuing such an examination is by focusing on vulnerability theory.

Vulnerability theory (Turner, 2006) brings together the concepts of human rights, marginalization, agency, vulnerability and recognition. Turner stresses the importance of human rights and defends their universalism. He notes that “[v]ulnerability defines our humanity” (p. 1). . . and that “[h]uman rights can be defined as universal principles, because human beings share a common ontology that is grounded in a shared vulnerability” (p. 4). . . . “In this sense, human rights doctrine is a revolutionary creed, since it makes a radical demand of all human groups, that they serve the interest of the individuals who compose them” (p. 8).

Turner explains how the field of sociology examines the social structures that create decision-making contexts, within which people are either able to exercise agency or are denied agency by circumstances outside of their control or even knowledge (p. 12). He explains the physical and moral vulnerability that all people share, regardless of status, race, or age. This vulnerability is exacerbated by conflicts at any level (pp. 16-17).

Turner bases his vulnerability theory on four fundamental philosophical assumptions: the vulnerability of human beings as embodied agents, the dependency of humans (especially during their early childhood development), the general reciprocity or interconnectedness of social life, and finally the precariousness of social institutions (2006, p. 25). This positions the moral issue behind human rights as one of recognition—how to motivate people to recognize other people as humans worthy of their respect, concern and care.

Turner's vulnerability theory is but one manifestation of recognition theory within the human rights framework that provides a better understanding of the link often made between young people and civil conflict and crime (McEvoy-Levy, 2006b). The use of recognition theory can offset negative youth stereotypes. Other potential contributing factors to young people being viewed as troublemakers include characteristics of new wars, such as high levels of unemployment and the exclusion of uneducated and unskilled young people from the post-conflict peace economy. Taking these and other factors into consideration reveals how critically recognition theory underpins the idea that mutual recognition will require mutual reflection and respect (Turner, 2006).

With regard to mutual reflection and respect, young people everywhere both struggle with and embrace a wide spectrum of influences around them, ranging from the effect of divorced parents who have caused them to move, to globalization, which brings previously foreign words, products and ideas to their doorsteps via the internet. But the issue of vulnerability with regard to voice and agency, remains a challenge for youth, as some events that shape lives are beyond the control of individuals, such as conflict. Both these events and the individuals caught up in them need to be recognized, acknowledged, and listened to. This is how agency and voice work together, especially for young people.

The roles of voice and agency will be further explored in this thesis now by investigating their meanings.

Voice

Definitions

The traditional definitions of *voice* include:

- “an agency by which a point of view is expressed or represented” (Oxford dictionary, 2013)
- “wish, choice, or opinion openly or formally expressed” (Merriam-Webster dictionary, 2013)
- “a stated choice, wish, or opinion or the power or right to have an opinion heard and considered” (Collins dictionary, 2013).
- From a political science point-of-view, voice is “Widely used to describe the articulation of demands for redress or recognition by marginalized or dissatisfied groups” (Calhoun, 2002, p. 505).

The preceding definitions are significant because they set the parameters for the rest of this thesis. If youth and agency can be linked to voice, then the interplay between voice and agency becomes clearer. An example of this from my own research is a South African policy that bowed to cultural relativism (Ignatieff, 2001) in allowing for Zulu girls to be examined in order to prove their virginity.

A 15-year old spoke about the humiliation she endured, and the hypocrisy implied by the patriarchal society enforcing this before the South African parliament, and the policy was reversed (L. Jamieson, personal communication, October 5, 2011). This was a case applying to Zulu young women. In Chapter 5 the case study of youth in South Africa will reveal identity paradigms along the lines of class, gender, and educational systems, as well as tribal affiliation. In addition, the interplay between voice and agency further illustrates the dilemma between adults' and children's rights, as well as the point that many voices make up a group's voice. This thesis will now consider other studies regarding the nature of voice.

Examples of voice

This section outlines five ways voice has been studied by other researchers so as to further demonstrate the links between voice and agency. Voice can take many different shapes, and may go unnoticed unless pro-active attempts are made to open up specific listening spaces. One such use of voice is as a means of resistance (Scott, 1990); this can also be explored in terms of "hidden transcripts." The other four examples which will follow are: 2) Voice within TRCs; 3) Voices reflecting societal violence; 4) Agency and citizen participation as voice; and 5) Voice and religion. These five examples were chosen specifically because they focus on aspects of voice that this thesis purposely explores, both theoretically and in practice, when analyzing the fieldwork contained in Chapter 5. Hidden transcripts are about recognition and power. Voice within TRCs is of particular relevance to South Africa, the case study of this thesis. Societal

violence when voice does not work and citizen participation are different forms of the same phenomenon that occurs when government power structures control who is being heard. The threads of these five examples will be picked up later in Chapter 5 within the themes revealed by my qualitative research, namely identity (hidden transcripts), and history (TRCs), together with the disconnect between rhetoric, reality, and rights (societal violence).

1) Hidden transcripts

This exploration of the relationship between voice and agency in terms of hidden transcripts reveals a limited literature on participation and development with regard to gender (Cornwall, 2003), and very little actually linking voice, agency and hidden transcripts. This thesis attempts to do just that, the results of which might be construed as an original contribution to advancing the discussion. My work adds to how agency is perceived within this context. According to Scott (1990), “Rebels or revolutionaries are labeled bandits, criminals, hooligans in a way that attempts to divert attention from their political claims” (p. 55). This demonstrates the power of language and framing. It also demonstrates that by labeling rebels and revolutionaries with the above-mentioned terms it criminalizes them and, thus, makes it easier for other people to violate their human rights because these terms can somewhat dehumanize people in certain contexts. Scott states that often negative terms like deviance and delinquency, or even mental illness, are used to describe youth. As a result, the public transcript creates a perceived unanimity among the ruling groups and the appearance of consent among subordinates. But this actually causes a repression of differences

and indeed a repression of recognition, which ties back to the theories previously discussed. Questions of agency are questions of power and position regarding where and how a particular group can resist government structures that repress them (Clegg, 1989).

Scott says what is not noted are the disagreements, informal discussions, and off-guard commentaries. These are the hidden transcripts—the voices spoken but not heard. They occur at “informal but protected sites” (1990, p. 56). These critiques of hegemonic power often occur in plain sight, or at least in earshot. These subversive discourses are forms of resistance; indeed, they make up social capital in their very forms of resistance (Bourdieu, 1986; 1991; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989; Bordieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Scott also discusses the bonding role anger plays. This is important because of the often-used stereotype of angry youth by the media, a subject to be further discussed later in this section with regards to student activism and violence leading up to revolution. He further elaborates on the notion of social sites, as well as marginalized groups who act as carriers of hidden transcripts. These can be equated with degrees of freedom, with respect to having been “othered.” This concept will be further explored during the analysis at the end of the fieldwork chapter (Chapter 5). Hidden transcripts are just one way that voice enables youth to claim agency, or power, within divided societies.

The social sites of the hidden transcript are those locations in which the unspoken riposte, stifled anger, and bitten tongues created by relations of

domination find a vehement, full-throated expression. . . . Voiced in a sequestered social site where the control, surveillance, and repression of the dominant are least able to reach, and second, when this sequestered social milieu is composed entirely of close confidants who share similar experiences of domination. (1990, p. 120)

Such alternative ways of exercising voice can be found among many marginalized people. There is a particularly poignant parallel, however, with the 19th century slave culture of the southern U.S., used as an example by Scott, and the non-white members of South African society who suffered under the apartheid regime. Before 1994, for example, the non-white population had its own ways of, and own places for, communicating. One manifestation of this was the anti-apartheid protest songs, which were sung in local languages to the tunes of lullabies, by black nannies caring for white babies (personal communication with John Samuel, 2011). The irony of this hidden transcript only adds weight to the inevitability of how voice enables people to claim agency.³ In South Africa's case, voices heard and unheard are what prepared the way for a new and controversial tool in post-conflict reconciliation: the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

2) Voice within the South African TRC

After apartheid ended in South Africa, the country's leaders sought creative ways to cooperate in opening listening spaces so voice could be exercised by non-white groups. One such way was through the Truth and Reconciliation

³ This echoes Bordieu's notion of distinction (Bordieu, 1979), or how class segments separate from each other by their contrasting attitudes and choices.

Commission (TRC). The South African TRC defines a certain category of truth as a “personal/narrative” truth that aims to confirm “the individual subjective experiences of people who had previously been silenced or voiceless” (Alidu, Webb, & Fairbairn, 2009, p. 138). Although TRCs are yet another example of the ways voice has been studied, they have also sometimes provided platforms for voices of both the victim and perpetrator. In giving voice to the so-called voiceless, it is often overlooked how crucial the interplay between victim and perpetrator can be in the promotion of this voice (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, 2002). This granting voice to perpetrators is one criticism of the TRC process in South Africa.

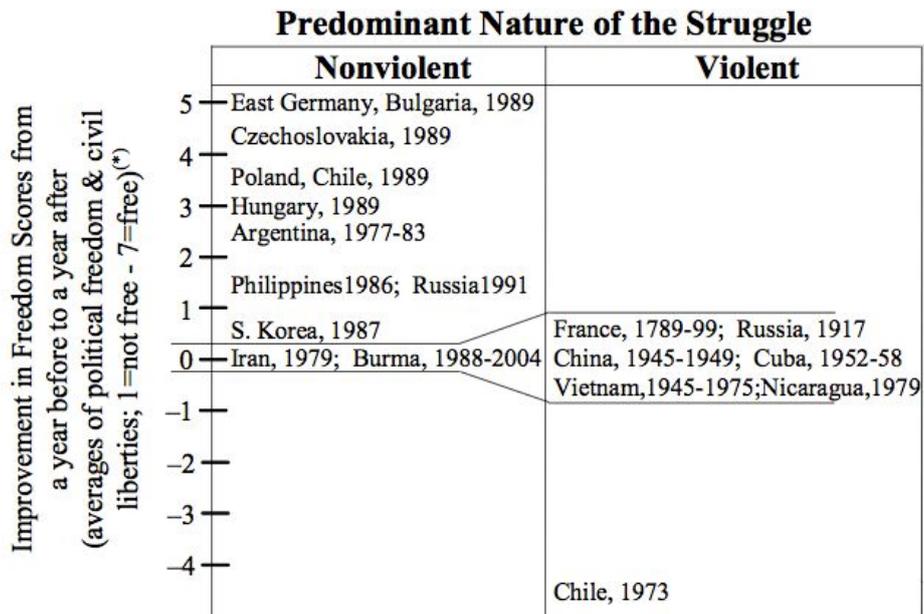
Regarding the specific voices of past victims in South Africa’s case, the legislation governing the TRC challenges the entire nation, that is, victims, survivors, perpetrators, beneficiaries and bystanders to rise above their emotions of resentment, retribution, fear and indifference. This translates into a focus on the identity of the citizen, rather than the victim, in order to create a new and different kind of society, within which the bigger picture of national unity and reconciliation is promoted (Villa-Vicencio, as cited by Rothfield, 2007).

Whether or not the people in a post-conflict country decide to initiate a TRC process is one way of exercising agency, while another is to raise a collection of voices calling for change, as in the case of revolution.

3) Voices reflecting societal violence

Voice, or a lack of voice - or people not having their voices listened to -, often cause individuals to resort to violence as a form of communication, when in fact, violent revolution may have fewer long-lasting ramifications than non-violent revolutions. Spencer Graves (n.d.) makes a differentiation between violent revolutions (French, American, Chinese) and non-violent ones (South African, Indian, Velvet, American Civil Rights Movement). Graves quotes Gene Sharp (1973), in that “violence tends to concentrate power, while nonviolent action tends to diffuse it” (p. 9). The key is civil society or, in other words, levels of participation among marginalized groups, and their consequent agency and voice.

The figure below is taken from Graves’s “The Impact of Violent and Nonviolent Action on Constructed Realities and Conflict” (2005). It shows that violent revolutions, with a mere single exception, tend not to improve freedom within a society. Instead, the improvements in freedom come not from violence, but from the nonviolent negotiations that precede or ran parallel to the violence, such as the town hall meetings in pre-revolution America.



(*) Freedom House scores for events since 1973; author's assessment for previous events; see the text and Appendix 1.

Figure 2. Impact of Violence and Nonviolence on Freedom and Democracy

So while both non-violence and violence may be the end result of marginalized groups like youth claiming agency through voice, voice clearly links participation and agency.

4) Agency and citizen participation as voice

The fourth example of how voice has been studied is in terms of participation, as introduced above. According to Bifulco (2013), the relationship between voice and agency can be demonstrated through asking what powers and what freedoms are involved in participation and “How are they constructed and increased?” (p. 1). In other words, what is the nature of the agency in voice?

Voice provides alternative perspectives, and in order to hear the story from different historical perspectives, it is necessary to have different people providing their versions of the truth. The concept of altering historical narratives will be revisited in the fieldwork chapter (Chapter 5), as this became a major theme within the qualitative research I conducted for this thesis. According to Bifulco (2013, p. 179), there needs to be an awareness of an “active, autonomous individuality, full of initiative.” Democracy and freedom are concepts tied up with the dignity of individuals. And individual stories are what often decide how future truths will be told and interpreted. But the stories must resonate with others, and this is more likely to occur when both the listener and teller share common themes, such as freedom and dignity. According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), development and human rights share the common motivation of enhancing people’s ability to pursue a life of freedom and dignity (UNDP, 2000). The example of revolution, introduced in the previous section, can be viewed in terms of people seeking lives with greater freedom and dignity.

The last example of how voice has been researched looks at the “othering” potential of religious profiling and the role of identity.

5) Voice and religion

Identity is another major theme that emerged from the fieldwork conducted for this thesis. The last example of how voice has been studied follows from the idea of differentiating between groups. It explores the role of voice and religion, highlighting how it might not be so much religion, as identity that acts as a

partial contributor to conflict. Rosen (2010) has spoken about the impact identity has on war and violence. He challenges and disputes the general notion that religion was the reason for most of the great wars. Rosen deconstructs the argument and claims that one should not blame these wars and violence on religion, but actually on the simple human need for identity (and belonging). Because people are in constant need of belonging, they often easily accept an identity assigned to them. Rosen's efforts to bring together faith leaders from different backgrounds involved in various conflicts (including Northern Ireland and Israel) helped these conflicts de-escalate, even if they have not been completely resolved.

Rosen uses the image of a spiral to illustrate the behavior of particular identities, whether good or bad. These circles within circles demonstrate how feeling secure inside a family teaches respect for other families. This has a ripple effect, enabling one to affirm the broader context of respecting other communities, nations, and religions. He states that when the different components of human identity feel uncomfortable in the broader context, they could very well isolate themselves, cutting themselves off from one another and causing a heightened sense of alienation (Rosen, 2010). This alienation can both break identities, and make a new one, that of not belonging.

Rosen's observations regarding religion and identity bring the consideration of various ways voice has been studied full circle. These five examples reveal

certain links between voice and agency. This is important to remember in terms of youth voices and agency due to expanding identity issues regarding marginalization and the Other. This thesis now moves on to an exploration of the various meanings of agency, or power.

Agency

Definitions

As with the definition of youth, this thesis adopts the view that the definition of agency is also dependent on the geographic and identity culture being discussed. In other words, what is clearly an example of agency in one culture might not be considered so in another. As an illustration of this, a theoretical definition of agency taken from the field of anthropology (Ahearn, 2001) warns that conceptions of agency may differ from society to society, and explains how these could relate to notions of personhood and causality (Jackson, Karp, & Skinner, as cited in Ahearn, 2001). Agency is often defined in terms that limit it in a narrow or simplistic manner. Sometimes agency is discussed in terms of free will, as in the field of philosophy concerning action theory. But this approach barely acknowledges, if at all, the social nature of agency and the pervasive impact of culture on people's intentions, beliefs, and actions. This latter concept can be found in other fields, including psychology, history, anthropology, but especially within the theory of social constructivism in the field of international relations.

More traditional definitions of *agency* describe it as follows:

- “an action or intervention producing a particular effect” (Oxford dictionary, 2013)
- “the capacity, condition, or state of acting or of exerting power” (Merriam-Webster dictionary, 2013)
- “action, power, or operation” (Collins dictionary, 2013).

So for the purpose of this thesis, when trying to further define agency, I utilized an African-based definition, as opposed to European-based definitions, and specifically one from the University of Stellenbosch (South Africa). The definition adopted for this thesis, then, is: “To some extent all three contributions maintain use of a general, academic shorthand notion of agency defined as **‘an ability to act’ or ‘ability to change structures’**” (Brown, 2011, p. 12). I drew on this South African definition given the case study of this thesis. This is a record of work, part of which was conducted in South Africa and as such, attempts like this have been made to decolonize the academic praxis.

In addition to pointing out cultural bias in definitions of agency, there is one more theoretical definition, which needs to be highlighted, this time from the field of sociology. Here agency also embraces choice and freedom (related to the free-will definition introduced earlier), but in addition, it ties back to the discussion of democracy needing an “Other.” This view discusses the reconceptualization of human agency “as a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented toward the present (as a capacity to contextualize past habits and

future projects within the contingencies of the moment)” (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, pp. 963-964). Social action as a form of agency is complex and needs to be situated in time, with actors oriented toward the past, the future, and the present at any given moment. As contexts unfold, there are varying degrees of maneuverability, inventiveness, and reflective choice shown by social actors in relation to the constraining and enabling contexts of action. This affects the degree to which people are able to claim and exercise agency within divided societies.

Using time as a means of interpreting agency leads up to a discussion in Chapter 5, observing how young people may prove instrumental in bringing about change, before being sidelined once power has shifted (O’Kane, Feinstein, & Giertsen, 2013). The temporal aspects of agency are also reflected in the fact that young people do not remain young. With time, they grow up and their roles shift, as does their potential for being listened to and for bringing about change. This bringing about change is, indeed, the common denominator to definitions of agency (Clegg, 1989).

A more academic definition of agency can be found in Craig Calhoun’s *Dictionary of the Social Sciences* (2002):

The capacity for autonomous social action. Agency commonly refers to the ability of actors to operate independently of the determining constraints of social structure.

This more general albeit social scientific usage of the word emphasizes the problem of autonomy itself. In this context, agency connects with human intentions, the nature and social construction of free will, moral choice, and political capacity. Calhoun stresses how agency suggests not merely the ability to act, but the ability to do so in ways that demand the recognition and/or response of others. As a final definition, Heywood's *Global Politics* (2011) defines *agency* as the ability of human actors to influence events.

It is important to note the linking of agency and recognition, as this confirms the conclusions drawn in Chapter 1, regarding recognition theories as a prism through which these concepts might be better understood. Defining agency helps designate what it is exactly that youth are claiming within divided societies. This, in turn, sheds light on not-yet-recognized contributions by young people toward both increasing conflict and building peace. These definitions bring to the fore previously unseen or unheard voices, or partially unheard voices. Asking the question, "What do young people say about this?" opens a space where they may contribute, and as a result of this, they may not feel the need to turn to violence as a form of communication.

The relationship between voice and agency is crucial in identifying actors and their potential power. Hannah Arendt (1970) has written significantly about power, agency, and violence. As recognition theories place the value of difference

at their core, seeing agency and voice through the prism of recognition theory enhances a greater understanding of the links between agency or power, voice, and violence.

Agency, power, and violence

Arendt argues that violence is recognized as having a practical character. It is a means, whereas power is an end, presupposing the collective will of a group (Arendt, 1970). In order for violence to occur, therefore, there must be a violation of a person physically, or in terms of their integrity, autonomy, or dignity. So violence affects persons' bodies, while power affects actions (Bourdieu, as cited in Smith, 2008).

Bourdieu addresses the concept of social capital in the form of resistance (1986)⁴, as well as the notion of distinction (2002). When power is denied, this causes those excluded to unite as a group defined by their very powerlessness. Wacquant and Bourdieu (1992) describe the

“field of power” as the relations of force that obtain between the social positions which guarantee their occupants a quantum of social force, or of capital, such that they are able to enter into the struggles over the monopoly of power. (p. 229-230)

⁴ Ranciere (2004) emphasizes how the political struggle is, rather than a rational debate between multiple, interests, more and at the same time, a struggle for one's voice to be heard and recognized as the voice of a legitimate partner. To have one's voice heard means having the so-called excluded demonstrating in favor of their very right to be heard and recognized as an equal partner in the debate (1152/2656).

For example, Wacquant and Wilson (1989), describe a state of “acute social and economic marginalization” (p. 9) among Chicago’s inner-city African-American community, due to joblessness and economic exclusion. These same factors contribute to a similar form of marginalization among many of the South Africans I interviewed: a form of exclusion due to socio-economic factors. This point will be elaborated on in Chapter 5.

Bourdieu also refers to linguistic capital (1991), which is confirmed in my own research which demonstrates how in South Africa language is the replacement for race differentiation (to be discussed further in Chapter 5). “This linguistic ‘sense of place’” (1991, p. 508) or *habitus* has a bearing on the nature of discourse and its inherent power, something confirmed by interviewees Krog and Murithi in Chapter 5, when they describe how so few South Africans speak any one language fluently and what the ramifications are of this in terms of social capital. The *habitus* Bourdieu refers to are dispositions, the ways we behave, act and think because of socialization, family, or other cultural influencers such as school. Bourdieu’s notion of distinctions (1986) is further confirmed in my discussion of stereotypes and generalizations near the end of Chapter 5. He states:

the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world, i.e., the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices. (1986, p. 15)

Bourdieu explains how “different types of capital (or power, which amounts to the same thing) change into one another” (p. 16). Voice emerges as a form of resistance, and agency can be exercised despite hegemonic opposition. Becoming reflexive of one’s own *habitus* is also a means of exercising agency. These reflections and recognitions are significant due to interaction and group identity, and need to be recognized as such.

Bourdieu (1986) also shows how the use of education can enable agency among youth by increasing their cultural capital and thereby their (potential) power. Bourdieu’s research into explanations of unequal scholastic achievement among children of different social classes reveals a social structure “sanctioning the hereditary transmission of cultural capital” (1986, p. 17). Bourdieu states that the so-called “scholastic yield from educational action depends on the cultural capital previously invested by the family. Moreover, the economic and social yield of the educational qualification depends on the social capital, again inherited, which can be used to back it up” (p. 17). This, too, was confirmed in the interviews for this thesis, as it was not enough for young people from the communities to receive a bursary, or scholarship to an elite school; rather, they also often lacked the home environment required to succeed academically.

In addition, violence often may be a response to shame of some sort. This confirms a major tenet of this thesis, in that marginalized groups also use violence as a form

of communication and a means of a last-resort type of agency. This will be explored from several perspectives throughout the thesis.

Definitions of marginalization

Throughout this thesis, youth are referred to as a marginalized group. Among the many definitions of marginalization, the Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) (2000) states that to begin with, it should be understood that marginalization is not limited to poverty, but is, most likely, accompanied by poverty. This is confirmed and discussed in Chapter 6, when poverty is designated as a primary societal faultline (Galtung & Webel, 2007) within the context of a deeply divided society.

According to CPRN, poverty can often be a marginalizing factor in its own right. Yet, while an absence of economic resources may characterize a certain marginalized group, a lack of social and cultural knowledge, political rights and capacity, recognition and power are also factors of marginalization. People living on the margins of society who are unable to work also thereby become excluded from one of society's major integrating activities. This only exacerbates their attempts at full inclusion (Young, 1990). Again, this is upheld in my own research, as youth who remain unemployed are often also the ones who turn to violence as a means of agency. In Chapter 5, the high rate of unemployment among South African young people will be cited as a further example of young people remaining excluded.

Young states that marginalization is not randomly distributed in any population: “There is a growing underclass of people permanently confined to lives of social marginalization, most of whom are racially marked. . . . Marginalization is by no means the fate only of racially marked groups, however.” On the list, Young puts youth, the long-term unemployed, single mothers, people living with disabilities, aboriginal people and the elderly (Young, as cited by CPRN, 2000, pp. 1-2). When people are marginalized, they become vulnerable. As a minority, often such people need to call upon the protection of others. This was the motivation behind the human rights culture (Shue, 1980).

Conclusion

This chapter on voice and agency has attempted to extend the conversation about the potential involvement of young people in conflict and peacebuilding scenarios. Youth, violence, and the marginalization of youth were discussed from a theoretical point of view, calling on political philosophers and theorists such as Arendt, Honneth, Turner, Bordieu, and Wacquant. The very meaning of marginalization was discussed, as were the human rights theories of vulnerability and recognition. Several definitions of both agency and voice were presented, and then five examples of voice were used as illustrations of just how significant a role voice may play. These were: 1) Hidden transcripts, 2) Voice within TRCs, 3) Voices reflecting societal violence, 4) How agency and citizen

participation can function as voice and 5) The role of voice and religion, as reflected in identity.

My research demonstrates that *agency* and *voice* are linked, creating a unique synergy that exceeds the mere sum of their parts. More voice generates more agency, and more agency creates increased voice. Their definitions overlap and extend one another. When a hidden voice becomes listened to agency, or power is exercised. It is part of the definition of being a marginalized group to not have one's voice heard. So a lack of voice and marginalization are also related. And to be "othered" involves marginalization.

The discussion regarding agency, or power, and voice links the different strands of recognition theory and illustrates how so-called hidden transcripts emerge as a form of resistance against the perspective of the holders of hegemonic power, who are then able to dehumanize and commit structural violence against youth when they are discussed in terms of being deviants, delinquents and/or criminals. Through exercising voice, the exclusionary acts of hegemonic power can be counterbalanced when unity and inclusion are created among those, such as young people, whom hegemonic power defines as marginalized.

All these processes involve an element of fear. Fear is also often a motor behind the othering or making of marginalized groups. To counteract this fear, participation plays a key role in people's ability to effect change. The matter

becomes further complicated when the group being considered is one whom society traditionally has told: “You may be seen, but not heard,” such as often is the case with young people. This will be addressed in Chapter 3, which will explore the interconnectedness of the above topics, continuing the discussion raised in this chapter, regarding voice and agency, and going on to highlight the links between youth and agency.

Chapter 3: Youth and Agency

Introduction

Emotion serves as the link between the previous chapter and this chapter highlighting youth and agency, The previous chapter latterly introduced the recognition of both the significance of emotions—in this case fear—in a conflict situation and the awareness of the difficulties that mainstream discourse has in incorporating both emotions and voice. Although in recent years there has been a significant development in such literature (Fierke, 2005; Pupavac, 2002), the more visceral emotions such as rage and fear have long been of particular interest to international relations scholars focusing on conflict (e.g. Horowitz, 1985; Petersen, 2002), with such attention having increased even further more recently (Halperin & Schwartz, 2010). It is these emotions, however, that may be the real catalysts for change, as they fuel civil society and give focus to voices calling for change (Halperin & Schwartz, 2010; Jarstad & Hoglund, 2015). Therefore, understanding them is important for our examination of the nature of agency in contemporary conflicts. The topics of human rights and vulnerability discussed in the previous chapter open the way for this chapter's further analysis of youth and agency, which begins with an analysis of the liberal peace within this context.

This chapter sets the background to the case study in Chapter 5 and the interviews I conducted in South Africa. With regard to these issues within the

South African context, the significance of voice is highlighted through a historical overview of the role of the youth in bringing down apartheid, as it relates to youth and agency. Of course, youth voice is never united, as illustrated by the South African context. In addition, there will be an analysis of how the youth have been excluded in South Africa since 1994.

In this thesis I ask what the significance is in listening to youth voices as a way of adding to our understanding of conflict and peacebuilding. And because this thesis is about youth voice(s), the qualitative methodology that will be outlined in Chapter 5 allows others to speak, in order to explore the importance of youth agency. Unlike the image of children as passive victims in conflict and post-conflict areas, children's participation can contribute to peacebuilding as they organize children's associations, create safer environments and rebuild civil society by influencing school and local governance planning. Besides, listening to children and engaging them in peace talks allows us to more clearly uncover and attend to the structural factors that impede peace (Feinstein, Giertsen & O'Kane, 2010). My findings, based on listening to children's perspectives, provide potential guidelines for policy making with regard to youth (Feinstein, Giertsen & O'Kane, 2010). As such, this chapter acts as a bridging chapter between the exploration of voice and agency (Chapter 2) and that of voice and youth (Chapter 4). In this chapter, the roles of youth and agency in conflict and peacebuilding will be further explored.

The fieldwork discussion in Chapter 5 will demonstrate that youth agency is nuanced, a concept this chapter unpacks in terms of the potential role youth may play in the policymaking process (Watson, 2006). By assuming they are absent, or take part in only one or two specific roles, such as either troublemaker or peacemaker (McEvoy-Levy, 2006b), we are not looking at how they might exercise agency in other functions. The liberal peace and what it considers—and does not consider—may help determine who has agency and what is heard, especially in policymaking arenas (Mac Ginty, 2014). When given the chance, though, young people can also play a major role in the development of policy. As my research shows, some young leaders in war can shift into peacetime with relative ease, when allowed to draw on the skills they developed during conflict (McEvoy-Levy, 2006b).

Note that agency remains a contested concept, however, as was discussed and referenced in Chapter 2. My discussion of the definition of agency in Chapter 2 has already highlighted the significance of measuring youth engagement by using a clear definition of agency. This thesis contributes to the existing literature on how personal narratives and an evaluation of methods of advocacy can elucidate youth engagement (Hammack, 2009; Harland, 2011; Senehi, 2016). This chapter will also examine the concept often referred to as the “youth bulge.” Discussions about youth in conflict often refer to this, or a population with high percentages of youth as having negative attributes such as higher levels of violence and crime. Huntington (1997), Urdal (2006), and Kurtenbach (2008) have all said that the issue of youth bulge is particularly significant, which this chapter aims to

further unpack, by asking if there might be an upside to the youth bulge, and what might it mean to invest in young people? A number of examples will be used to demonstrate how this can have some surprisingly positive results, including one country's post-conflict restructuring of priorities.

This broader survey of the social sciences will demonstrate the (potential) significance of youth and agency within the field of IR (Chatty, 2010; Lee, 2010; Jeffrey, 2012; Staeheli, Attoh, & Mitchell, 2013). This chapter also raises questions about trying to understand young people through more attentive and pro-active listening, a subject further explored in Chapter 4. This chapter outlines the significance of youth agency, particularly within the field of IR, which will lay the groundwork for a more in-depth methodological analysis in Chapter 4. In Chapter 1 *Introduction*, youth was defined, and for the purposes of this thesis reasons were provided for adhering to a 30-or-under definition of young people. Chapter 2 *Voice and Agency* contained definitions of both those terms, and explored how questions of agency are questions of power and position. For example, where and how can a particular group resist government structures that repress them? In this thesis, I am advancing the discussion of the relationship between marginalized groups and theory. In this chapter, I add to the ongoing conversation about agency, providing an additional dimension to current arguments. This chapter will now bring together youth and agency, while continuing to explore the means of bringing agency to a marginalized group, a theme that will be further explored as the thesis progresses. The way in which

these concepts are placed and discussed in this thesis provides an original way of considering the roles of young people, their voices, and consequent agency.

The liberal peace and youth roles

This section introduces another theoretical stance which adds to recognition theory, and adds to the discussion regarding voice and agency. When exploring the significance of youth to international relations, in terms of their agency, it is important initially to determine the general conceptualizations of youth agency within IR. Choosing to use a human rights framework is a choice that enables the research process.

The liberal peace looks for certain things and tends to narrow down the reasons for conflict, in fact simplifying what can be extremely complicated contributing factors. With regard to youth, the liberal peace promotes democracy and strong institutions (Heywood, 2011), but one should also remember that youth often face unemployment. In general, there is a lack of consideration about the needs of youth within the framework of the liberal peace (Mac Ginty & Williams, 2009).

Within the framework of the liberal peace the individual is amorphous, not young or old (Richmond, 2010b). In addition, as previously mentioned, emotions such as fear and how it affects individuals are not dealt with by the liberal peace. As my own research demonstrates, a key aspect of human security is that it is

meant to be enforced by the local population, and yet, within the liberal peace framework, there is little or no listening space for young people. Criticism of the liberal peace often refers to the lack of consideration of local factors and nuances (Richmond, 2010b; Mac Ginty & Williams, 2009). My thesis is in keeping with this critique, and highlights these local voices at a grassroots level.

Another illustration of how the liberal peace model might fail is that youth are often doubly marginalized because of race and age, as a result of intersectionality (Gopaldas, 2013; Horsford & Tillman, 2014; Stewart & Bassel, 2014). Ageism provides an additional layer of othering, so that a person may be othered because they are both young and black, for example.

In order to illustrate how youth agency and youth voice can evolve and interact in practice, this thesis uses South Africa as a case study, and other examples to demonstrate global significance. The present chapter now expands its discussion of youth and agency from a critical perspective of the liberal peace and an examination of transitional justice, to a layering of the forces at work behind the TRCs. This will be followed by a more theoretical analysis of youth and agency, using recognition theory.

Historical perspectives on South African youth, agency, and voice

Youth involvement in South Africa's struggle for human rights in the apartheid era can be traced back to the founding of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) under the ANC in the late 1940s (Cooper, 1994). However, the banning of the ANC after the Sharpeville massacre of March 21, 1960 forced many youths into exile and a certain political hiatus emerged (Brooks & Brickhill, 1980). Against this backdrop, the rise of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and the South African Students' Organization (SASO) in the 1960s marked the re-emergence of youth onto the political scene. Vis-à-vis their parents who were exercising their political struggle through labor strikes in the decade that followed, these historical junctures facilitated the development of a politically-aware student community that would make their mark known, such as during the Soweto uprising in 1976, which would establish the leading role of the ANC in the struggle against apartheid. The new youth movement was seen to be handed the reins of the struggle, becoming the main anti-apartheid change agents for over twenty years from the late sixties to early 1990 (Cooper, 1994).

The Soweto uprising in many ways facilitated the outbreak of violence among the townships in the 1980s, instigated largely by young ANC supporters. This was coupled with high levels of unemployment among the generation of politically active youth who had missed out on schooling during the 1970s; further fueling crime and violence. By the late 1980s, the government did not have complete autonomy over many of the townships, and this generation was increasingly sensationalized and portrayed as violent youth in the mass media (Cooper, 1994).

The role of the heroic youth thus took on a new meaning towards the end of apartheid, which Seekings (1996) describes as follows: “Between 1989 and mid-1993 South Africa was gripped by episodes of ‘moral panic’ focused on the political and social threats supposedly posed by young black South Africans” (p. 103). Broken family structures, a struggling economy, boycotted schools and street violence were seen to have bred a *lost generation* of marginalized youth.

The youth problem could of course be traced back to the turbulent revolts in townships and rural areas in the mid-1980s, where young black South Africans boycotted schools and demonstrated on the streets against the state security; actions which were supported by the larger anti-apartheid movement. However, there was now a growing idea that the militancy of unorganized youth needed to be channeled into disciplined action, that they needed to be held responsible and accountable to the entire community, out of fear that the youth might become a threat to society, rather than just a threat to the state (Seekings, 1996).

The view of youth became more cumbersome during the changing political conditions of 1989-94. Across the entire political spectrum, the youth were seen as posing a threat to the transition negotiation process. Political leaders played an important role in perpetuating the role of the youth problem with the then-ANC leader Walter Sisulu admitting that it was not easy to negotiate with them because so many young people had become angry (Kraft, 1990).

To combat this, the ANCYL was charged with the difficult task of incorporating its members into the ANC's chosen tactic of negotiations. A back-to-school campaign initiated by churches and the democratic movement proved unsuccessful however, and overall there was a recognition that most young people had slipped through the cracks in the transition period (Seekings, 1996).

According to Cooper (1994), from the center stage that they had enjoyed for more than 20 years, the youth were now denied the opportunity to fully engage in the transition process, not only during apartheid, but also by the resistance to it. Exclusion from the political process was seen as a betrayal by many who had sacrificed their education and personal development during the resistance years. A generation of under-educated youth leaders of the anti-apartheid struggle was now being treated in a patronizing way by both the oppressor and oppressed (Cooper, 1994). Suddenly, the youth who had borne the brunt of the struggle against apartheid were regarded as being non-essential and even dangerous to the central discussion and negotiations and the political process following the end of apartheid.

Youth in post-apartheid South Africa

The idea of youth exclusion is central to this thesis, especially because it supposes that the next generation of leaders will emerge from among the politically active youth. Thus, the disengagement of youth in the peace process

and the shaping of their political attitudes and skills in such a period have had important long-term implications for sustainable peace in South Africa. This section continues the discussion and presentation of historical perspectives on youth, agency and voice with specific reference to South Africa as the case study of this thesis. This is illustrated by means of the following comparison of post-apartheid South Africa with apartheid South Africa, highlighting how youth played a significant role in resisting the apartheid regime. This is important because it provides the coherence and structure for an overarching frame for the entire thesis.

It was black secondary school pupils who precipitated the 1976 Soweto uprising which helped contribute toward the expansion of a national resistance struggle. Secondary school pupils organized national school strikes paralleling the black industrial labor strikes organized by their parents and other adults, which secured some concessions from the apartheid authorities. Whilst the youth played a critical role in bringing about the end of the apartheid era, and whilst their role was acknowledged in the 1994 elections, where the voting age was lowered from 18 to 14, once negotiations began and the armed struggle stopped, the youth were expected to return to their normal lives. McEvoy-Levy states that “this was in part a recognition by leaders that youth have special needs – particularly educational ones – but the youth themselves felt cheated of decision-making power ... In the long run this marginalization of youth during transition has posed significant challenges to the post-[a]partheid governments as it is

linked with the development both of criminal gangs and alternative youth policing bodies” (2001, p. 10).

Dissel (1997) notes the irony of the situation, that the transition from the politics of resistance to the politics of negotiation – from the armed struggle to sophisticated dialogue – resulted in the marginalization of the young people who helped bring about the change. youth. Many of the youth movement leaders of the youth movements were lost to power politics in the negotiations.

In addition to physical exclusion, the highly-politicized activities the youth carried out during the liberation movements greatly contributed to the identities they constructed of themselves. These constructed identities did not suddenly change after the elections. Even with the end of apartheid, many of the problems related to poverty remained in the townships. These included provisions of education and job creation directly affecting the mostly black youth.

Building on Mannheim (1936) and Danziger’s (1963) study, Dawes and Finchilescu (1994) note that, post-apartheid South African society failed to provide clear sources of ideals to the youth such as those that were present during the resistance to apartheid. In addition, the wider social situation in South Africa provided many threats to a smooth transition from adolescence to adulthood. The perceived identity coupled with the grave situation in the townships could be viewed as an indication of a youth bulge in South Africa.

This autonomy of youth is highlighted by Lewis (1998), when he states that the codification of children's rights on the basis of incompetence promoted a discourse representing a fundamental attack upon the notion of the autonomous individual as a legal subject.

Jensen (2008) argues that as crime and violence emerged as important national and local political issues, township residents increasingly came to be viewed as the obstacle to transformation. This took place against the backdrop of the dismantling of traditional family structures, the death of guardians due to the AIDS pandemic and the increased responsibility of youth to be primary breadwinners in the family unit. Turning to violence and crime, therefore, was in some cases a means of the youth to gain agency against a state apparatus that was failing them.

Leoschut and Burton's (2009) list of the causes of youth violence and criminality highlights this point. The list includes elements such as exposure to crime and violence in families or communities, poverty and unemployment, gender and conceptions of masculinity, peer relationships, acquisition of material goods, the state of security in the country, substance use and abuse, the family environment, and children's rights and responsibilities; factors which are present in the daily lives of the majority of (black) youth of South Africa.

Indeed, it may not be surprising that youth have increasingly turned to gangs and violence thus leading to a culture of violence with young people seemingly in the center. Potgieter-Gqubule and Ngcobo (2009) state that this is related to the parents of children today, the former of which are the very generation who grew up amidst the violence and repression of the 1980s, a context they characterize as demonstrating a breakdown in respect of authority.

Leoschut and Burton (2009) identify nine key factors that enhance the resilience of youth and are crucial in breaking the cycle of violence. These are: education (keeping young people in school and providing them with opportunities for post-school education), gender (how young men and women relate to violence and crimes, and gendered interventions), support for the creation of non-violent family environments, limiting exposure to criminal role models, substance abstinence, interactions with non-delinquent peers, reducing child and youth victimization, and changing societal attitudes to violence and anti-social behavior.

Indeed, whereas South Africa has made progress since the end of apartheid to ensure better education and employment conditions, there is still a system of marginalized young people, deprived of opportunities and who have been left voiceless. An even more worrying factor in this is the exposure and participation of young people in violent crime. The reproduction of a culture of violence in both homes and schools needs to be remedied by comprehensive policies that

foster education, positive role models, positive peer interactions, support to families and safety at home and at school; factors which will undoubtedly enhance the resilience of youth. In effect, post-apartheid South Africa has ironically witnessed a demobilization of the political role of youth with the end of the anti-apartheid struggle. The issue of youth voices in South Africa is not merely their absence, but also the betrayal of their erasure from active engagement. Young people in the Soweto uprising changed South African politics, were included in the transition, and then were dismissed by the very political forces for whom so many young people made great sacrifices. The preceding means that policy changes are needed in order to better enable young people to exercise their agency.

Much of what took place in South Africa can be analyzed by means of recognition theory, especially the rise and fall of youth agency and youth voice. As noted, young people's views and voices became increasingly ignored, consequently their agency deteriorated after 1994.

Recognition

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, recognition theorists argue that recognition can shape or even define our sense of who we are and our value in society as individuals (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), a discussion which is resumed here as a means of enhancing the understanding of the connection between youth and agency. As demonstrated in the above section about South Africa's

historical background, the ways in which people are recognized and the ways we recognize others significantly influence their quality of life and that of our own. Who is doing the recognizing is a political issue (Bourdieu, 1986). The relationship between a sociological explanation and normative assessment needs also to include an acknowledgement of the psychological conditions for recognition, which is tied in with relations of social justice (Honneth, 2012). Honneth's arguments can further highlight the significance of youth and agency when we study experiences of disrespect or humiliation as yet another form of social recognition (Honneth, 2007). In Chapter 4, these states, as well as additional steps such as being ignored, will be used in a typology I have created that links the potential for violence with a lack of voice. But at this point, recognition theory can also be linked with the aforementioned freedom promised by the liberal peace, but not delivered, as freedom from fear, as well as other freedoms, go unaddressed. Too many obstacles prevent the social freedom that could emerge from mutual recognition (Honneth, 2014). This is significant for my own work because it illustrates the need for opening up listening spaces for young people, as well as hearing their individual voices (Senehi, 2016).

In my own research, it was while listening to a lecture by the author of a paper quoted in Chapter 2, Patrick Hayden, that I understood how recognizing people as individuals could help remove prejudice in a deeply divided society. This is supported by the wider literature, including Kochi (2009) and Kristeva (1991), in which the issue is addressed as one of determining who is doing the recognizing and the implied power and privilege of that act. My own fieldwork

was influenced by Hayden's research about the South African health system needing to look at people as individuals, since young people could not be classified as having typical teenage complaints because many of them were already care-givers for dying parents and orphaned children.

The following survey of various peacebuilding and conflict situations worldwide explores the roles played by young people, providing valuable comparisons among post-conflict countries (Kurtenbach, 2008), as well as a reinforcement for my own decision to define youth in terms of cultural aspects. As already mentioned, one role involves young people being seen as catalysts for violence. And here, the research shifts slightly from discussing local peacebuilding rules to peacebuilding and conflict situations. These conflicts are often exacerbated by means of the so-called youth bulge (Kemper, 2005).

Perceptions of youth

As mentioned previously, too often young people are generalized as a source of violence, but this is a polarized view, and when engagement and agency enter the discussion, it becomes easier to see the peacebuilding potential of societies with large populations of young people. This section presents the shortcomings of the youth bulge concept and offers an alternative perspective (Izzi & Kumar, 2013). This is significant because it raises questions about how children are viewed—both within societies, and within the field of international relations—what is said

and not said, heard and not heard, and relates back to the ongoing discussion in this chapter concerning youth and agency.

In general, there is wide agreement on the relevance of youth bulges for conflict analysis in terms of whether young people in a post-conflict society can find jobs. If they are unable to do so, this might mean instead that they can be mobilized for war. But there is still debate on the relative significance of factors other than unemployment, such as poverty, and the type of state authority in place. In fact, youth bulge theorists are divided among themselves as to whether young people's violence is ultimately caused by greed or grievance, promotion prospects or inequality and poverty (Urdal, Heinsohn, & Youssef, as cited in Kemper, 2005). Even the very discussion on the youth bulge, both in terms of its content and style, is controversial as to whether it affects the image of youth and ultimately the policies toward them (Tabyshalieva & Schnabel, 2013). For example, several U.S. experts on national security have listed the youth bulge as a threat to U.S. national security, placing it within the context of the current war on terrorism (Hughes, Huntington, & Zinni, as cited in Kemper, 2005).

This is of relevance to the research of this thesis because it demonstrates how young people sometimes have not been consulted, and it amplifies what may have been previously ignored voices with the potential of bringing about positive change in deeply divided societies. The issue of poverty's effect on this situation will be further discussed in Chapter 5, when the restricting factor of socio-

economic limitations arises. This section now turns to addressing the youth bulge in more detail.

Samuel Huntington (1997) writes about the “youth bulge thesis,” referring to it as a major contributing factor to violence. He argues that societies with a high percentage of young men who find themselves unable to imagine a future for themselves are more likely to fall into conflict as a result.

But Henrik Urdal’s (2006) quantitative research paints a more nuanced picture, suggesting that youth bulges are usually linked to relatively organized forms of low-intensity political violence and smaller conflicts, rather than to large-scale war. Other researchers agree (Wagschal, Schwank, & Metz, as cited in Kurtenbach, 2008), and point out the significance of context for youth and youth violence.

Research from the fields of criminology, sociology and psychology (Dowdney, Dubet, Hagedorn, Klein et al., as cited in Kurtenbach, 2008) point to three common risk factors for young people to become violent:

1. Personal experiences of violence in the family or in society;
2. Peer groups and other forms of collective organization related to violence;
3. Economic and political environments that influence or change the perspectives for the future.

Keeping this in mind, youth is important for conflict and peace analysis beyond the demographic factor for at least two reasons:

1. Youth is a decisive phase of life and personal development where past and future meets and interacts and where the personal transition from the family to the larger society takes place.

2. Youth is the most important phase of life for the acquisition of values and norms in the socialization process. The concrete experiences young people make (with adults, with peers, with society) during this time affect their future behavior to a great extent. How a society deals with youth before and during war as well as after violent conflict ends will thus have a lasting impact on the sustainability of peace (and democracy) (Kurtenbach, 2008, p. 4).

These peacebuilding efforts need to provide the following services to young people, in order to succeed: protection, advocacy and socialization. A closer look at the need for advocacy demarcates the link between violence and voice. Youth advocacy plays a major role in peacebuilding efforts, and is often a key function of both local and international human rights organizations. This, however, usually focuses on young people aged 18 and below, leaving those aged 18-30 with no one speaking on their behalf. "This lack of attention can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy as youth might turn to the armed groups or others involved in the conflict for protection or just for survival" (Kurtenbach, 2008, p. 8). Often these are labeled as problem youth.

Youth perceived as problematic

Young people can have their agency restricted, often because of how they are perceived, but perceptions can change. One of the reasons young people are sometimes considered in a negative light in urban areas, as well as in conflict zones and developing countries, concerns certain pervasive psychological theories. Specifically, according to Ginwright and Cammarota (2002),

Throughout the 1980s and into the early 1990s, psychological theories of human development dominated the youth development field, explaining how children progressed through natural stages or rites of passage leading to adulthood. Much of what we know about adolescents is therefore based on psychological models of development. Although this theoretical work has informed our knowledge of youth, its central focus is identifying youth problems such as delinquency, substance abuse, and violence.

In the early 1990s, the youth development field began to promote youth assets, rather than focusing on youth problems. By promoting youth assets, scholars reconceptualized policy and practice by placing an emphasis on emotional health, empowerment, and exploration. Additionally, youth development practitioners and researchers reframed their most basic assumptions about youth in ways that viewed them as agents and acknowledged their self-worth and self-awareness. For example, Pittman and Fleming (1991) argued for a paradigm shift from thinking about youth as problems in need of fixing to positive youth development, which emphasized developing young people through skill and asset building. (pp. 83-84)

In this case, the field of psychology provides answers to both the past dilemma of viewing youth as problems, and the present challenge of including youth when searching for peacebuilding solutions. These answers can be juxtaposed with IR fields such as peace and conflict studies, where youth can also be often seen as risky or a threat (Brocklehurst, 2006; Stephens, 1995). Indeed, youth agency revolves around the question of how young people negotiate, contest, and challenge the institutionalized processes of social division within which they find themselves (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002).

How adults view young people is not the only consideration, however. Of equal importance is how youth view themselves (Watson, 2009), and both these perspectives need to be added to how the field of IR views young people, when assessing the significance of youth and agency. The process of young people activating their agency includes an increased awareness of critical consciousness and empowerment, as explained here:

However, people can only truly “know” that they can exercise control over their existence by directly engaging the conditions that shape their lives. We argue, therefore, that social action and critical consciousness are a necessary couplet; that is, acting upon the conditions influencing one’s social experience leads to an awareness of the contingent quality of life. [...] We become closer to our humanity and agents of our own development when we reflect and act to transform the conditions influencing our existence.

The integration of critical consciousness and social action is how young people make sense of, and begin to transform, their social world. Through their own praxis, they explore their own and others’ experiences with oppression and privilege. Critical consciousness and social action provide young people with tools to understand and change the underlying causes of social and historical processes that perpetuate the problems they face daily (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002, pp. 87-88).

As young people realize that they do in fact have control over their lives, then a world of options may open to them, many of which offer an alternative to violence. These choices provide opportunities for exercising agency, and when young people claim this agency, there are implications in terms of conflict and peacebuilding. This section helped demonstrate how perceptions of youth as being problematic affect their agency, thereby limiting any positive contributions they might make toward sustainable peacekeeping.

Troublemakers and peacemakers

Peacebuilding strategies that do not take into account the multiple roles and needs of young people in a post-conflict society severely weaken their potential for achieving sustainable peace. To view children as only victims or perpetrators ignores the other political roles they might play, such as soldiering, and social roles, such as maintaining families. There are various motivations and roles of youth, and complex analysis is necessary when assessing the strengths and

weaknesses of any post-conflict reintegration program. McEvoy-Levy (2006b) states, "To build peace in a post-accord environment, it is vital to engage youth in positive ways, enable them to assume a positive role in civilian society, and integrate them to communities" (pp. 27-28).

It should be kept in mind that young survivors of war may have been militarized, been exposed to experiences of death, either through witnessing it firsthand or through committing acts of murder, and may have experienced widespread exposure to other such atrocities. In addition, they may have learned leadership skills and may know how to communicate effectively. Employment and saleable skills training increase dignity and prospects for a better life. Young people can also fulfill roles "as leaders, advocates and activists, and as agents of social change, as well as peacebuilding" (McEvoy-Levy, 2006b, p. 213).

As previously mentioned in this thesis, when young people's plights are improved, society as a whole often benefits. This can also occur at the level of societal healing. McEvoy-Levy provides the example of generational healing and emphasizes the role of young people as critical thinkers.

Three generations of Holocaust survivors, the questions that successive generations ask, and the dialogues they investigate about the past, can have a healing effect for those involved. This is a contention borne out by the studies in this volume – the role of the next generation in asking critical questions is central to their role as conflict transformers. (2006b, p. 287)

Another illustration of how young people may contribute in a positive way, thereby benefiting society as a whole as they exercise agency, is in the field of development policy. The following section provides a blueprint for youth participation that can be superimposed onto other fields of policymaking. This is an important answer to the research question of this thesis, namely how voice enables youth to claim agency within divided societies.

Perceiving youth as serious political stakeholders

This section includes examples explaining why young people have not been taken more seriously in the political realm, and how they have been restricted in exercising their agency.

As previously mentioned, Article 12 of the CRC grants all young people the right to participate, or have a voice, in matters that affect them. Although most countries in the world adhere to the CRC, what it outlines in terms of giving youth a voice, and how this plays out in actual practice are often two disparate realities (Franklin, 2002). The question as to why youth have not been included in the policymaking that affects their lives needs to be asked since possible answers may help to shed some light on what the next steps forward might be, in terms of greater youth inclusion. This is one of the aims of this thesis.

Curnan and Hughes (2002) discuss the Community Youth Development (CYD) movement, another example of what this thesis calls youth exercising agency. The CYD states that it is grounded in equality and justice, compassion, and sustainability. The approach attempts to focus on the interdependence among people, families, and communities globally. They advocate something that falls in line with recognition theory, and view the creation of better social, economic, psychological, environmental, and physical health for all young people rather than the “diagnosed problem” model of treatment. The latter fails to look at the whole person, the individual within the context of families and communities. “Youth are seen as a collection of problems instead of as future parents, neighbors, and workers who need maximum adult involvement, teaching, and encouragement to grow and be productive citizens” (Curnan & Hughes, 2002, p. 4).

This is a neoliberal dilemma as neoliberalism is about the individual, but not about that individual’s specific characteristics. An example cited by Curnan and Hughes (2002) and confirmed in my own fieldwork research is how the entire community benefits when young people’s needs are met in an improved manner.

Examples of agency

The global examples of youth agency that follow complement the case study of South Africa, to be discussed in Chapter 5. These global examples illustrate how youth who have survived conflict have skills that are desperately sought after in

the realm of peacebuilding. This moves the thesis closer to an exposure of how young people in divided societies might play multiple roles simultaneously, and of how youth agency and youth voice can contribute to a more sustainable peace.

This thesis looks at the roles youth play in peacebuilding, and how these roles have been overlooked by policymakers. Post-conflict young people are often only considered in IR as lacking skills or employment opportunities (Watson, 2009). Rather, there are myriad ways in which young people can acquire the same more specifically practical and career-oriented skills as adults.

Youth participation in development policy

The Department for International Development (DFID)-CSO is a working group of 11 organizations (British Youth Council, International Planned Parenthood Foundation, Peace Child International, Plan UK, War Child, etc.) and a wider network of more than 30 organizations concerned with youth involvement in international development. The example it provides illustrates how young people's voices could be incorporated in policymaking efforts such as those previously mentioned as necessary in South Africa. Established in 2007, the goal of the working group is to put young people at the heart of development. One of the three key areas of the working group's aim is policy, which aims to suggest evidence-based improvements to new or existing DFID policies and programs in support of young people (DFID-CSO, 2010).

Toward this aim, DFID funded a guidebook on involving young people in development policymaking. The guidebook (DFID-CSO Youth Working Group, 2010) details the added value that youth participation brings to the work of donor agencies and policymaking. Several of the DFID case studies found that young people can improve policy processes by contributing their knowledge, experience and commitment. Examples of how this works include: sharing on-the-ground experiences to inform policy; and expressing and conveying the ever-changing nuances of the everyday issues they face. It was found that consulting young people on the policies that affect them would result in their long-term commitment to development processes. In addition, engaging young people in post-conflict countries in policy making could help minimize youth engagement in civil unrest. Consulting young people is an inherent part of designing policy that affects young people, and yet the effectiveness of this is often overshadowed when adults speak on their behalf, rather than soliciting their voice and participation (Schwartz, 2010). Furthermore, when involving young people, it is also important to integrate more than just what is often termed as youth elite.

Youth agency in peacebuilding

Children's rights and agency are inextricably entwined. My research addresses what young people say, and just as significant, what is not said, when listening spaces are opened up (Senehi, 2016). The following examples from across continents provide some insights into how peacebuilding efforts using youth voices might occur.

In Papua New Guinea during the nineties young people who were involved in conflict were being spoken on behalf of, by elders in their town who claimed responsibility for the dispute settlement, even though the young people were those doing the fighting (Wiessner & Pupu, 2012). This example illustrates how young people are often spoken on behalf of by a wide range of adults, varying from politicians to parents (Brocklehurst, 2006). Other examples include rhetoric by politicians focusing on peace for future generations.

Peacebuilding activities remain restricted, and often focus on youth participation, such as sports or arts, though youth are often assumed to be apathetic and apolitical (Pruitt, 2013). Harris (2001) states that more attention needs to be paid to how young people participate, rather than on how they do not. Although youth camps may demonstrate a positive aspect of educational activism, it should also be noted that far too often education is the only realm in which young people are afforded agency. And educational spaces are, by definition, places where young people are relegated to an assumption of being under adult control. It is not enough, in terms of agency, to merely have the presence of children, since this becomes a form of tokenism. It is not real participation, and certainly does not engender agency. In Chapter 4 the different levels of youth participation will be explained further, and tokenism defined in more detail, as it is another one of the steps that may lead to youth feeling unheard.

With regard to peacebuilding, however, the method used in these youth camps is quite simple at heart: conflict transformation occurs at a personal level through a process of building relationships with “the enemy” and thereby reframing perceptions of the conflict. Students break stereotypes through human contact and cultural sharing, build an understanding of opposing points-of-views through dialogue, establish group camaraderie through team-building exercises and cooperative games, and form genuine friendships through social and recreational activities—on an individual basis.

In many ways there are parallels with wider forgiveness and reconciliation projects (Wilson, 2001). It is important to note that young people interacting as individuals with each other, as highlighted in recognition theory, rather than as representatives of groups, may learn in such neutral settings to see each other with different, even more equal, eyes. When a society finds itself deeply divided, people may become more motivated to come up with creative solutions to a conflict (Plaatjies, 2011). This is becoming increasingly apparent in areas of the world that have been torn by ongoing conflict that sometimes lasts decades, such as the Middle East, Angola, Sierra Leone, and Democratic Republic of Congo. Such desperation may push a society to make room even for young people at the peace table.

This was the case in another example of youth agency, in West Africa, where young people were mobilized to play an ever more active role in peacebuilding and development. A project sponsored by the Many River Union (MRU), Ecowas, and UNDP actively involved young people from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ivory Coast, and in so doing, established a link between peacebuilding, youth, and development. These groups have established a forum, attended by twelve young people from each of the four countries. Each of the twelve delegates had already been galvanized by youth conferences in their home countries. The young people chosen, tended to come from elite backgrounds thus they cannot be considered representative of so-called average youth. Nonetheless, their presence was in itself significant.

The resulting consultations revealed a simmering bitterness among the youth, one of whom, from Liberia, commented that young people were neither asked nor heard during the ongoing peace process, yet supposedly they were the future (Ankomah, 2005). Young people were asked to express their views and positions on the ongoing reconciliation and peacebuilding processes in their countries. The Accra meeting agreed to launch a Youth Peace and Development Forum to enable and identify young people's concerns, needs and priorities. Development partners would translate these into practical peacebuilding projects (Ankomah, 2005). Although this represents a case of youth agency, it remains limited. But it does open up the concept of using young people as a new source of understanding with regard to local peacebuilding practices (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013).

This argument is taken up by Watson (2006), who identifies children as a group worthy of the same recognition within mainstream international relations discourse as other actors. “Despite the fact that ‘childhood studies’ are comparatively well established in a number of academic disciplines; similar recognition has been later in coming to the study of IR” (p. 237). She calls for an “examination of how the child may potentially best be conceptualized within the mainstream discourse and the implications of the inclusion of children as a ‘site of knowledge’ through which the international system may be more clearly understood” (p. 237).

This is significant because if the mainstream IR discourse were to focus on young people as a potential site of knowledge, then this would challenge the very conception of power in the international system as it is currently being described and analyzed. She states,

Therefore, despite the fact that during the past half century the study of childhood has become routine for the psychologist, the sociologist, the philosopher and the anthropologist, confusion remains about the efficacy of the concept of childhood itself, and of its historical, cultural, legal, and indeed ethical implications. (Watson, 2006, pp. 246-247)

Watson (2006) goes on to say that even the concept of childhood is rife with contention. Young people may have the potential for agency, as they will probably grow up one day, but they are not yet in a position to speak in a voice that would be recognized in the field of IR.

As previously discussed, what little recognition of young people there is in the field of peacebuilding, is often limited to a group image, rather than as being seen as individuals. In addition, negative agency may be assigned by the media and others as, for example, calls are made for children to be held responsible for crimes they have committed at an age when society generally argues that they are too young to have positive agency. In other words, children can have negative agency, even though they are viewed as being too young to participate and make a positive contribution to this same society (Watson, 2006). This is the same dilemma described previously when young people in conflict and peacebuilding situations are viewed as having limited capacities.

Sharon Stephens (1995) refers to this fear of “risky children,” who might be child laborers or child soldiers or even child refugees, as an underlying motivation behind a society’s stated need to control young people. A culture might prioritize this control because young people become viewed as threats to the existing societal order, or because they embody too much potential for upheaval in a rapidly changing global society.

As this thesis attempts to demonstrate, the reality may in fact be more nuanced as young people, rather than just falling into two polarized categories, actually fall into as many categories as middle-aged or elderly people (Ozerdem, 2016). Some are threats, some are not. Some exercise agency, some do not or cannot

(Schnabel & Tabyshalieva, 2013). And some choose to act, some do not. Some are perpetrators and victims at the same time. What would it mean to expand the study of youth participation in an attempt to achieve full agency? In searching for a framework within which to examine the issues of youth agency and youth participation, one particularly significant cognate field is that of psychology. A significant body of research examining these subjects of youth agency and youth participation already exists, and IR can draw from this as it has drawn from psychology in other areas (e.g. terrorism research, and conflict analysis). The following section illustrates just one of the ways youth participation, and thereby youth agency has been investigated within the field of psychology.

Youth participation—From psychology to IR

One area in which psychology may intersect with IR, in terms of youth, is child soldiers (Brocklehurst, 2006). Regarding issues of psycho-social intervention, Pupavac (2002) argues that such policies represent a preoccupation with deviancy, and again questions whether the existing child rights regime may actually be institutionalizing an increasingly unequal international system.

The potential contribution psychology makes to IR regarding listening to young people can be viewed within the framework of different levels of analysis: 1) An individual point-of-view (individual adolescents in a post-conflict society as they mature into adults bear similarities to individual adolescents who are mental health patients as they mature into adults); 2) a societal point-of-view

(substitute post-conflict society for mental health patient); 3) and a national point-of-view (countries transitioning from conflict zones to developing nations).

In fact, many of the processes used in psychology could easily serve the field of peacebuilding and act as a warning to peacekeeping missions, in that young people's hopes for peace should also be taken into account. Here the societal level of analysis mentioned earlier provides a framework for youth and agency as a peaceful society can be substituted for adulthood. By the same token, at a more individual level of analysis, the neglect of including young people in the plans being made for their lives can cause similar results as what is described in the following paragraph. For example, schools and agencies that try to serve youth sometimes end up designing treatment, service or transition plans that are intended to help young people transition successfully into adulthood.

Unfortunately, these plans are typically created for youth, with little input or buy-in from the young people themselves (Walker, Geenen, Thorne, & Powers, 2009).

Such efforts run parallel with those meant to rehabilitate former youth combatants in post-conflict situations. Both sets of circumstances—helping young people cope with post-conflict conditions, and helping them cope with mental illness— can demonstrate that when schools and agencies fail to engage young people in planning for their futures, this is a missed opportunity (Toolis & Hammack, 2015). A properly implemented, individualized planning process can

provide young people with experiences that directly contribute to increases in self-determination, empowerment and self-efficacy (Walker et al., 2009).

One example of how such a youth-inclusive plan might work in practical terms includes a framework that could be adapted to post-conflict peacebuilding, and is borrowed from the mental health field—AMP (Achieve My Plan). AMP is an intervention method that is currently being developed for young mental health patients in need of a plan to help them mature into adulthood. The same framework applies to involving youth in peacebuilding. The steps include developing intervention and related materials in collaboration with an advisory board that includes youth, caregivers and service providers. This means instead of a policy being determined *on behalf of* youth, it is a product of *youth input*, among other contributors, involving young people in order to make the peace more sustainable.

Within the mental health field, when young people have been involved in making policy that have helped them transition to adulthood, the Walker study data (2009) reveals that, while youth did not necessarily speak more frequently during meetings, the quality of their verbal contributions increased significantly. In fact, those who received training like that of the AMP, were more likely to make high quality contributions, such as suggesting strategies, goals, or action items for the plan. (This contrasts with lower-quality contributions such as single-word responses to questions asked by others.) Most significantly, an

intervention like AMP that involves the full participation of young people also appears to have had an impact on the adults involved in the process, who were significantly more likely to respond to youth contributions in ways that supported the youth and/or encouraged the youth to provide further ideas, information or explanation. (This contrasts with responses such as ignoring or interrupting the youth participants). In addition, the young people in the Walker study described themselves as more confident both in managing their own challenges, and their overall empowerment scores also increased (Walker et al., 2009).

In practical terms, a peacebuilding plan that involves young people might adopt the following nine steps taken from another plan from the psychology field, *My Life*, which is similar to the AMP plan. *My Life* is a psychological study (Walker et al., 2009) that investigates the benefits of enhancing levels of self-determination in young people. These same steps could be adapted to peacebuilding venues, in which youth need to be contributing actors, in order for a peace to become a more sustainable one. Young people would be encouraged to:

- 1) Identify dreams and set transition goals
- 2) Share dreams and goals with others⁵

⁵ In my own research, I often asked young people the open-ended questions “What is your dream? What do you want to be when you grow up?” I found this opened a listening space for them to create a future they felt in control of. This was important because in the post-conflict areas I visited there seemed very little they did feel in control of: neither their past, nor their future. There really was only one place among the many post-conflict areas I visited where young people had no response to these questions. That was Iraq between the two wars,

- 3) Identify steps and necessary support in order to reach goals (after youth identify their broad transition goals, they identify specific steps they can carry out and the support they may need from others to achieve them)
- 4) Formalize planning objectives (youth present their goals and proposed steps and supports needed in a formal transition-planning meeting)
- 5) Agree on responsibilities and timeframes for carrying out plans (the youth and other team members formulate specific plans for goal achievement, clarify responsibilities, and define monitoring procedures to ensure progress)
- 6) Problem-solve strategies to achieve goals and overcome barriers
- 7) Carry out plans (young people carry out the strategies to achieve their selected goals, regularly evaluate their success, and use problem solving to address new barriers)
- 8) Monitor and manage support for achieving goals (young people learn and apply steps for building partnerships and managing help from others)
- 9) Celebrate success and resilience (youth learn how to self-monitor and celebrate their goal achievement and resilience to barriers, e.g., frustration and discouragement by others).

and when a group of teens did not answer my questions, I asked my translator why. He answered that the young men knew they would be forced into Sadaam's army for six years, "and emerge as animals." And the young women (who were Assyrian Christian, and as such, part of a marginalized minority caught between the Shia and Sunni communities) "were condemned to prostitution."

The findings from programs like the AMP and My Life interventions suggest that “it is quite possible to increase the extent to which young people are involved and engaged in making decisions and carrying out plans for their futures” (Walker et al., 2009, p. 16). Even more significantly, these sorts of youth-participation practices also have an impact on other outcomes, such as education, employment, and mental health, and support the idea that youth-driven planning is a feasible and effective strategy for promoting better outcomes for young people.

This thesis proposes that these same steps can be followed in order to grant young people a chance to “own” a peace, especially in terms of policymaking. This would establish a foundation for preventing youth violence and enable young people to speak a sustainable peace into being, namely one that lasts once the foreign peacekeepers go home. One of the hallmarks of successful youth programs is that they be created together with youth, for youth. The guidelines outlined above could apply just as easily to community reconciliation programs, peace education, and youth rehabilitation within post-conflict societies.

Yet another practice that could be transplanted from psychology into peacebuilding—and one that promotes youth agency—is that of young people teaching young people. Through mentorship programs a level of understanding is reached as it is acknowledged that those involved share similar experiences.

The peacebuilding equivalent for mental-health-challenged young people is former youth combatants coaching each other.

Once organizations realize that they need to involve the youth, new policies can be put in place that are youth-led, and supported by youth-friendly adults. The following illustrates the benefits of such a program. This also demonstrates the alternative to violence such a policy would provide, signifying how youth and agency are linked. Youth participation—including the voices of young people—also has personal and individual benefits for the youth involved. These benefits include empowerment, acceptance, opportunity, and a voice.

One of the means of including youth voices in peacebuilding would be a youth advisory board. Strachan (2009) quotes one young member describing what his participation in the program meant to him, a significant example of youth, voice, and agency:

It makes such a difference when the people in suits ask you your ideas, listen, and then put them into action. Once you see you are putting yourself out there and they are going to listen, it makes you feel like more than just the “token youth.” (p. 24)

Important practices for including young people in decision-making practices involve having at least two young people present at the meeting. According to Strachan (2009), it becomes much more comfortable for that young person to ask for the adult to repeat what was said if another young person is present. In addition, adults should be prepared to take a bit more time to explain certain

ideas, not so much because young people cannot grasp the concepts, but because the youth participants may not be spending 40 hours a week around those concepts and ideas like most of the other adults.

Policymaking

The previous section demonstrated many similarities between youth and agency by means of youth participation—in both the mental health and peacebuilding fields. The following section includes a concrete example of agency in action, since it is still necessary to think about what actually construes a listening space, and how to measure levels of engagement (Maynes, Pierce & Laslett, 2008).

What happens in this example among policymakers, and by means of a youth narrative (Pranis, 2001), is a prime example of how youth voice enables agency, thereby changing policy.

Within my own research, an example of personal narratives that changed policy is one told to me by a senior researcher at the University of Cape Town's (UCT) Children's Institute. Although briefly mentioned in Chapter 2, it provides an excellent illustration of how youth voice can influence policy. In South Africa, girls aged 12 and older were required by Zulu tradition to undergo a virginity test. One young woman who had repeatedly run away from her husband went to the magistrate, and ended up going to parliament to tell her story. She explained how street children were being picked up and subjected to this test, then forced into marriage, as she had been. As a result of her testimony—done in a school

uniform and spoken simply—the law changed to prevent forced virginity tests being imposed on young women (L. Jamieson, personal communication, October 5, 2011).

This is just one example of youth voice and agency, and as my research demonstrates, such examples are not common. In general, adults think of youth as risky; they cannot be counted on (Stephens, 1995). One of the ways this riskiness is framed is within the context of high youth population percentages, since there is extensive research pointing to the so-called youth bulge as a source of violence within societies.

Investing in youth

What follows are examples from Kosovo and Sierra Leone. These examples are useful for my own research because they demonstrate youth agency in policy making within deeply divided societies. It should be noted, however, that there is a difference between post-war divided societies and those that are not post-war. Sierra Leone provides an example of the grassroots involvement of youth within a deeply divided post-conflict society. South Africa, the case study for this thesis, is an example of a deeply divided society although not in a post-war setting. South Africa has imposed youth participation from the top down, by means of its constitution (1996), but this remains nearly invisible on the ground, as there is a growing disconnect between the rhetoric regarding youth, and the reality in South Africa. This presents yet another societal faultline (Galtung & Webel,

2007) my research aims to further explore. The following examples demonstrate (in Kosovo's case) the high cost of not including youth voices and (in Sierra Leone's case) the high profit of youth engagement in a peace process. South Africa's situation will be examined in Chapter 5.

Kosovo provides an example of the costs involved when young people are not participating. According to a report submitted to the World Bank, more than 75 percent of the 50,000 rioting in Kosovo in 2004 were between 15 and 24 years, thus the "German soldiers said that they would not shoot at children and youth." The costs for damage repair and stabilizing the country amounted to approximately 200 million euros. These two days of rioting in March, 2004 effectively cost one-third of Kosovo's annual budget, i.e. more than the overall funds available that year for education and health in Kosovo. It was commented that the amount spent could have expanded all youth centers in Kosovo. In contrast to the widely held notion of youth as a potential risk, the economic case for investing in youth as an economic actor still has to be made (Kemper, 2005).

This example of just how expensive it can be *not* to invest in youth, establishes a crucial answer to the so-what question of IR. As will be illustrated in chapters 4 and 5, the payoff of youth participation often benefits the entire society.

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is an example of a war-to-peace transition that included young people from the ground up (Hansen, as cited in Kemper, 2005). It is included here because it illustrates youth participation in a post-conflict situation, as well as youth and agency. The explanation below offers a foundation for future efforts in youth participation in peacebuilding. In this way, similar mistakes might be avoided when subsequent opportunities arise to use the voices of youth as a tool for designing projects in post-conflict areas.

This peace process was entitled the OTI, and it began at the time of the 1999 Lomé Peace Accord. The OTI's Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace Program (YRTEP) for Sierra Leone was conducted as a national, community-based, informal initiative for ex-combatants and war-affected young adults (Hansen, as cited in Kemper, 2005). Since some analyses of the conflict named disenfranchised youth among the root causes of the war and a destabilizing factor for the peace process in terms of potential post-conflict violence, the YRTEP targeted all marginalized youth, both former combatants and noncombatants. It also adopted a broad notion of youth following a socio-cultural definition because people in their 30s and 40s are considered youth in Sierra Leone as long as their fathers are still alive (Hansen, as cited in Kemper, 2005).

However, from the outset, YRTEP struggled with several external obstacles: the recurrence of conflict that obstructed access to foreign advisers; the unofficial

demobilization of combatants; and the reluctance of some combatants to identify themselves as ex-combatants out of fear and shame (Peters & Richards, 1998).

The program still managed to reach more than 40,000 youth in two years (Hansen, as cited in Kemper, 2005) and for this reason, among others, it has been labeled a success.

The YRTEP aimed to reintegrate young people back into their communities, provide them with training in literacy, as well as life skills, vocational counseling, agricultural skills development, and civic education. Management System International (MSI), an American consultancy firm, was responsible for all technical aspects of education as well as World Vision, an NGO focused on aspects concerning community-related programming (Hansen, as cited in Kemper, 2005).

The setbacks inherent in the success include MSI's Western concept of education, which proved incompatible with participants' need for immediate results. After completing the program, literacy and numeracy rates remained extremely low. More importantly, there were no follow-up programs in order for the graduates to utilize and profit from their skills because of the scarcity of micro-credit schemes or small grants in Sierra Leone; nor did YRTEP link its efforts to other developmental programming. Sustaining the program proved difficult because the trainers and educational material the program required were too costly.

Consequently, one aspect of the program in need of correction if used for future post-conflict situations is that it not be at the mercy of a prompt response. Because the MSI program was put together in haste, no pilot project was used that could have given warning of these consequences. The second major drawback was a lack of communication between MSI and World Vision, so no exchange of ideas on local implementation or local ownership could take place in the shape of community participation (Hansen, as cited in Kemper, 2005). As a result, time and money made this project inaccessible to locals as something they could own and replicate.

Another complication involved the relative success of YRTEP in reconciling marginalized youth with the local community. The success was relative because the training provided young people with skills that helped them control their tempers, understand cultural norms and function with a commitment to constructive activities, rather than violence. Some who underwent the peace training applied their conflict-resolution skills as local “peace ambassadors,” but the downside of this was that participants complained about a lack of closure. Living on the streets and having little or no goals besides survival ran at cross-purposes with learning how to settle disputes. One criticism is that two approaches were mixed without thought to their inherent contradictions. “Long-term goals like reconciliation could have been better achieved through a socio-political approach that would have allowed WVI and locals to participate in program design. The short-term economic aspect suffered under the ‘distraction’ of peace education” (Kemper, 2005, p. 33). Participants would have been better

served by learning how to generate income and by accessing small credit programs, as well as receiving peace education.

These conclusions underline both the need to access non-Western programs, “owned” and set up by local communities, and the warning that a clear communication of expectations is essential in youth participation. There is a need to define youth in terms much more advanced than merely assessing their so-called value in war economies; it is a call to international organizations to listen to young people’s voices and support the implementation of their ideas. There needs to be a pro-active collection of youth perspectives and capabilities, a generational impact report, to complement the local community-impact, and indeed, gender-impact reports many NGOs now consider standard before implementing a program.

This is yet another example of young people being spoken on behalf of, the lowest participation rung on Hart’s Ladder of Participation: “Assigned but informed” wavers just above the non-participation steps. This ladder will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4, where it will be analyzed and compared with other possible models. One way to avoid youth being spoken on behalf of would be an “inter-generational learning” process (Rudolph, as cited in Kemper, 2005).

From an economic perspective, the youth potential is often portrayed in a negative light, as the youth bulge is depicted as a threat to stability because of

pre-supposed violence. But if seen from a socio-political point-of-view, excluding a large share of the population is an obstacle for democratization and stability. As an integral part of civil society, young people can enforce a version of renegotiation of the social contract and thus become a cornerstone for societal transformation (Tulchin & Varat, as cited in Kemper, 2005). Within the Sierra Leone case study, there was an inherent assumption in the socio-political argument that youth could and would transfer their war capacities for peace promotion in the reconstruction phase if provided with the opportunities. But this too proved to be a downside of the program, as it idealized and oversimplified the roles of young people, overlooking the need to blend both positive and negative potential. Instead, a more realistic assessment of young people's contributions needs to be made, just as it would for adults' potential contributions (Kostelny & Wessells, 2013). The catch, however, is that young people, as well as those in power, need to realize this potential for a renegotiation of the social contract. "Youth should be considered and supported as peace constituencies because they can both promote peace but also endanger it" (Kemper, 2005, p. 38).

A socio-political approach holds much greater potential for contributing to peacebuilding efforts, than an economic one, because it envisions young people as actors, according them agency. Even—and especially—if this agency is at the grassroots level, it can affect peace processes at higher levels. Just like the rights-based approach, it is inclusive, discounting young people's so-called economic or security-related values. It neither imposes the roles of victim or perpetrator, nor

does it impose age-based expectations. In Sierra Leone, the lesson was learned by some international organizations that placed youth in the political sphere, acknowledging their effect and influence on crisis prevention, democratization, human rights and good governance (Kemper, 2005, p. 43).

It was in Sierra Leone that young people (re-)emerged as agents of peace. Despite the setbacks of the program as such, it became clear that the potential roles for young people had expanded, so that neglecting youth might actually put an entire peace process at risk. The necessity of offering young people “space,” has implications for expanding the field of peacebuilding (Ozerdem, 2016).

According to Jeremy Goldberg, director of development at Seeds of Peace and Parag Khanna, senior research analyst at the Brookings Institute, “Youth are on the frontlines of these conflicts; they are the soldiers, the victims, and all too often the suicide bombers. It’s about time they were put on the frontlines in the battle for peace” (cited by Kemper, 2005, p. 57).

Sierra Leone may provide a shining example of youth inclusion, although this is now somewhat tarnished. Despite these arguments in favor of youth inclusion in peace processes, young people remain absent at most peace negotiations. The question remains though, how can a post-conflict society “own” a peace when the very segment of the population responsible for maintaining a future peace remains unheard?

The arguments against youth inclusion can be convincing and need to be considered within the context of this exploration of youth and agency, as this counterweight helps provide tools for the potential use of youth voice as a means of peacebuilding within divided societies. One such counterweight is the prevalence of youth involved in terrorist activities.

Youth and terrorism

It should be noted at the outset that the topic of terrorism as addressed in this thesis needs to be placed in context. This research does not address terrorism as such, but rather, the ways in which unheard and disenfranchised groups communicate, one means of which might be through violence. Analyses of the youth bulge theory vary, but when surveying the root causes of 9/11, it has been argued that youth bulges together with slow economic and social change have provided a foundation for an Islamic resurgence in the Arab world” (Zakaria, as cited in Urdal, 2006). Most youth bulge authors have generally focused on economic growth and opportunities. But as Zakaria notes, social change may have a bigger role to play than previously thought. Youth bulge literature tends to fit into the “grievance” perspective, based on Gurr’s 1970 research, which has its origins in relative deprivation theory. It focuses on how large youth cohorts facing institutional bottlenecks and unemployment, lack of political openness, and crowding in urban centers may be aggrieved, increasing the risk of political violence (Choucri, Braungart, & Goldstone, as cited in Urdal, 2006). It is widely

claimed that there is an increased risk of violence in areas with a high youth population. According to the World Bank (2005), countries with 40% or more youth aged 15–29 were twice as likely to break out in civil conflict in 1990s.

Urdal proposes what he terms, “Hypothesis 5: The more autocratic a country, the stronger the effect of youth bulges on political violence.” He goes on to explain the effects of a lack of democracy:

It has been suggested by proponents of the motive perspective that when large youth groups aspiring to political positions are excluded from participation in the political processes, they may engage in violent conflict behavior in an attempt to force democratic reform (e.g., Goldstone, 2001). The potential for radical mobilization for terrorist organizations is argued to be greater when large, educated youth cohorts are barred from social mobility by autocratic and patriarchic forms of governance (Lia, 2005). According to the motive-oriented literature, we should thus expect to see that youth bulges have a greater effect on political violence the more autocratic the regime. (2006, p. 613)

The previous quote explains the relationship between youth bulges, violence, and levels of democracy/autocracy. However, it is crucial that this information also be evaluated in conjunction with the following:

The statistically significant squared regime term suggests that there is indeed an inverse U-shaped relationship between regime type and conflict, meaning intermediary regimes are more conflict prone than democracies and autocracies. Democracies and autocracies do not have a significantly different risk of conflict. (Urdal, 2006, p. 619)

When evaluated together, these two quotes clearly indicate that violence/ youth bulge theories point toward the possibility for an outbreak of violence as largely dependent on the level of voice the population has. This is a crucial link, in terms

of importance for this thesis, for it expands the discussion around youth violence and provides additional analysis (Schwartz, 2010).

This also brings full circle the discussion of the upside and downside of youth bulges, tying together the threads of investing in youth, examples of youth agency, the cost of investing in youth, and the cost of not investing. Sierra Leone provides an example of not only how young people can play multiple roles as peacemakers, but also how they need to be listened to in order to realize the full potential of a successful post-conflict program. The complex roles of youth only enhance their potential for agency, though these roles may include that of victim, and do not exclude other simultaneously exercised roles. And when youth bulge arguments promote the image of youth and terrorism, level of voice, as well as the rates of social and economic change, this can contribute heavily toward growing—or waning—violence.

As a closing statement to the youth bulge discussion, the nature of victimhood needs to be considered, and how the manner in which it is portrayed often impacts levels of youth agency. Linking back to the simplification of youth roles as either victims or perpetrators, there are often complex relationships between levels of affluence and (youth) crime rates, and research needs to focus on both offenders and victims. This might provide additional ideas about the effectiveness of general deterrence, rehabilitation, and conventional offender-oriented crime prevention, offering alternatives to simply viewing crime and

violence through lenses like the ones mentioned above, as well as victim-oriented crime prevention (Van Dijk, 1994). An acceptance of the multiple roles and potential agency of young people would further enhance understanding in this field, as well.

Subjects like violence, youth, and agency reflect the complexity of youth roles. These roles vary as widely as adult roles and include the broad spectrum between peacemakers to troublemakers, perpetrators to victims. How young people perceive themselves—as agents of change—and how their societies perceive them, play a major role in envisioning peace and speaking peace into being.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the rights framework of liberalism, under-recognized agency, participation of youth, examples of youth agency, and youth bulges. It discussed the agency of young people, specifically. It highlighted the contestation of childhood, the place of the child, young people's roles, the pros and cons of a so-called youth bulge, and introduced concepts borrowed from other social science fields where research into youth participation in policymaking is more advanced than within international relations.

The main purpose of this chapter in practical terms, however, can be found in the suggestions for empowering youth through participation and education. To recognize young people as “active” citizens (Watson, 2006) implies far-reaching implications, as an extension of citizenship creates possibilities for an extension of the moral and political boundaries of a community. This is because it challenges the assumption that a political community requires a collective identity that excludes some because not all can share one voice. On the contrary, as revealed through recognition theory, seeing and hearing individuals—and individual voices, rather than a collective voice, unveils a richer complexity. Within the context of international relations, this provides us with insights into the very nature of a political community and the missed opportunity of excluding any group. As a result of inclusion, however, international policymaking becomes more efficient and more sustainable, and peacebuilding efforts more effective.

International relations impacts the global community by means of children’s rights through the front door and the back door—through the front door because the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely accepted human rights document in the world and through the back door because it puts onto the global community’s table considerations such as:

- Instead of young people being spoken on behalf of, what is it they say themselves?
- How do we open up listening spaces for young people regarding policies that affect them?

At the core of IR is conflict and peace. When young people might provide benchmarks and indicators for a sustainable peace, why are they not consulted? Laws concerning children's rights may have the potential of uniting the global community, and could even quantify the extent to which post-conflict populations "own" a peace, but how does the field of international relations fall short?

In fact, youth agency is much more nuanced: young people are not merely risky or peacebuilders (Schwartz, 2010). This chapter has unpacked the positionality of youth. By assuming they sit in one place, we are not giving them agency to sit in other places, when in fact, they switch roles (Ozerdem, 2016). So how can we understand them better? Perhaps by listening. The ramifications of this may have far-reaching impact on policy making, as well as peacebuilding.

As young people's agency increases, their voices become heard, and as their voices become heard, their agency grows (Cardozo, L., Higgins, S., Maber, E., Brandt, C. O., Kusmallah, N., & Le Mat, M. L. J., 2015). It is a process that takes generations, but youth and voice, together with the implications of participation, contribute heavily to the decisions of whether or not individuals resort to violence.

Chapter 4: Voice and Youth

Introduction

In his 2012 report on Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict, the United Nations Secretary-General highlighted, that

a successful peacebuilding process must be transformative and create space for a wider set of actors – including, but not limited to, representatives of women, young people, victims and marginalized communities; community and religious leaders; civil society actors; and refugees and internally displaced persons – to participate in public decision-making on all aspects of post-conflict governance and recovery. (Reliefweb, 2012, p. 11)

This thesis posits that there is a causal relationship between youth participation (voice) and sustainable peacebuilding. In other words, it claims that higher levels of youth participation will lead to the greater likelihood of a more sustainable peace. In order to demonstrate this claim, this chapter will outline the research methodology used as well as examine a number of the existing frameworks that are best suited to unpacking the thesis claim. This chapter will also justify the methodology used in this thesis before highlighting the contribution that the research conducted here makes to the discipline overall.

This research relies heavily on a method called interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Groenwald, 2004), an approach that has a long and important history as a means of analyzing qualitative data obtained through a mixture of interviews and participant observation. Welman and Kruger (as cited in

Groenwald, 2004, p. 5) state that “the phenomenologists are concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of people involved.” The research outlined here relies upon primary data obtained from interviews that aim to understand the central research claim in a comprehensive and holistic way. Specifically, in order to explain the observed behavior, the results of the primary data obtained from the 144 interviews conducted are analyzed using an adapted version of the theoretical framework of Hart’s Youth Participation Ladder (1992). As will be explained further in Chapter 5, these interviews were chosen out of concern for the lived experiences of the people involved, using a phenomenological framework (Greene, 1997; Holloway, 1997; Kvale, 1996; Robinson & Reed, 1998). The interviewees were selected on the basis of the principle that they have South African experiences related to agency, youth, and sustainable peacebuilding, and a snowballing sampling technique was utilized for this purpose (Patton, 1990).

The interview research method was selected because it enables the direct and immediate means of hearing the voices of the youth. As this is the central tenet examined in this thesis, it was important that I had direct access to the selected participants and was able to have the subjects of the thesis (youth) participate.

In this introductory section, it should be pointed out that the interviewees are not representative of the South African population as a whole, and that this thesis does not aim to make any overarching claims regarding wider South

African society. Rather the thesis focusses upon the South African experience because that country's constitution is one of the few that makes a direct allusion to the significance of youth in policy processes, and thus provides an appropriate case study for considering the significance of youth voice in this regard.

Moreover, South Africa was chosen as a case study because of its long history with youth participation, both in terms of the role of youth in the anti-apartheid era, in the period following the fall of apartheid, and in the contemporary era, as described in Chapter 3. The South African case is general enough to be applicable to other cases for understanding the role of youth in sustainable peacebuilding efforts, thus extending the scope of the research results.

The application of phenomenology concerns the lived experiences of the people interviewed (Greene; Holloway; Kruger; Kvale; Maypole & Davies; Robinson & Reed, as cited in Groenwald, 2004, p. 5). While conducting interviews with young people, it was important to keep the definition of children and youth as described in the previous chapters paramount. The interviewees included those falling into the defined age limit as well as those working directly with participants of those ages.

A mix between an informal conversational interview method, where questions organically arose during the conversation, and a general interview method, which relies on research themes to guide the questioning, was selected (Beuving & de Vries, 2015). This enabled an informal interaction with the interviewee that

was steered by the central themes put forth in the selected theoretical framework of Hart's Participation Ladder (1992) and in my own model detailed below.

The theoretical assumption guiding the methodology is that the active hearing of youth voices will more likely contribute to the development of a successful peacebuilding process. This is because listening leads to trust, which leads to greater participation, which leads to stronger political institutions. Schwartz (2010) refers to this as the "face of peace." Listening also provides those being listened to with a sense of having been heard, which may sway the person from turning to violence as a desperate means of getting their message across (Schmid & De Graaf, 1982). These assumptions also rest on the strengths and weaknesses of the given communicative interaction.

The concept of youth (mis)recognition in strengthening or hindering the peace process is further revealed in the fields of sociology (Turner, 2006), anthropology (Ahearn, 2001), philosophy (Taylor, 2003), and in the political science literature (Urdal, 2006). Much of this existing discourse can be summed up as stating that young people do not appear as important variables in the literature on peace processes. Nor have adolescents been largely included in studies of war-affected children (Carpenter, 2010). This neglect of adolescents and older young people is viewed by some as short-sighted and counterproductive in terms of peacebuilding (McEvoy-Levy, 2006b). This is

particularly true in the crucial post-accord phase with its twin challenges of violence prevention/accord maintenance and societal reconciliation and reconstruction.

Similarly, Schwartz (2010) states that if young people are given venues during the peacebuilding process, and are allowed to have their voices heard, and participate in decision making in their communities, they may be more inclined to trust the peace process and attempt to strengthen it. In addition, young people who have grown up within a culture of conflict are too often demobilized without an opportunity to learn skills that would enable them to pursue productive employment (Brahimi, 2007). Moreover, Del Felice and Wisler (2007) state, that the emergence of youth gangs [in post-conflict societies] has been the answer to a system that excludes young people.

It is clear then from both the existing literature and the preceding chapters that in order for any society to have a chance at a sustainable peace, adults must include young people in the design and ownership of it (Schwartz, 2010). This includes envisioning peace together—people over 30 with people under 30—and articulating the building blocks of peace in young people’s own words, which may mean using terms such as trust and justice. Thus, how everyday peace is narrated may determine the very direction towards which a post-conflict society is headed such that young people’s voices and choices may translate their role into being agents of change. Post conflict societies need stability for social

reconstruction, and a major contributor to this stability involves targeting youth as agents of peacebuilding (Danesh, 2008). Also, young people may have experience and capacities that can either promote or tear down new social and political constructs. A sustainable peace needs young people to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for the creation and maintenance of conditions required by peace (Drummond-Mundal & Cave, 2006). This is important to the research of this thesis because it highlights the links between voice, agency, and youth, stressing the need for even more attention to be paid to the various roles of young people and their opinions concerning issues that affect them, such as peacebuilding.

The methodology of phenomenology and the issue of recognizing, i.e. seeing and listening to young people, all point toward the field of youth participation. Before examining various participatory models, this research turns to a brief discussion of how youth, voice, and agency might be examined in more nuanced ways.

Youth and voice

My first time in the field was in a refugee camp in Western Tanzania. The camp was large—52,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, half of whom were children. When I interviewed former youth combatants there (not for this research but within the context of my other writing career), they told me how soldiers had kidnapped them from their boarding schools ran by Belgian nuns. At the time, one young ex-combatant said to me: “The commander asked if

I prayed. I said yes. He said now my god was the gun, and I must listen to the voice of my gun, for this was the voice of god.” This quote – although it precedes the fieldwork conducted in South Africa by a number of years - in some way typifies the ways in which young people in conflict are viewed: as the passive recipients of adult policies. Extensive research has already begun to reveal a framework for measuring and assessing the different levels of child and youth participation in conflict and post-conflict settings (Brocklehurst, 2006; Kurtenbach, 2008; McEvoy-Levy, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2011, 2012; Murer, 2012; Watson, 2006, 2008; Ungerleider, 2001). In turn, such participation (or lack of participation) is often characterized as being linked to levels of violence, or to agency (or lack of agency), or is given as a direct consequence and/or cause of marginalization.

A wider literature, however, seeks to examine what “agency” means when applied to the “child,” and whether our characterization of how young people participate in conflict and post-conflict situations needs to be examined in a more nuanced way (Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010; McCarry, 2012; Thomas, 2012; Tisdall, 2013). This literature recognizes that traditionally, much of the research on the topic has been managed by adults, heavily skewing the definitions of agency and participation (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). However, more recently, a growing number of researchers have worked with young people on voice and representation, and are very inclusive of young people, recognizing and including them in their research and its design. Examples include Pope’s (2012) exploration of violence directed against women in the British punk rock scene;

Muggleton's (2002) examination of the voices of girls and young women in subculture studies; and Blackman's (2010) research into the links between youth subcultures and drug prohibition. All of these illustrate the utilization of listening to young people and their exercise of agency, in terms of having made a difference in policymaking. All of the above illustrate the viability of including young people and justify attempts to increase youth participation even more.

A great deal of "childhood studies" research, noted in Chapter 2, has been devoted to examining the potential roles of young people within several academic fields, but this recognition has been slow in coming within international relations. Within IR there is research being conducted around the issues of child soldiers, and child sex trafficking, and here we sometimes find children's voices describing what they think and feel in such situations. Furthermore, refugee studies and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs in post-conflict societies also sometimes seek to hear what young people are saying. The *Youth Voice Journal* is another example of an increasing willingness to include young people's views on issues that affect them, as this serves as a forum.

In addition, within the fields of development studies, and sociology there is a rich tradition of acknowledging the potential of greater youth inclusion. For example, in developmental studies, "Student voice initiatives also provide legitimate opportunities for youth to take on meaningful roles, including opportunities to be change-makers in their schools and communities so that they can experience

making a difference—especially by helping others in need” (Serriere & Dana, 2012, p. 746). An example taken from the field of sociology states that “Agency is used to refer to something very significant about the way that young people relate to society, and some of the earliest texts in youth studies demonstrate that it has long been recognized as a conceptual problem” (Coffey & Farrugia, 2014, p. 462-463). However, there could be even more of a pro-active effort to open listening spaces for young people, especially in the field of peace and conflict studies within international relations.

There are, nonetheless, a number of important models available in the literature that set out to define and explain the effects of youth agency and participation in a more inclusive manner. These models are especially relevant for policy-makers, advocates and activists who seek to meaningfully support the active engagement (agency) of young people. These models are also important for the development of an inclusive international relations literature on youth participation. The models outlined below, along with my own introduced later in this chapter, operationalize ways in which youth participation can move from rhetoric to even more actual engagement in local communities. In the following section, this will be analyzed, using a variety of typologies, leading to an explanation about why certain participatory models have been chosen to undergird the research of this thesis.

Building the Ladder of Participation

Before focusing on models upon which the research of this thesis bases its additional steps, it needs to be acknowledged that there is an extensive literature on political participation within the fields of political science and sociology. This body of knowledge goes back to and includes such research as Almond and Verba's (1963) fundamental text on political participation, as well as the (1995) work by Verba, Scholzman and Brady about voice and equality. These and other preliminary works lay the foundation for further explorations into the complex relationships between power, agency, and voice.

In 1969 Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation became yet another model that categorizes citizen participation as citizen power. According to McCready and Dilworth (2014), youth participant models tend to juxtapose the powerless and the powerful, when in fact, the typologies themselves often exclude an analysis of the most significant barriers to achieving genuine participation. In addition, little attention is paid to the skills and practices necessary to enable young people to participate fully. Arnstein's ladder of citizen engagement (Arnstein, 1969) remains an important tool in analyzing and benchmarking participation.

Arnstein's Ladder is significant here because it inspired an important building block for this thesis, namely Hart's Youth Participation Ladder (1992). Hart's Ladder extends Arnstein's and is especially relevant to this thesis because it focuses specifically on children. Before turning to Hart's Ladder, however, it is

important to outline a few of the many other significant models available in the sociology and political science literature, sketching only a sample of the long and rich history of research into (political) participation. This is necessary in order to embed my own research in existing literature. These models are chosen because they provide a way of comparing and contrasting Hart's model in various ways and are mentioned here because they reveal a sampling of the breadth of alternatives within the participation literature. The survey analyses why Hart's model is chosen against other possible candidates, and provides comparisons of the strengths of the Hart model vis-à-vis other possible models not chosen. The benefits and critique of these other models over the Hart model, even though they were not selected, will now be discussed. Some models were not chosen specifically to undergird the research of this thesis because they did not meet the criteria of youth and voice in a deeply divided society, the subject of this thesis, as well as Hart's Ladder does. Several do, however, provide further illustrations or language that advance the research of this thesis. I include such models here to provide a comparison with Hart's model and my own adaptation of his Ladder of Participation. This is important to my thesis because it provides deeper analysis and as will be illustrated later in this chapter, my adaptation adds to these models, addressing a gap that continues to be overlooked in the following models, namely creating a space for the unheard.

The first such model to be considered is White's Typology of Participation (1996), which asks questions about who participates in policymaking and at what level. Applicable to all marginalized groups, her typology details the ways

in which the uses (and abuses) of participation can exist and thus urges advocates to ensure that participation efforts create meaningful outcomes for recipients. Whilst examining how relevant policy can be developed for all marginalized groups is useful for this thesis, White's typology model was not selected as a major contributor for this thesis because it examines all marginalized groups in society, thus exceeding the thesis subject's scope (youth). It is also very general in its conclusions, as these are complex dynamics. White's model only goes so far, and makes assumptions regarding the movement and momentum of participation. For example, sometimes participation occurs within a combination of top-down and bottom-up settings, from which a third space is created where civil society might spur on government efforts, and vice versa. There is no room for such multi-layered and more complex participation dynamics in White's model although it does provide confirmation of the language of inclusion that is used in this thesis.

Critics of White's model (McCready & Dilworth, 2014; Tritter & McCallum, 2006; Collins & Ison, 2009) argue that in this form, participation and achieving citizen control is perceived to be hierarchical, in the sense that citizen control is the ultimate goal of participation. This may not be the case among participants who may have many assumptions about what their individual goals are. As mentioned previously, the ladder metaphor is also criticized as being too linear, in the sense that the problem is assumed to remain constant and only the approach to the actors changes, whereas problems vary and participants may have different expectations of their role in decision making. Moreover, not achieving "citizen

control” may be regarded as a failure of the participatory process, despite the level attained by citizens and their meaningful participation only occurring in relation to the decisions, activities and power of state organizations or similar authorities.

Table 1 Interests in participation			
Form	Top-Down	Bottom-Up	Function
Nominal	Legitimation	Inclusion	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency	Cost	Means
Representative	Sustainability	Leverage	Voice
Transformative	Empowerment	Empowerment	Means/End

Figure 1: White’s Typology of Participation

Another example of a participatory model is Treseder’s Degrees of Participation (1997), which builds on Hart’s Children’s Participation Ladder. Unlike Hart’s model, however, Treseder argues that participation does not necessarily have to manifest in a specified sequence, and that there should be no limit to children and youth’s involvement in projects, but that they must be empowered adequately in order to be able to meaningfully participate in the community. This supports an aspect of my own research, in that it demonstrates how young people may experience immediate inclusion without necessarily having to work their way through previous, less participatory stages such as passive involvement or being the token youth. It could be possible, for example, that an adult in authority trusts young people’s views without their necessarily having

earned it. This might be based on previous experiences with a different group of young people. Treseder makes the important step of illustrating how levels of participation need not progress linearly; however, this model fails to create a listening space for young people who might not fit in the lowest category, who go unheard and unseen for a variety of reasons and are not even talked to, let alone informed, as level 1 designates. My own research does acknowledge and recognize these groups, which will be explored later.

Treseder (1997) offers an alternative to Hart's Ladder, which recognizes different levels of involvement, presented as a non-hierarchical and context-specific model (McCready & Dilworth, 2014). It reflects that, within certain contexts (for example, in schools) children may not have control and therefore may never reach the top rung of Hart's model. Treseder's model also acknowledges that although some children may wish to participate, they may choose to do so at a level that best reflects their abilities, resources and ambitions and that young people should have the option to choose to participate or not as they please (Quinn, 2008). According to Quinn, Treseder's intention is to recognize these forms of activity to be at once equal but different, with empowerment the intended outcome for children and young people. He emphasizes the importance of the commitment required to take on board young people's views and to reciprocate with detailed information and comments. It is interesting how this model accepts the role of adults more than the previous models shown above, as well as highlighting the difference between consultation and participation phases.

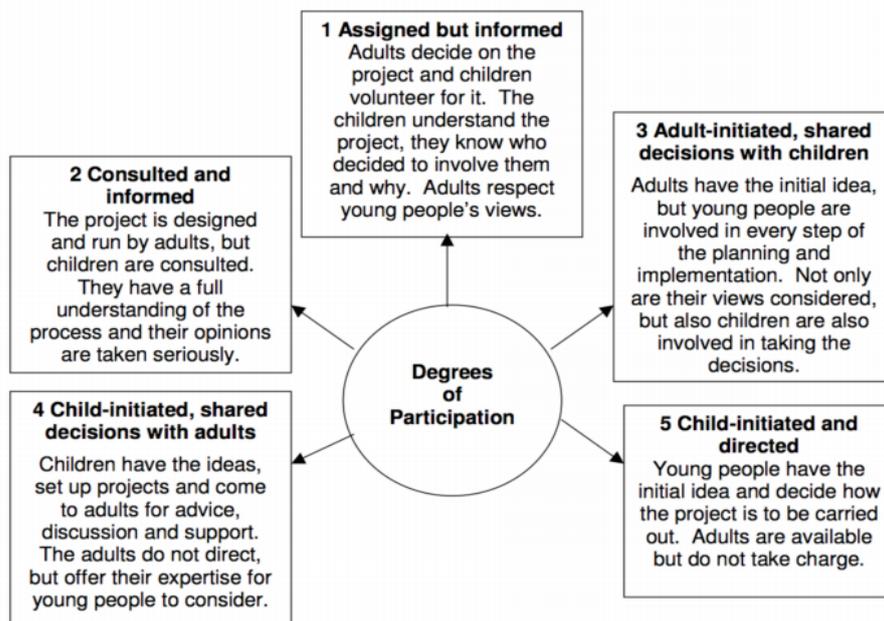


Figure 2: Treseder's Degrees of Participation

Another preliminary model for participation is Shier's Pathways to Participation (2001), which offers a practical planning and evaluation tool for situations where adults work with children. This is based on a typology of five levels of youth participation. The first stage occurs when children are listened to, followed by when children's views are supported, children's views being taken into account, children being involved in the decision-making process, and finally, when children share power and responsibility in the decision-making process, thus representing the optimal condition for youth participation. Shier's inclusion is important to this thesis because it illustrates the causal relationships between listening and supporting young people. Too often the assumption is that giving young people a voice, or listening to them is enough. But the link with agency is

crucial, as even when a child has a voice, it can ring hollow, or empty, when those in authority do not act on the voice. What may prove even better, as Shier's model shows, is coupling openings with opportunities and obligations, as young people themselves become involved in the decision-making process followed through with action, based on their views. This further enhances my own research by linking language with responsibility, both among adults and among young people and between them.

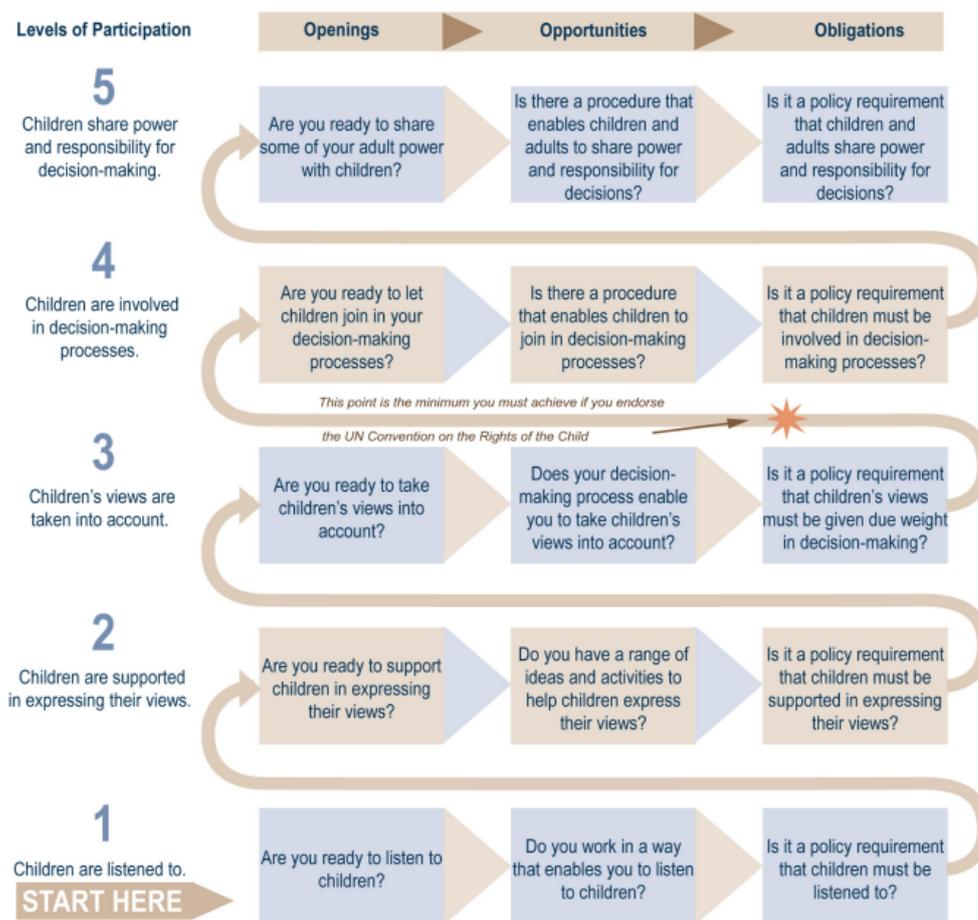


Figure 3: Shier's Pathways to Participation

A further illustration of the dynamics of voice can be seen in Lardner's Clarity Model for Participation (2001). It relies on a grid model, which proposes six dimensions of youth participation: initiation, agenda setting, decision-making, and obtaining information, independence in implementing action, and structures and links. The grid creates a visual means of understanding when and how youth participation can be operationalized. Again, it is an oversimplification of the processes and assumes a limited number of scenarios; although it does allow for overlap when, for example, both young people and adults share power, it has no place for more complex dynamics, while young people who may not have access to informal structures are excluded.

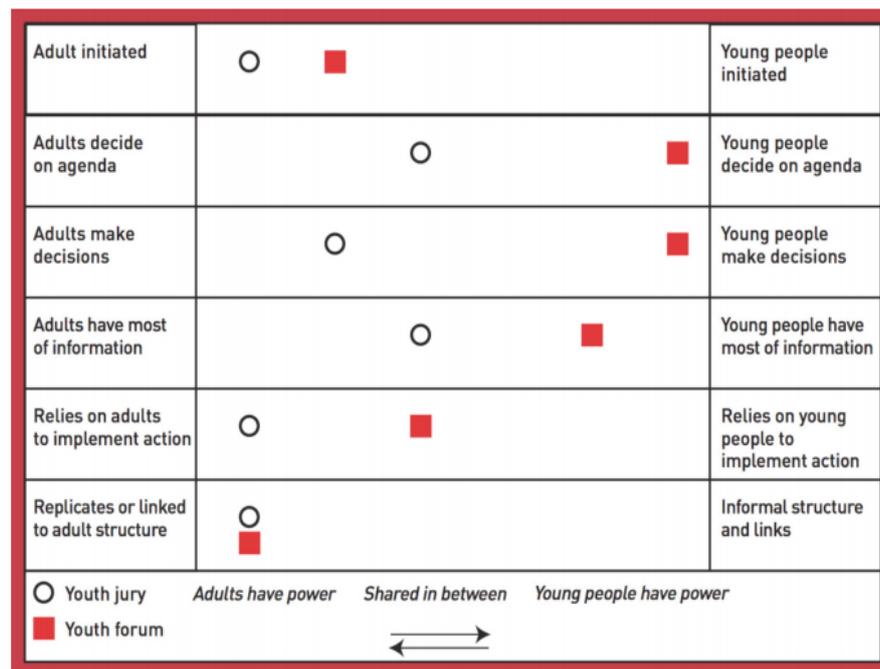


Figure 4: Lardner's Clarity Model of Participation

The next model demonstrates an attempt to expand these models. UNICEF's strategic approach to participation (2001) aims to promote the meaningful

participation of youth at a local and global level. It does so by emphasizing that youth must have the capabilities, opportunities, and supportive environments to realize their participation rights. This model uses some of the language of the previous ones, including Hart's Ladder, but acknowledges the roles played by motivation and the influence of both adults and young people. It is significant as an indicator of how crucial safety and support are to young people if they are to realize their potential and flourish. However, this model has its limitations in that it does not allow for other influences that fall outside the categories of capabilities and opportunities. For example, there is no place for informal support systems among young people themselves. There is an assumption here that adults are present, or need to be present, in order for young people to develop roles, such as those concerning leadership, but this could also occur within an entirely youth-controlled environment such as a gang. This is important for this present research because the same groups excluded here are those I try to include in my adaptation of Hart's Ladder. My research improves upon Hart's model by highlighting how youth leaders in conflict sometimes share the same characteristics needed to be youth leaders in peacetime, and how these skills might be honed within communities of other young people. There is no place for such a situation in the UNICEF model, as post-conflict situations often lack the very safety and support this model places as central to young people's participation levels. There is an implied assumption in this model that adults are the ones doing the listening or manipulating, or are the ones providing the home and domestic environment. In post-conflict areas, in deeply divided societies, as my South African interviews demonstrate, young people often take care of other young people, as is the case with child-headed households in areas of South

Africa hard hit by AIDS. Yet, the UNICEF model, with its broad generalizations, fails to take into account this more nuanced and complicated set of circumstances. If it is making the point that young people need safe and supportive environments to thrive, then it succeeds. But it remains limited in its scope.

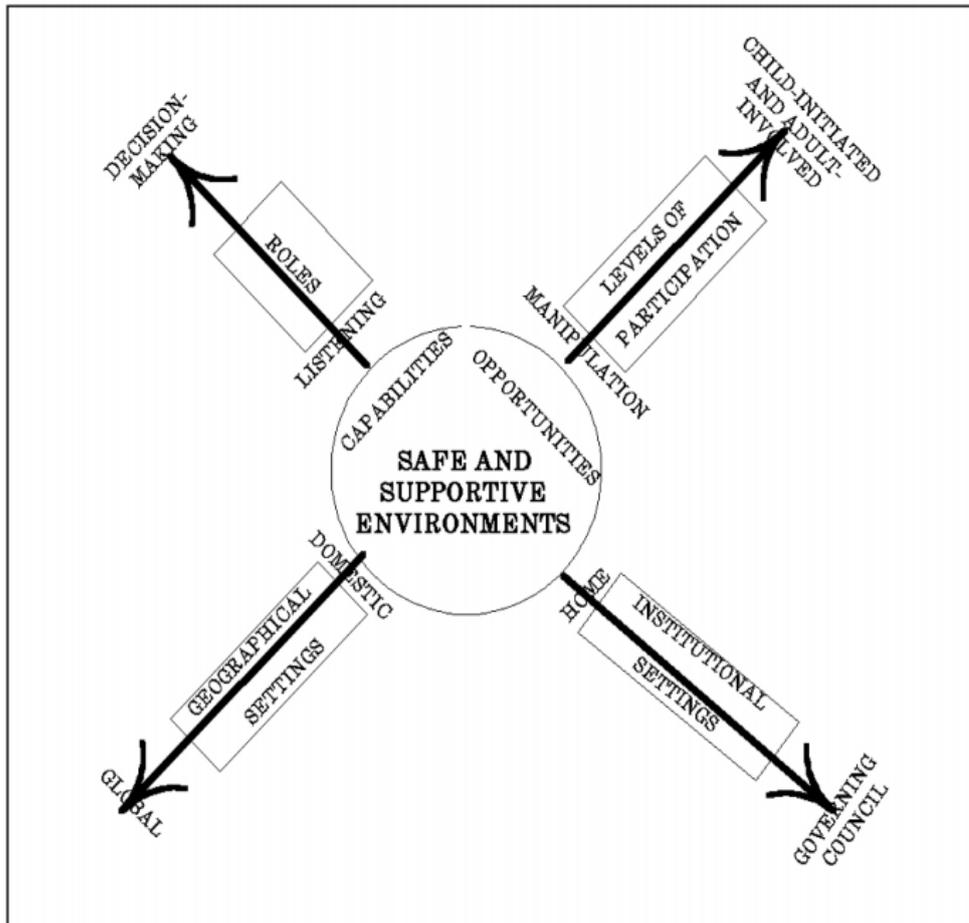


Figure 5: UNICEF's strategic approach to participation (UNICEF, 2001)

One of the limitations of the UNICEF model, namely the absence of acknowledging the impact of youth-with-youth cooperation, is addressed in the following model by Jans and De Backer (2002). Their Youth and Social

Participation model stipulates that youth participation can transpire through internal projects, where youth work with each other, or through external participation, where youth are involved with public actors. These two types of involvement can occur through direct participation, where youth speak on their own behalf, or through indirect participation, where intermediaries speak on behalf of youth. The authors state that the way in which this occurs is heavily context-dependent; however, it is preferable (and often more useful) to have youth advocate on behalf of themselves directly at an external level where possible. This extends the assumptions made by Hart, when he labels as one of the steps on his ladder, young people being spoken on behalf of. While one benefit is that this model suggests it is better for young people to speak on their own behalf, the Jans and De Backer's model is incomplete for the purposes of this thesis because it has no place for young people who do not belong to organizations, or young people who are not recognized, let alone sought out and heard within a deeply divided society. Not all young people have equal opportunities to participate either internally, among other youth, or externally, among adults. These are groups my research tries to include, as will be explained shortly.

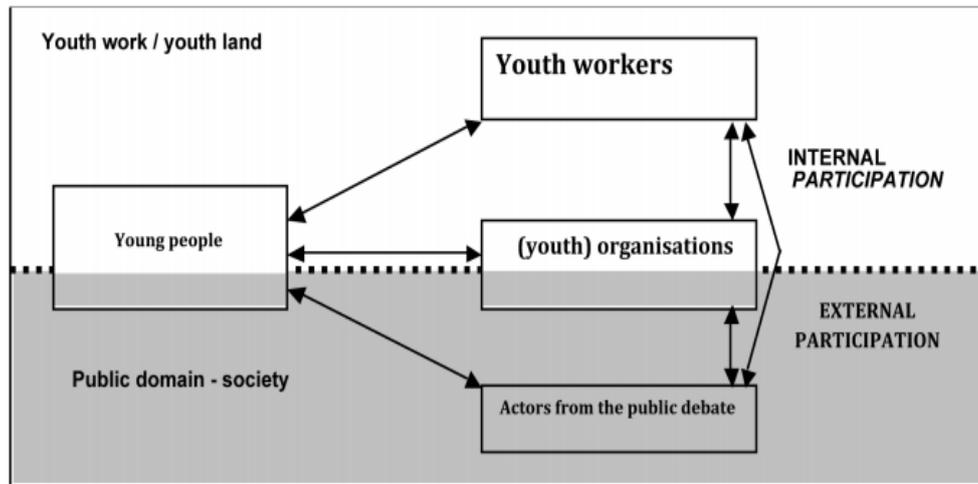


Figure 6: Jans and De Backer's Youth Participation in Society

The final model to be assessed as a precursor to Hart's Ladder and my adaptation of it expands participation research to include a discussion of power, as my own research does, in terms of agency. Neema and Driskell's Key Dimensions for Participation (2009) model claims that the lack of youth voice in decision making is the direct result of power imbalances between youth and adults in society and relevant institutions. Although this was something often implied in previously discussed models, here power is addressed explicitly. The authors argue that strategies that do not seek to change the power relationship between decision makers and those affected by these decisions are a major impediment to meaningful engagement. The researchers state that barriers to youth engagement strategies are primarily found in how institutions are structured, and thus change must occur there in order for meaningful youth participation to transpire. Although this model further defines what it calls the key dimensions of participation, it fails to draw the link between a failure to listen to young people and possible consequences, as my improvement upon

Hart's model does. It also only mentions four dimensions, and could be described as over simplistic, sacrificing accuracy for elegance. As my research reveals, there are few neatly delineated dimensions in young people's worlds as they experience them.

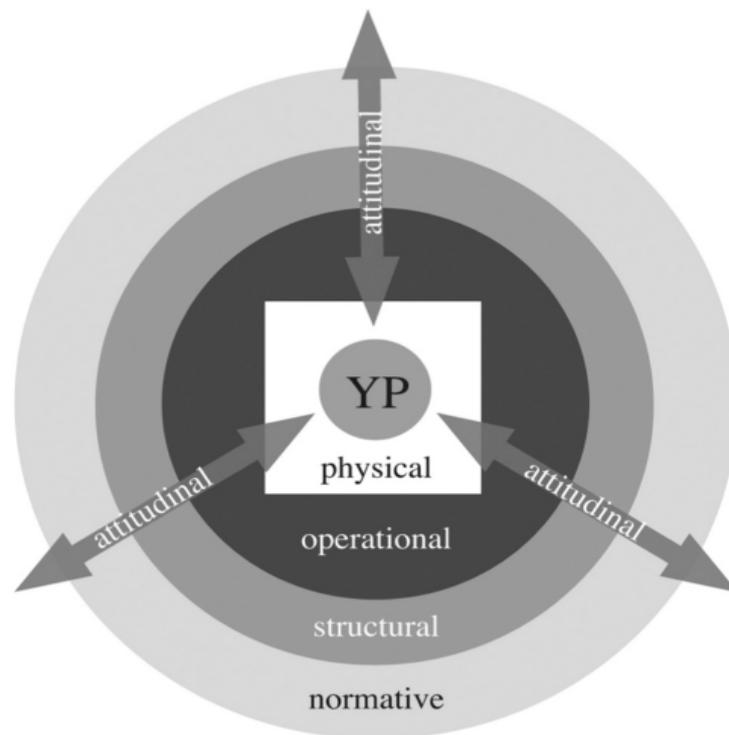


Figure 7: Neema and Driskell's Key Dimensions of Participation

All the above descriptions of participation reveal upon analysis various ways of describing the participation process, as well as providing a deeper understanding of what this entails. The strengths of the Hart model vis-à-vis these other possible models not chosen will now be further discussed. Hart's Ladder is chosen as the foundation, so to speak, of my own model because it is the most visionary and comprehensive of all the models reviewed. Its elegance is

matched by its strength. The models mentioned above add to the conversation, but it is Hart's Ladder that remains the pivotal illustration of the need to include young people in participatory processes. Another model might go into more detail about certain aspects, but Hart's points upward toward the benefits of greater participation, and downward, toward the consequences of not listening to youth.

Following Hart's ladder, this thesis introduces an alternative model, in an attempt to improve upon Hart's model. The model provided (Vortex) builds on Hart's Ladder, which was chosen in particular because of its emphasis on participation, thus reinforcing the causal relationship detailed in this thesis. As a model that has been utilized by practitioners, Hart's Ladder is, therefore, worthy of examination. Add to this the fact that the stages that Hart employs recognize key elements in the affective dimensions of conflict and post-conflict environments—e.g. perception, understanding, emotion, all mentioned previously in this thesis—and thus with those elements, it may in actuality contribute toward finding a solution to the “transformation of violent conflict” (Darby and Mac Ginty, 2008, p. 5). These are all clearer strengths of Hart's model. The primary difference between Hart's model and the others is that Hart's is applicable to conflict and post-conflict situations, including deeply divided societies, thus making it more fitting for the South African case study of this thesis.

By way of further background, UNICEF recognized the significance of the arguments that Hart made in practical policy terms in 1992. Believing that young people can have a lasting impact on issues of global significance, such as sustainable development, the environment, and children's rights, UNICEF commissioned Hart to conduct extensive research on the levels of children's participation around the world, and the related consequences for the respective societies involved. The resulting publication attempted to link a concern of growing international importance: the environment, as now expressed by the international movement for sustainable development, and children's rights, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The research concentrated on the conceptual issues, processes and methods for authentically involving children in research, planning, design, management and monitoring of the environment (Hart, 1997).

In his book, *Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care* (1997), Hart expands on his theory concerning the importance of involving young citizens in the growth of their societies. Hart particularly focused on youth participation in terms of community development and environmental issues. Importantly, however, the general theories and notions on which his writing is based are applicable to other fields in which youth participation is of importance, including post-conflict peacebuilding and deeply divided societies. This is yet another strength of Hart's model and why it was chosen to undergird this research.

In particular, Hart argues that when communities acknowledge young people's developing competencies and unique strengths, some policy goals become that much more attainable (Hart, 1997). For Hart (1992), this concern with participation translated into a methodological approach for measuring current participation and a language for stating the potential for youth involvement, thereby echoing the premises of this thesis.

In terms of international relations, this chapter contends that this approach has direct relevance given that Hart argues that the direct participation of young people helps them develop a genuine appreciation of democracy and a sense of their own competence and responsibility to participate (Hart 1997)—thus potentially bringing a post-conflict society that much closer to a lasting and sustainable peace. This is a key aspect of this thesis, and yet another reason why the Hart model has been chosen.

Here is Hart's Ladder:

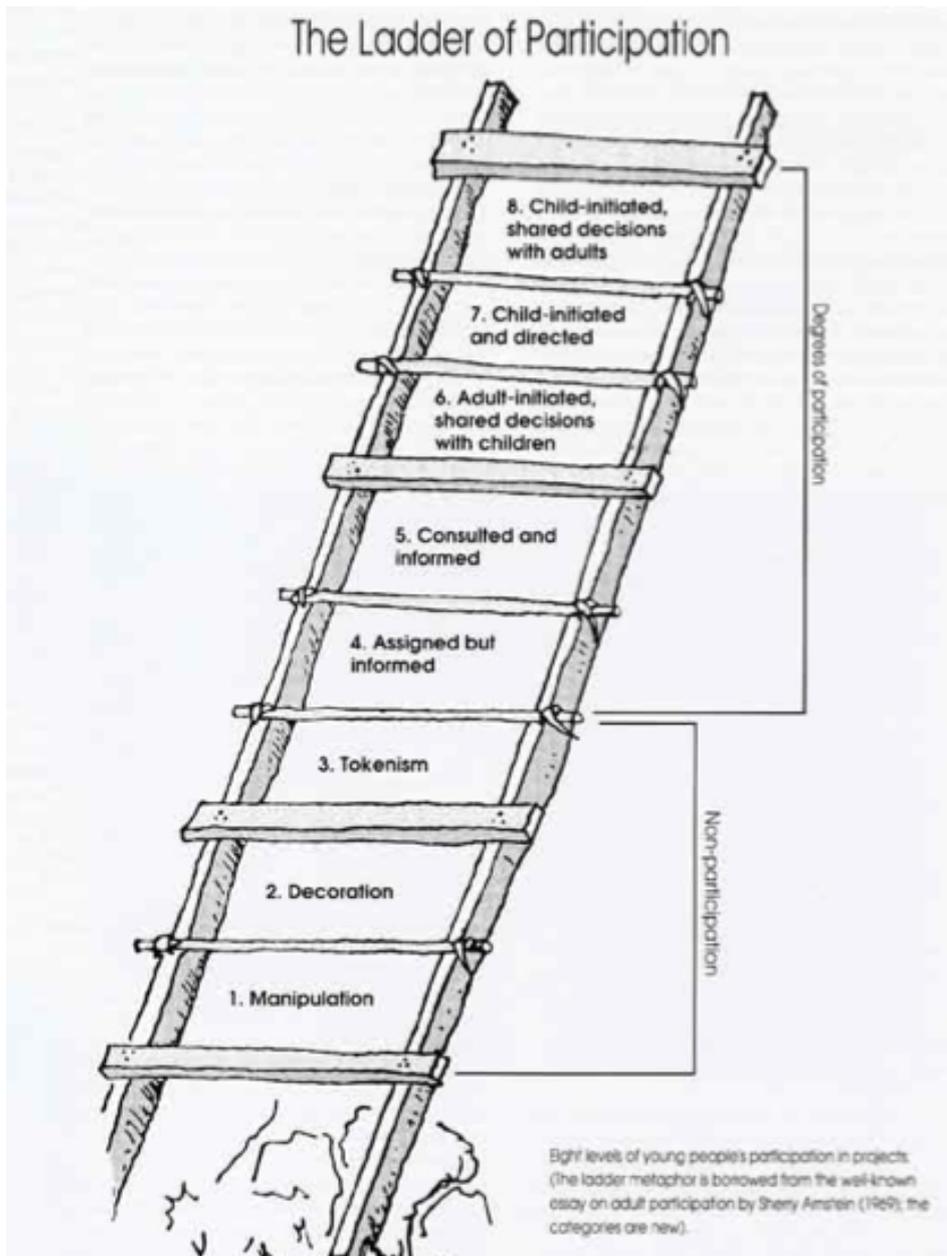


Figure 8: Children's Participation Ladder

(Note at bottom of illustration:

Eight levels of young people's participation in projects (the ladder metaphor is borrowed from the well-known essay on adult participation by Sherry Arnstein (1969); the categories are new [to Hart]).

As mentioned previously, Hart's ladder was inspired by Arnstein's. In her piece that first used a ladder as a metaphor for (adult) participation (1969), Arnstein addresses the question of how participation is significant to IR:

My answer to the critical so-what question is simply that citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parceled out. In short, it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform, which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society. (pp. 1-2)

This process can also be applied to young people marginalized by power, as a more participatory policy helps redistribute power. A more in-depth discussion of this aspect can be found in Chapter 2. As noted above, Hart labeled Arnstein's steps, proposing a number of key categories with regard to increased youth participation (Hart, 1992). These steps are:

- 8) Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults
- 7) Child-initiated and directed
- 6) Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children
- 5) Consulted and informed
- 4) Assigned but informed
- 3) Tokenism

2) Decoration

1) Manipulation.

This chapter recognizes that Hart's conceptualization has both a theoretical and practical relevance. In particular, the present analysis will extend Hart's framework to specifically take into account the issues of voice: the narrative that voice creates; and the relationship of that narrative to violence as a means of preventing violence. As outlined, Hart's Ladder articulates the different stages of youth participation, and gives a label to specific events that some might think are participatory, but that in actuality, merely use young people as "tokens" or "decoration," with the purpose of enhancing the status or trustworthiness of adults.

This experience goes to the heart of debates that consider whether, in fact, children have rights, or whether instead, it is adults who claim those rights on behalf of children (see, for example, O'Neill, 1992). This is important to my own research because upon analysis, young people who do not in actuality have rights, may then be prohibited from participating. And if there is no meaningful participation, then they are effectively isolated from the policy process. Arguably it is for reasons such as these that youth remain marginalized: they are either too young or, as Stephens (1995) notes, too "risky" for their voices to be trusted.

Having outlined alternative frameworks to youth participation above, this thesis positions itself in the context of contributing to the existing literature, and adds to it through a new approach in an attempt to improve upon Hart's model. This takes the question several steps further in understanding the (adverse) effects of youth participation. Hart himself has admitted there are limitations to his Ladder (2008). Here I provide a new framework in the guise of the Vortex of and Violence, as my research has demonstrated that violence itself is considered as a form of communication (Schmid & De Graaf, 1982) chosen by young people (and indeed, all marginalized groups) whenever their voices go unheard within post-conflict and deeply divided societies.

This assertion is not new, and rests on the shoulders of a wide variety of scholars who have published an extensive history of research into the links between voice, or communication, or lack of communication, and violence itself as a form of communication. These range from Held (2008), who states that an act of violence may need to be justifiable, should a political system fail to give voice, to Tauman (2003), who outlines the idea that terrorism is a process of communication. These ideas go back to works such as that by Schmid and De Graaf (1982), who pioneered terrorism studies by making the link between insurgent terrorist acts and the perpetrators' need to be heard. The authors point out that the purpose of insurgent terrorism is often to "draw the attention of the world" (p. 27). They list case studies of terrorist acts in the 1960s and 1970s that consistently rated the communication of (fear-) messages to a mass audience as the number one use of terrorism. The research by Schmid and De

Graaf is relevant to this thesis because it acknowledges the potential threat of groups who continue to go unheard. The authors describe the communication aspect of terrorism, explaining how insurgent terrorists use the media as a means of communicating their cause, thereby describing their desperation, and signaling their power. The broader public, who are generally not affected by the terroristic act, become an actor as they must acknowledge the existence of terrorist groups who might have previously gone unseen and unheard. As an example, the authors site incidents when Berlin students committed terrorist act in the late 1960s. It is significant how the students “turned to terroristic methods because of a failure to get those perceptions across by conventional means. At the basis of their misdirected course stood, in our view, problems of communication, lack of access to the masses via the mass media” (p. 183). Schmid and De Graaf add, “We see the genesis of contemporary insurgent terrorism, as it has manifested itself in the Western World since the late 1960s, primarily as the outgrowth of minority strategies to get into the news” (p. 215).

This thesis argues that a potential solution to this problem is to listen to the marginalized groups who would turn to terrorism before they are driven to committing such extreme acts. “Insurgent terrorism is not senseless violence but a symptom that something is wrong with communication. . . . If insurgent terrorism is seen as communication by violence, efforts to curb it might be more successful if they aimed at lowering the threshold of communication rather than at heightening the level of repression” (Schmid & De Graaf, 1982, p. 219). They discuss a right to communicate and how giving air time or column space to

marginalized groups could prevent them from turning to violence as a form of communication. The authors are careful not to make too many generalizations or promises, but their research opens the way for my own, which recognizes whole groups who do not even fit onto Hart's Ladder of Participation.

The Vortex includes young people previously marginalized or not even acknowledged. The Vortex also demonstrates how youth feel about the promise of agency, and become frustrated when they see ways in which they are lacking it. My framework is built upon examples of agency and a lack of agency, participation and a lack of participation from a wide variety of post-conflict situations across the world. These examples help to illustrate the highly diverse roles young people may already play in everyday peacebuilding, as well as what it means when their voices go unheard. I will also further introduce the results of my own fieldwork, conducted in South Africa. This will be analyzed in depth in Chapter 5.

Creating new steps

I have created a methodological framework based on my fieldwork in South Africa conducted between January and March 2012, with follow-up interviews in January, 2013. In conducting this fieldwork, I had one over-arching question: *How does voice work?* It needs to be acknowledged that there already is a wide literature on this question, including the *Youth Voice Journal* (Clarke, 2015). Clarke discusses various means of including young people from marginalized

groups in order to empower them. Other examples are the ethnographic studies of lives of disabled teenagers (Wickenden, 2011). These are just two illustrations of how voice can be linked to identity and power, which tie in with my own research because they demonstrate a rich tradition of arguing in favor of youth inclusion.

Regarding the question: *How does voice work?* I sought to consider the applicability of Hart's model within conflict and post-conflict contexts. I also recognized, however, that before even getting to the stage of manipulation—the lowest stage of participation in Hart's framework—the relationship between children and the way in which they are listened to may be subject to a more nuanced approach. In particular, I hypothesized that being

-1) Ignored

-2) Humiliated

and -3) Marginalized

might be significant substeps to Hart's Ladder. As mentioned below, these concepts are particularly important to consider as they reflect elements of an already existing critical literature within the IR discourse.

The study of being ignored, and humiliation as weapons of war, have become established within the IR discipline and affirms that those humiliated in conflict can respond with violence. Examples include studies of sexual violence during

wartime, behavior at checkpoints, and terrorism studies. Writings include those by Buss (2009), Fierke (2005), and Lang & Beattie (2009). These authors look at the power of excluding others, ignoring them, the humiliating treatment of marginalized populations, and conclude that such behavior exacerbates conflict as powerfully as the use of weapons. Similarly, the literature on identity and identity politics in IR (see, for example, Heyes, 2012; Riggins, 1997; Hekman, 1997) is very much part of a wider literature on marginalization in IR that highlights the lack of agency that a particular construction of an identity, whether determined by age, gender, or ethnicity, creates.

This sample of literature supports my claim that youth participation can be measured within IR as a tool for peacebuilding. Having a scale against which to gauge the (lack of) youth participation illustrates the need for youth-oriented benchmarks and youth-narrated visions. The model I submit is a modified version of Hart's Ladder of Participation. As a result of investigating the different levels of participation that Hart describes, and exploring this disconnect between rhetoric and reality (a theme which will be further illustrated in Chapter 5, when my fieldwork is analyzed), an enhanced version of Hart's model was developed, termed here, the "Vortex of Voice and Violence."

Vortex of Voice and Violence

This Vortex of Voice and Violence is original, a new way of framing, an extension—so to speak—of Hart's Ladder. Hart's Ladder is a tool of policy, used

by several disciplines within the social sciences, such as psychology, sociology, and human geography, but here it has now been adapted for use in international relations. This is a different approach to violence and peacebuilding, and adds a new dimension to the already existing body of knowledge. The Vortex provides an illustration of how a lack of voice may lead to increased violence, demonstrating potential links between voice and violence, from an IR perspective, thereby extending the discussion of these topics.



Inverse relationship between voice/participation and violence: the greater the level of participation, the lower the levels of violence; the lower the level of participation, the greater risk of spiraling violence.

Figure 9: De Graaf's Vortex of Voice and Violence

As the Vortex moves downward, farther away from participation, young people are perceived as riskier, and what little trust there might have been disintegrates. This trust issue applies to all marginalized groups, as fear and lack of trust brand them as unpredictable and risky (Stephens, 1995), whether their differences are based on race, gender, class, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, or age. In addition, marginalized youth may feel the promise of agency, but become increasingly aware of ways in which they lack agency, which just further fuels their anger and frustration.

With regard to this lowest sub-step of being Marginalized, marginalized groups throughout history were often further pushed to the edges of society by being denied a voice. Not just youth, but all marginalized groups fit this model of voice (or lack of voice) and agency (or lack of agency). Examples include indigenous groups and minority populations whose children were punished in school when using native languages, as well as those people lacking political representation. The closer young people, and other marginalized groups, find themselves to having no voice at all, the more likely they are to turn to violence as a form of communication.

As the Vortex illustrates, youth activism is a form of communication. If it is not listened to, then peaceful demonstrations often tip into violent demonstrations, and depending on the response of authorities, into riots. How violent they become, depends on how they are perceived. Authorities' reactions to peaceful

demonstrations may exacerbate the situation. When youth activists are not listened to, often police view them as risky (Stephens, 1995) and assume violence, so there is an escalation on both sides as positions become entrenched. When youth feel that they are not being listening to and assume the worst, this equals the stage my own research has created, that of being Ignored. Similar scenarios illustrate the sub-step of being Humiliated.

The Vortex provides an analytical device for examining how far a particular society has progressed in terms of developing participation. It includes Hart's "non-participation" categories, each of which can be recognized for its existing significance within IR discourse. Thus, Hart's recognition of the significance of manipulation is echoed in the work of Stedman & Tanner (2003); Pugh (2002); and Perry (1988) on the plight of refugees, during and after war, and on the operation of political parties. The same holds true in terms of Hart's "tokenism" within IR. This category of tokenism is particularly relevant with regard to children and their place in peacebuilding, and the consideration of whether all of the means so often used to include them, are in reality of any relevance to their position as agential actors. As Hart notes, "A nation is democratic to the extent that its citizens are involved, particularly at the community level" (1992, p. 4).

When citizens are not involved, their voices go unheard. Looking at how people communicate means recognizing violence as a form of communication. According to Blementhal (2006), when words fail, for whatever reason, violence

provides a powerful form of communication, which may have devastating consequences. But it is also a breakdown of the mental process necessary for thinking, cutting off any potential exchange of ideas. "Violence is a communication at such a primitive level that it bypasses thought altogether, and consequently the dialogue between the victim, the perpetrator and society occurs largely at a level that is beyond awareness" (Blementhal, 2006, p. 4).

Violence as communication

The Vortex refers to violence as a means of communication. This is relevant to this thesis because being in a post-conflict or deeply divided society just adds instability, which breeds unrest. That tipping point, when peaceful demonstrations become violent, as illustrated on the Vortex, is much more frightening within a post-conflict context or within a deeply divided society. In some ways this is unsurprising, given the IR literature that exists on youth bulges, as explained previously. Within the field of IR, youth are considered to play very limited roles, most of which are risky (Stephens, 1995). The consequences of non-participation, however, are exacerbated within a conflict situation, and sometimes even more so when the war is over. Therefore, studying this phenomenon is especially significant for understanding post-conflict peacebuilding, especially at a communal level.

The post-conflict environment

When a conflict ends, roles shift within a society, as do perspectives, both about young people and about so-called youth violence, and also the perspectives of young people themselves. As long as siding with an opposition political party is seen as an act of rebellion, it may hold a higher appeal to young people than when that party legitimately comes to power. Often youth violence in post-war contexts sheds its political skin and is simply seen to be some sort of deviant behavior (Jarman, McEvoy-Levy, & Smyth-Campbell, as cited in Kurtenbach, 2008). The perspectives of young people thus remain an important factor to be taken into consideration and studied further.

As discussed in detail in the previous chapter, a youth bulge is generally seen as a negative characteristic of a society, in terms of high unemployment and potential post-conflict violence—which are categorized as threats to the peacebuilding process. This perception persists, despite Urdal's (2006) quantitative data proving otherwise, where he and others explore how the potential for an outbreak of violence is more dependent on the level of voice the population has, rather than the age of that population.

This thesis argues that if young people were viewed as an asset, rather than as a problem, then a youth bulge could be considered a positive characteristic with inherent potential for contributing to peacebuilding processes. But if young people are viewed as “lost,” then this valuable potential goes untapped, and any role they might play in peacebuilding, especially in the context of their ability to

connect and bring groups together, becomes a missed opportunity (Kamper & Badenhorst, 2010). Their voices are not listened to, and so their knowledge is not heard. As Kurtenbach (2008) notes, the focus given to youth may determine both local and international strategies. This is a key point of this thesis, namely that what happens to youth—whether they are listened to or not—plays a significant role in determining if peacebuilding efforts will result in a lasting peace.

As a global example, Shipler (2008) notes with regard to a peacebuilding initiative in Nepal, that it is possible to build a national program of stakeholders from across dividing lines, and that this often hinges on working directly with youth leaders. In Nepal's case, young people's questions guided the topics addressed. They asked what could young people do to implement the peace agreement in each of their individual communities? What role could they play in facilitating reconciliation? As part of the ensuing answer, youth clubs played an important role in disseminating the resulting responses. Communities everywhere often already have youth clubs set up, and these may be centered on sporting, religious or vocational themes. By tapping into these already existing hubs for youth, it becomes possible to tap into a rich variety of political, ethnic, caste, and social interests. The common purpose, however, is to help create space for young people to participate in the transformation that is going on around them. As discussed in the frameworks introduced above, different means of engaging youth at the local level have been developed. What is lacking, however, is policy that prioritizes this.

An important first step in operationalizing such policy is by identifying young people's needs. Listening to the voices of youth is everyday peacebuilding at its purest. In my fieldwork, I discovered that the power of asking what people need was demonstrated in South Africa, when the constitution was being drawn up in 1994. At that time, focus groups were conducted around the country, in which young people talked about the adult-sized burdens they carried, in terms of caring for sick or dying parents because of the HIV pandemic, and caring for their younger siblings. This contributed to a constitution (1996) being written that gives young people unprecedented rights. However, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, there is much evidence that South African young people feel that in practice, their government has stopped listening to its youth.

Richmond (2010a), recognizes in his research the value of listening to youth in the post-conflict context, and makes the point that what is lacking in the liberal peace is an understanding of how people communicate. This can take many forms, including local means of communicating. When people who have endured conflict have the opportunity to tell their stories, and are then listened to, they often feel empowered to renounce their victim status and take up instead the role of survivor. A significant release occurs and the burden of the past shifts slightly, as conflict becomes post conflict.

Youth in war-to-peace transitions

In post-conflict societies, young people often say they need to learn the skills that will enable them to survive peacetime, as they survived wartime. If youth were given a more prominent place at the peace-negotiation table, one of the results might be less youth violence in post-conflict areas. My own research demonstrates that such programs may include focus groups and generational impact studies, as proposed earlier in this thesis. They should target not just younger children, but also older teens, providing them with valuable skills so that they can find employment (Kemper, 2005).

An example of a generational impact study would involve NGOs asking themselves how their program development reflects the needs, as voiced by youth, of former youth combatants in particular:

Since there is no legal framework for this group, however, demobilization and reintegration programs (DRP) have largely neglected them in practice. Neither small children nor mature adults, international organizations have been torn between a desire to protect them and allowing for their meaningful participation. In contrast to armed groups, which regularly offer youth an income, an occupation, status, identity and the “excitement” of violence, most DRPs fail to appeal to older children and young adults. But the failure to (re)integrate youth into civil structures can not only put the peace-building process at jeopardy, but also deprives these war-affected societies of a potential driving force for peace and development. (Kemper, 2005, p. 3)

Here, again what I refer to as the “upside of the youth bulge” in Chapter 3, is noted. By granting young people job perspectives and asking for their opinion and action, they are more likely to “own” a peace which now has the potential of becoming sustainable because it was co-created by the very generation that must

keep it in place. In this way, it is important to view youth not only as irresponsible war creators, but also as ingenious peace instigators. “All the same, effective programs ultimately have to persuade ex-combatants that peace pays off, for both society as a whole and, more important, for them as individuals. Otherwise, ex-combatants can jeopardize a frail state of peace” (Kemper, 2005, p. 11).

In other words, the reintegration of former youth combatants must also be viewed in terms of benefits (or costs) to young people as individuals. This underlines the need to view people as individuals, and highlights the hypothesis that one of the reasons some reintegration programs may fail to achieve all the goals they aim for, is that children or youth in these conflict zones are often addressed in similar ways as youth or children in Western societies. This can be a costly misjudgment, as former youth combatants have articulated a very particular set of needs, namely skills for jobs. This was confirmed during my fieldwork in South Africa and will be addressed in more detail in Chapter 5.

As another global example of the participatory role of youth in war-to-peace transition, Sierra Leone is often heralded as a country that was desperate for peace, after its war and related images broadcast around the world of people with missing limbs. Sierra Leone was so desperate, some say, that they allowed young people a place at the peace table. Nonetheless, there has been criticism of this peace process and of the resulting peace—that it was still not inclusive

enough of young people (McIntyre & Thusi, 2003). There is a direct link between youth not having a voice, and subsequent violence if the issue is not resolved.

The first issue is that children and youth are used in conflicts in a political way only to be marginalized later and relegated in to an apolitical sphere, especially during and after the peace process. Despite having been hailed as a United Nations (UN) success story, the Sierra Leone case is, like many, a case of lost opportunity to improve the social, economic and political lives of children and youth. (McIntyre & Thusi, 2003, p. 74)

And if young people find themselves excluded during the peace process, then their case is even stronger for inclusion in the peace-building phase. In order to overcome increasing marginalization (often the same marginalization that caused young people to turn to violent politics in the first place), they need to participate in the political process. In Sierra Leone, it is known that young people played important roles during the conflict (as combatants and commanders), however the exact role they played in the peace process is less concrete. If Hart's Ladder is used as a measuring stick, then the Sierra Leone peace process might hover somewhere between steps 4 and 5, *Assigned but informed*, and *Consulted and informed*. But there could have been so much more. And the Vortex of Voice and Violence illustrates a downward spiral of violence should these young people's concerns about education and skills go ignored, as apparent in the Sierra Leone case.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the methodology that will guide the data analysis in the subsequent chapter. It has also outlined relevant and important frameworks

found in sociology and political science literature, paying particular attention to Hart's Participation Ladder, and has contributed to the IR field by presenting the Vortex which hypothesizes that a lack of voice and agency can lead to violence in general, and in post-conflict situations, in particular.

The central aim here is to identify ways in which sustainable peacebuilding can be enhanced by meaningfully engaging youth in the process. In contrast to the alternative frameworks outlined above, this chapter has demonstrated a particular model that links the loss of voice to the equal loss of agency. When a society withholds voice, does not allow young people to participate and be heard, then agency is also withheld. The marginalized group becomes impotent—at best an observer, at worst a victim. Too often the only way to be heard in such cases is through violence. This is a critical factor that needs to be accounted for in sustainable peacebuilding efforts. The oppression of marginalized groups leads to violence, as their voices are denied, as they may feel the promise of agency, and may thus grow aware of the ways in which they lack it (Gurr, 1970). When this group is young, they might be labeled as risky youth (Stephens, 1995), as society withdraws trust and views them in a negative light, as is often the case with youth offenders and combatants.

This chapter analyzed why Hart's model was selected, comparing and contrasting it with possible other candidates. The strengths of the Hart model, compared with other possible models were explained, as were the benefits other

models might have over the Hart model. In addition, an explanation was provided for how the Vortex improves upon Hart's model.

The Vortex model works for youth and for all marginalized groups. To lose local knowledge in a post-conflict society is to lose the potential for a sustainable peace.

The everyday is a space in which local individuals and communities live and develop political strategies in their local environment, towards the state and towards international models of order. It is not civil society, often a Western-induced artifice, but it is representative of the deeper local-local. It is often transversal and transnational, engaging with needs, rights, custom, individual, community, agency and mobilization in political terms. Yet, these are often hidden or deemed marginal by mainstream approaches. (Richmond, 2010b, p. 670)

These often hidden or deemed marginal "local-local" peacebuilding efforts can be found at the opposite end of the Vortex, however, and they point toward a place not narrow and confining, but wide open—a place of promise. When young people, especially those who have been involved in leadership positions in conflict, make the shift to peacetime, they bring a unique set of skills with them. Creating a place at the table for young people to participate in post-conflict peacebuilding, may create the means for an entire society to become transformed.

This chapter is, in short, an exploration of how youth can be involved in the peacebuilding efforts of post-conflict and deeply divided societies in a sustainable way. The imperative aim of this analysis is to apply the Vortex

framework to the data obtained from 144 interviews conducted in South Africa. By going to the field and hearing the voices of the participants first-hand, this thesis provides unique data for policymakers interested in understanding the causal relationship between youth and violence and for developing sustainable peacebuilding policies.

The fieldwork in South Africa, to be discussed in Chapter 5, reveals a clear relationship between voice and agency. This previous chapter puts forward an original model that can be bedded in already-existing terms, concepts and issues within the IR field. Existing literature on everyday diplomacy and the failure of the liberal peace confirms this chapter's findings that in order for the rhetoric of peace for future generations to live up to its potential, then the future generations must be listened to.⁶

⁶ One vivid example of this occurred during previous fieldwork in Liberia after the 14-year conflict there. The example was already mentioned in Chapter 3. I was interviewing former youth combatants who repeatedly and independently of each other said their main concern was learning how to read and write. They knew they needed those skills in order to survive in peace. The skills that had enabled them to survive in war would not help them to get jobs. And yet, the UN and NGOs hired locals with the very same skills needed for teachers—as interpreters and administrative workers. So most of the schools remained closed. Years later, these militarily trained young people have become “riskier” than ever, solving their problems in the only way they know, through violence, either in Liberia or resorting to fighting neighboring conflicts in Ivory Coast, making a semblance of a living the only way they know how to. The so-called peace in Liberia remains shaky at best, and these young people may never come home. One cannot but wonder what might have happened if listening to their voices had been as high a priority as taking away their guns.

Chapter 5: South Africa Fieldwork and Analysis

Introduction

This thesis contributes to understanding the relationship between agency among youth and sustainable peacebuilding (McEvoy-Levy, 2001; Uvin, 2007; Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; Barber, 2009). Specifically, the aim of this thesis is to unpack the roles of youth voice and agency in post-conflict societies (McEvoy-Levy, 2001; Drummond-Mundal & Cave, 2007; Stewart, 2011). This chapter will further explore whether sustainable peacebuilding is more likely to transpire if the voices of the youth are heard in a post-conflict society (Dennoy & Maclure, 2006; Ndebele & Billing, 2011). This is important with regard to future policy making and the prevention of violence (Hilker & Fraser, 2009; Walton, 2010).

This chapter analyzes the ways in which these aims are answered through an evaluation of the methodological approach and research methods used in the research. To summarize, these include the research approach, a description of the case study and location of the research participants, data-gathering and storing methods, as well as an explanation of the data gathered and the four themes identified from the 144 interviews I conducted.

This leads into a broader debate about “othering,” the process of setting oneself apart from others, or being set apart (Kochi, 2009). Although many factors (such

as identity and nationalism) may contribute to this state, voice and agency also play major roles in deciding on which side of the fence people place themselves or, indeed, where the fence should be positioned in the first place. Interesting experiments with regard to national reconciliation include the use of previously mentioned TRCs, as well as workshops on memory, law and reparations. Levels of participation, which relate directly to voice and agency, also influence the extent to which civil society can bring about change (Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010). Lastly, the chapter ends with a consideration of what it might mean to actually recognize the Other in ourselves (Kristeva, 1991). In this way, agency and voice are linked, demonstrating how participation leads to voice that leads to respect, and which then leads to agency and power.

This chapter ends with a brief conclusion before moving onto the next chapter, which applies the four identified themes to the Vortex of Voice and Violence,, introduced in the previous chapter.

Research approach

The methodological framework utilized in this study is largely based on the principles of phenomenological research. I use Giorgi's (2009) definition of this approach, which views the aim of the researcher as to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon studied. This means that the researcher must refrain from any pre-given framework, but remains true to the information revealed in the interviews (Salvendy & Smith, 2009).

I chose this framework because in contrast with the positivist school, which assumes that what exists in the social world is real and can be largely measured and described just as physical scientists measure and describe the real world, phenomenologists believe that the researcher cannot be detached from their own presuppositions (Hammersley, 2000). Welman and Kruger (2001) state: “The phenomenologist [is] concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of the people involved” (p. 189). A phenomenological body of research, therefore, is concerned with the lived experiences of the people involved, or those who were involved, with the issue that is being researched (Greene, 1997; Holloway, 1997; Kvale, 1996; Robinson & Reed, 1998).

This approach is particularly useful because through using this framework, insights into understanding the role of agency in sustainable peacebuilding can be discovered. Thus, the research was concerned with gathering interviews regarding the perspectives (voices) of the research participants about the relationship between agency (or lack of) and sustainable peacebuilding (or lack of).

The research is based on qualitative data retrieved through interviews, observations and conversations. The core of qualitative research consists of natural inquiry, which studies everyday situations with as little disturbance

through the researcher's presence as possible (Beuving & de Vries, 2015; Neuman, 2014). Such research is based on the interpretivist belief that one can only understand societies if one understands its members' actions and views, which are the building blocks of a society. It therefore includes numerous perspectives and integrates meaning with experience, or as Neuman (2014, p. 438) writes, "Field researchers try to get inside the 'heads' or meaning systems of diverse members and then switch back to an outsider or research viewpoint." To achieve that, one does not set pre-assigned boundaries, but instead identifies *foreshadowed problems* (Malinowski, 1922) and adjusts and focuses the research as it proceeds. Such research designs stand in contrast to positivist ones that seek to find universal laws in society through employing standardized procedures in controlled research sites, conventionally equated with quantitative approaches (Beuving & de Vries, 2015). With this in mind, I will first elaborate on the reasons behind the choice of case study for this thesis, and will then do so for the methods of the observation and conversation part, and finally, for the interviews.

I chose the interview method because I wanted to hear voices. Voices are important because sometimes information is missed because those impacted by certain policies are not listened to. As such, this thesis highlights the importance of voice (Ulbig, 2008; Couldry, 2010; Arnot & Swartz, 2012). I went into these interviews with a hypothesis, and proceeded to demonstrate that the methodology of asking questions in an open-ended manner could highlight their voices. My questions were purposefully broad, so as to allow greater scope for

the interviewees' answers. I approached it this way because of the primacy of listening (Louw, Todd & Jimakorn, 2011); I wanted those interviewed to answer in ways that could be considered as significant. In addition, because I knew the direction I wanted the conversation to head I derived qualitative results by having set thematic questions. This allowed interviewees to expand on certain topics. By interviewing in this manner, I gave interviewees agency by giving them space. This was done expressly, in order to observe the interplay of voice and agency in the field. I had a clear idea of the methodology I wished to apply and had planned and decided in advance how these interviews could best be conducted. This originates from the theoretical approaches explained in Chapter 2. In addition, I was also aware that by the very nature of the topics I was exploring, I could not go in to the interviews with a complete set of questions because this would go against the very crux of this thesis: voice.

As my hypothesis considers whether there is a relationship between peacebuilding and youth voices, a practical question arose: where would be the best place to conduct this research? It was important to find a place where society is deeply divided and where young people play unique roles in order to highlight the as yet untapped potential of youth voice and agency in the process of peacebuilding. As this is a thesis about voice, I needed somewhere English-speaking, so I could hear the voices myself.

It was also important that I chose a case study that has historically emphasized the role of youth in peacebuilding. South Africa offered me such an opportunity, as it is often held up—because of the nature of its constitution—as a model for youth participation. Firstly, its constitution reflects that children have agency, while within the context of peace and conflict studies, South Africa is important as it was host to the first major truth and reconciliation process. This very process highlights voice. Within the case study of South Africa, questions that came up during the interview process included: What do truth and reconciliation ask for? What is the role of voice? Is it enough to have a voice, or do voices need to be listened to?

South Africa demonstrates these issues in a comprehensive way because it has prioritized voice; for instance, with the TRC process, voice has become recognized through the powerful and moving testimonies of participants (Ross, 2003; Phelps, 2004; Fullard & Rousseau, 2008). Yet there is still a lack of recognition and agency, as evidenced by Dissel (1997) and McEvoy-Levy (2001), even though the youth played an important part in bringing down apartheid.

South African fieldwork: Voices and choices

As introduced in Chapter 1, several factors played a major role in the decision to conduct my fieldwork in South Africa. As previously referenced, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) presented a new model for

transitional justice. Meanwhile, the 1996 South African Constitution is viewed by many as the most liberal constitution in the world (Nuttall, 2009).

There is an extensive rights framework in place in South Africa, including the full adoption and legal approval of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In my readings and pre-fieldwork interviews, I came across several instances when South African social workers had come to the EU to give workshops on youth, voice, and agency, thus demonstrating that those concepts were part of the policy discussion. One example included advice given to members of the Scottish legal community about taking young people's witness accounts of alleged criminal acts by video, and the counseling before and after the act. This was based on wider research on youth voice and juvenile justice (Swaner & Correia, 2008).

As described in Chapter 3, South Africa has a unique history with regard to youth involvement. The anti-apartheid movement owes its turning point—when the international community became involved and imposed economic sanctions—to the young students who protested during the Soweto Uprising (Cooper, 1994; Seekings, 1996). On 16 June 1976, more than 20,000 school children protested against having to learn Afrikaans, which they considered the oppressor's language. When government forces killed between 176-700 people that day, including children, this event brought the anti-apartheid struggle onto the international stage. The consequent sanctions imposed by the international

community helped to eventually bring down the apartheid government (Wilson, 2001). Whilst the voices of the youth were a trigger factor in this, the end of the anti-apartheid struggle adversely led to a demobilization of the political role of youth in South Africa.

In addition, the AIDS pandemic claimed many parents who would have been aged 40-60 years old as of today. As a result, some estimates claim a fifth of South African children live in orphan-headed households (Statistics South Africa, 2012). This has a negative effect on the agency young people might potentially exercise due to restraints caused by the need for many to focus largely on basic essentials such as survival, food, and safety. The Social Profile of SA annual report is based on data from the General Household Survey between 2003 and 2011. Accurate figures are difficult to come by, however, and often vary. UNICEF (2014) states that 5.7 million people in South Africa are currently infected by HIV, and that many parents are dying and leaving behind orphaned children. An estimated 3.7 million orphans live in South Africa, about half of whom have lost one or both parents, and about 150,000 children are believed to be living in child-headed households (Hall, Woolard, Lake & Smith, 2012). It is still very much taboo to admit that family members suffer from HIV/AIDS, so tuberculosis (TB) and malaria are often named instead. This occurs despite the fact that most of South Africa is a malaria-free zone. During my interviews HIV/AIDS came up in masked language, as young people referred to their parents as being ill with TB.

Regardless of the disagreement on statistics, the fact remains that because of the AIDS pandemic, many young people in South Africa are raising their siblings, or are being raised by ailing grandparents. This is also acknowledged in the adult-sized rights they are accorded by the South African Constitution and as mentioned by President Mandela when the constitution came into force.

All the abovementioned reasons were contributing factors in my decision to conduct fieldwork in South Africa. I went into the field with a particular hypothesis, based on extensive readings and my own previous experiences. This hypothesis was that young people may play a larger role in bringing about long-term sustainable peace within their own deeply divided societies. There were certain themes I expected, and there were others that surprised me, so I added to this hypothesis, believing in the power of other people's words. Remembering how qualitative research is based on the interpretivist belief that it can aid in understanding people's actions and views, the building blocks of social understanding, and therefore include numerous perspectives and integrates meaning with experience (Beuving & de Vries, 2015; Neuman, 2014). Given the fact, for example, that youth were involved in the historical anti-apartheid movement as resisters, I wondered whether youth might be made more welcome to play active roles in certain aspects of South African society than in the EU. Could there be lessons learned in South Africa that could be applicable in other places of the world?

Research participants

According to Hycner (1999) “the phenomenon dictates the method (not vice-versa), including even the type of participants” (p. 156). The participants of this research were selected based on the principle that they have (in)direct experiences related to agency, youth, and sustainable peacebuilding in South Africa. In terms of selecting the participants, I used a snowballing sampling technique that allows the researcher to expand the study by asking one informant or participant to recommend others for interviewing (Patton, 1990). In order to ensure that I did not miss out on any key insights, I asked participants to recommend persons involved in peacebuilding and youth through: (i) direct involvement with peacebuilding; (ii) direct involvement with youth; (iii) youth involved in peacebuilding. Even though I had attempted to set these parameters, the participants influenced the direction of the research in the end. This sampling method is valid in social sciences (Heckathorn, 1997; Salganik & Heckathorn, 2004).

I conducted semi-structured interviews, which are simply conversations during which the interviewer knows what they want to find out about—and so they have a set of questions prepared to ask but the conversation is free to wander, and is likely to vary substantially between participants (Miles & Gilbert, 2005). It also includes *hanging out*, as Rodgers (2004) calls the small-scale qualitative research approach that involves interpersonal contact on an informal basis. While some academics warn of such approaches (see e.g., Jacobsen & Landau, 2003), Rodgers (2004) defends its usefulness for hearing individual voices on a

local, experience-based level, thus appreciating complexity independent of pre-established frameworks, and seeing interviewees as humans rather than mere research subjects. Jacobsen and Landau (2003), on the contrary, argue for well-planned methodological approaches that gather quantifiable data and are less prone to bias, claiming these are therefore more representative and ethical.

Jacobsen and Landau's approach would fall under the positivist research design mentioned earlier. I agree with them insofar that the methodology should be clear and open about shortcomings, and I consider their argument relevant. Beuving and de Vries (2015) identify four tools that counteract the danger of subjectivity, which Jacobsen and Landau warn of. Those are a triangulation of various data collection methods, such as note taking, rechecking interpretations with informants, and using grounded theory. The latter is a systematic procedure deriving theoretical concepts from empirical research (Strauss, 1987). It generalizes through finding patterns in individual experiences; then it links such generalizations in explaining the studied issue. In grounded theory, the research process is based on theoretical debates with open-ended concepts and is perpetuated by analyzing data during collection (Beuving & de Vries, 2015). This thesis sought to cater for all those provisions.

I oriented my method on theoretical sampling, which is guided by criteria being formulated as the research develops (Beuving & de Vries, 2015; Neuman, 2014). And as mentioned previously, snowball sampling played a role, as well. My

analysis of the interviews was inspired by a sequence of three types of coding that Strauss (1987) identified: 1) Open coding to condense the material into categories through locating key themes and events; 2) axial coding to combine or split those codes to form higher categories; and 3) identifying illustrative examples of the developed categories (see also Böhm, 2004; Neuman, 2014). In the course of translating and transcribing the interviews, I informally took notes of major topics that kept arising. Afterwards, I read each transcript again and marked on a separate sheet for every interviewee (i.e. if two people were interviewed at the same time, I counted them separately) which of the informally noted topics were mentioned. During this open coding phase I also continued to adjust and add topics that I had not identified during transcribing. I then went into the axial coding phase by condensing the most frequently mentioned topics into themes, and extracted the themes that were mentioned most often. While I analyzed the data and formulated conclusions, I conferred with several of my informants to check whether my interpretations resonated with them or not.

My fieldwork in South Africa covered a three-month period—January through March 2012, plus follow-up interviews a year later in January, 2013. I conducted 144 interviews with South African young people and adults from a wide variety of racial, ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as with NGOs, community and religious leaders, school principals, teachers, think tanks, social workers and other people involved with youth work.

Of the 144 interviews, 17 were follow-up interviews which will be explained further later on. Of the 127 people interviewed, 76 were with young people (below the age of 30). Of these 76, 21 were children, aged 18 or under, and attending either primary or high schools. Of the 55 young people over 18, the vast majority categorized themselves as students (35). In addition, there were two university administrators (one of whom was also a historical museum guide), three politicians, two filmmakers, one young homeless man, one author and current spokesman for SA Police, three NGO workers, one think-tank researcher, one restaurant manager, one waitress, and five unemployed young men and women.

The 51 adults consisted of 15 university professors, one university rector, one wife of a university rector, one historical museum guide, one former Robben Island inmate with President Mandela; the Deputy Director General for the South African government's department of education; the Chief Executive of the Nelson Mandela Foundation; CEO of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls; and a current senior advisor to a university rector, one Dutch-Reformed (Afrikaans) bishop, one social worker, one church minister, five NGO directors, four NGO workers, one politician, one former journalist who covered the TRC; a poet; an author; a philosopher; and a university instructor, two former anti-apartheid fighters, one former pro-apartheid fighter; a member of the SA military force who fought in Angola; and an owner of a surfing store and surfing instructor, one anthropologist, six think-tank researchers, one primary school

principal, one imam, two high school principals, two high school teachers, one think-tank director, and one winery guide.

This spread of interviews is the result of the abovementioned snowballing method which, by its nature can result in clustering around certain communities (Lunsford & Lunsford, 1995). In this case the clustering occurred around the education community; nonetheless, my interviews also highlight voices from a non-education sphere. This was a deliberate choice and part of my own qualitative research process. In addition, given that despite the fact that children and youth are generally ignored in peacebuilding literature (McEvoy-Levy, 2006), there is an extensive academic discussion about peace education (Reardon, 1993; Page, 2004; Harris, 2004; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005), which thus entered into my topics: namely, the relationship between peace education and sustainable peace. Those involved in the education sector and their views already play into existing literature. I interviewed people involved in education in whichever way because 1) education is a route toward sustainable peacebuilding (Kotite, 2012), and 2) higher levels of education increase the chance of participation in policymaking, which then increases agency. The clustering around the education community was a direct and purposeful consequence of choosing to apply a snowballing technique for qualitative research (Goodman, 2011). These particular people were chosen because they brought me closer to my goal of a greater understanding regarding how voice enables youth to claim agency within a divided society, and what are the

implications of this in terms of conflict and peacebuilding. These choices are further explained in the following section, Data gathering.

In addition, because this research concerns the role of voice, I was highly conscious of how important it was that I listened well, and exercised active listening (Pascal & Bertram, 2009). The interviewees often mentioned that they were grateful for the listening space I had provided, as many of the young people in particular rarely had been asked for their opinions.

It should also be noted that while conducting the interviews, I recognized my own positionality (Ganga & Scott, 2006). During the interviews, I drew on my past experiences as a researcher, and began to identify myself more as a white researcher than I had done in the past. I was more aware of this when with the white interviewees, than with the non-white interviewees because the former made certain assumptions about my own belief system; namely, several assumed it would match their own.

Another aspect of my experiences that I often drew upon was an expertise in interviewing children. My own methodology involves asking questions about a variety of subjects until I see them “come alive,” so to speak. Once they showed interest in a subject like sports or school, then I could guide the conversation in the direction of the subjects I wanted to cover. First, though, the children needed to be in a safe space, and I also asked the adult(s) in authority if they would not

mind leaving the room. As the research focuses on voice, I did not want any risk of the adults in the room speaking on the children's behalf.

It is important to note that although Article 12 of the CRC grants young people a voice, it does not designate an obligation on the part of adults to a) listen, and b) refrain from speaking on behalf of young people. When children are being interviewed, there is often an assumption that they do not know what to say (Solberg, 2012). This is sometimes made at a very subconscious level by adults, which makes it all the more subtle and difficult to counter. So, during my interviews, I sometimes waited in a friendly silence, nodding and smiling, as children gathered their thoughts into communicable shapes.

I am aware that my own particular interview style may have influenced the responses, and that the subjects covered were often in response to my queries in those directions. But I deliberately held back and submitted to the authority of those I interviewed, even and especially when with young people. I would find a topic they knew well and ask them questions, letting them teach me, so they could grow in confidence. Often, out of that confidence came a certain level of trust. The interviews were semi-structured in order to allow for vulnerability—both mine and theirs—as I wanted to give them an opportunity to use their voice. Interviews with children such as with those quoted in later sections demonstrate how voice can be unexpected, different and original.

The above explanations of my interview style, and motivation for silences and the removal of adults, and my own encouragement of children's confidence levels, are all to say that I sought pure voices. In other words, I made efforts (as listed) to eradicate any biases, interferences and influence that may have affected the child respondents so they could express themselves more freely. What I heard from those children, quoted in the later sections of this chapter, is as close to pure children's voices as I have heard.

Data gathering

The phenomena studied in this thesis are voice and sustainable peacebuilding, and more particularly the relationship between the realized agency of youth and sustainable peacebuilding. I conducted semi-structured, in-depth phenomenological (Hycner, 1985) interviews with the youth of South Africa, with people directly working with youth in South Africa, and with people directly working within the field of peacebuilding in South Africa. By choosing these three demographics, I felt that this would help me explore the multiple roles young people play, record narratives of peacebuilding and conflict, and investigate agency, or a lack thereof, as a result of these narratives. I also wanted to examine key issues that need to be taken into account, and which are perhaps currently ignored, in developing an examination of the relationship between voice and violence. There were certain themes that I needed to explore within the context of my research, and semi-structured interviews seemed the best means to achieve these ends (Hettler & Johnston, 2009; Pruitt, 2015; Hamber,

2015). The remainder of this section details how these interviews were conducted.

My questions were aimed at gauging the lived experiences, emotions, feelings and perceptions about the role of youth in peacebuilding—in truly listening to their voices and in some way also contributing to a growing awareness of youth agency in South Africa. The interviews produced information on how the participants “think and feel” about the role of youth in peacebuilding, about “describ[ing] the lived experience in a language free from the constructs of the intellect and society as possible” (Groenewald, 2004). The semi-structured nature of the qualitative interviews allowed for a dialogue to form between the participants and myself. This resulted in interviews varying in duration and the questions discussed, while building trust along the way.

Another consequence of this particular interview experience is that I have also learned to consciously and very actively listen for the unexpected. In this case, especially since the purpose of these interviews was to explore the role of voice, I was very deliberate about not restricting the conversations and limiting the way in which the interviewees expressed themselves. I did not want to constrain the interviewees and trap them into categorically tight boxes. It was important, both ethically and methodologically, to allow an opportunity for those being interviewed to contribute to the narrative in the ways in which they desired.

After all, voice is a foundational pillar of this thesis, and being spoken on behalf of is part of the non-participation segment of the Vortex.

I planned, as a result, certain foundational questions in advance, and used these as a template for most of the interviews. These questions can be clustered into three themes:

1) Identity—

- How would you describe your place in South African society?
- What is your identity?
- Which languages do you speak?
- Where are you from?
- What do you think it means to be South African?

2) Identity of the Other—

- Young people here in South Africa have a lot to teach us actually, and that's why I wanted to ask you a few questions. Could you tell me stories of things you have learned along the way that have helped you cope with the Other?
- Who do you think the Other is?
- You know it could be Christians or Muslims, or blacks or so-called "coloureds" (South Africans of Indian or Malaysian or mixed-race descent) or whites, or it could be the family down the street that your father isn't talking to. Whoever the Other is, if you have advice or stories, maybe you could tell me about them, the ways that you think people could show more respect to one another.

3) Policy and action—

- How do you plan to change South Africa?
- What do you think are South Africa's biggest challenges?
- How would you propose tackling them?
- What is your motivation for what you do?

I went into the interviews asking about their identity, how they saw the identities of others and policy. The data that emerged in the form of their voices and the themes produced followed these same three themes I had planned and proposed through my choice of questions, while a fourth theme was added, as will be explained in the thematic grouping of interview responses.

Data storing

Before turning to the four emergent themes, however, a further explanation of the methodology applied is necessary. The interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the interviewees. Each participant was given a code, and when a participant was interviewed twice, the code was revised accordingly. First, I listened to the recordings afterwards, then all the interviews were transcribed, during which I made notes and collected key words, which aided in the identification of the four emergent themes detailed below. In this way I determined which excerpts from which interviews could be used as representative of the themes.

With regard to the coding detailed in these four themes, it should be noted that the numerical figure preceding the name in square brackets refers to the interview number, and the interviews are presented in chronological order, within each section of the four themes discussed below. An indication of my own questions may precede an answer in parentheses. The description following each name is how the interviewee described themselves. The words in italics are excerpts from the actual interviews, and reference the four overarching themes. Please note the use of boldface for emphasis.

It should also be noted that the exact words have been transcribed, rather than a paraphrase of them, so the quotes sometimes appear colloquial. The quotes are exactly as stated as this is also part of the methodology. Choosing to not use the actual words would be to take away or decrease people's voices, and as this research concerns voice and agency, I purposely chose to present interviewees' voices in as pure a form possible.

In addition to the recorded tapes, I kept a research diary as a secondary source of data. According to Bailey (1996, p. xiii), research diaries involve "luck, feelings, timing, whimsy and art." This research made use of Burgess's (1984) methodological account model, whereby the research diary involved "autobiographical details outlining the researcher's involvement in the social situation in addition to the methods of social investigation involved" (p. 76). This allowed for me to reflect on the "lived experiences" of the participants and

determine key observations, remarking on central themes and shared experiences between the participants.

Understanding the data

I applied the approach of phenomenology (Groenewald, 2004; Kafle, 2013) on the three themes around which my questions centered: 1) Identity, 2) Identity of the Other, and 3) Policy and action. Then I conducted the interviews, during the course of which those three themes were not only reinforced, but also added to. It was important that rather than overly deconstructing the information gathered by the interviews or tampering with the intended meaning of the participants, I put an emphasis on extracting valuable meaning from the information gathered. In order to do so, I followed the procedures listed below:

- reviewing the transcripts of the interviews, taking notes, and listening again to the tapes when necessary
- extracting phrases and keywords that appeared important during the interviews
- clustering phrases and keywords together to identify recurring themes
- Validating the themes by listening to the interview tapes yet again, then going over my field notes to explore whether the extracted themes were still in line with the participants' statements.

The recurring themes that transpired from this process fall into four categories:

1) Identity

- a) Interviewee identity
 - b) Context of that identity alongside others
- 2) Socio-economic disparity
- a) Wealth
 - b) Class
 - c) Crime
 - d) Violence
- 3) Reality-versus-rhetoric disconnect between children's rights and consequent policy ramifications
- 4) History.

With regard to themes 1) Identity and 2) Socio-economic disparity, during the course of the interviewing process what became important was that intersectionality (Gopaldas, 2013; Horsford & Tillman, 2014; Stewart & Bassel, 2014) was also an important indicator of identity, as well as privilege. Identity (theme 1) is about far more than language and the color of one's skin, which had been expected. Although race and South Africa's apartheid history did prove to be significant indicators, the interviews showed the importance of identity in socio-economic terms. Research already shows that identity has an impact on crime and violence (Burdett Schiavone, 2009; Boduszek & Hyland, 2011), but following my interviews, socio-economic disparities came up as an even more

significant indicator within the theme of identity. This led to Socio-economic disparity being designated as a theme in its own right (theme 2).

Reality-versus-rhetoric disconnect between children's rights and consequent policy ramifications (theme 3), is important because several of the responses stressed that it is quite difficult for policy to change in this area, as often children's rights are viewed as unimportant (Koppich, 1993; Lansdown, 2001).

But most significant of all is the fact that because of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), South Africa is now seen as a country which truly listens to people's voices. However, as the TRC demonstrates, recognizing and listening is not enough. History (theme 4), arose as a significant subject as it highlights what happens when there is voice, but little agency. Recognition within the context of the liberal peace allows the TRC to be seen as a catch-all entity, whereby an implied promise was made, namely, that people's trauma would be recognized. But according to the victims and perpetrators (Kelly & Fitzduff, 2002; Brewer, 2006), this does nothing if policy change does not accompany recognition. Indeed, it hardly matters if someone has a voice, but is not given agency (Hart, 1992; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009), which ties in with the theme of recognition. Recognition is not enough, if there is no structural change accompanying it. In other words, unless something changes, then recognition is just reinforcement (Honneth, 1995), which can raise expectations and lead to violence (Gurr, 1970). Urban deprivation leads to violence (Yonas, 2005).

This chapter aims to prove that unless it is known what people feel, unless their voices are heard, then effective policy cannot be made. Listening is not enough, but it is absolutely crucial as a first step toward renewing policy. Structural change and policy impacting socio-economic change are what is needed. These interviews show that individual voices express individual needs, which means that they need to be recognized individually (Eijkman, 2010). By adding previously unheard voices to the factors being considered, structural and policy change can be expanded to address additional individual needs.

Each of these four themes will now be explored in detail, and excerpts from interviews will be supplied to illustrate the themes.

Theme 1: Identity

A deeply divided society exists when a large number of conflict group members ... hold antagonistic beliefs and emotions towards the opposing segment (Nordlinger, 1972).

A trans-societal bargaining culture facilitates negotiations of intergroup issues and enhances willingness to resolve conflict through an iterative process of political exchange and reciprocity. Where there is a bargaining culture, parties to an agreement are more likely to accept costs in the short term because they expect greater gains in the longer term. (1972, p. 59)

Nordlinger estimates that it takes about two generations to prompt meaningful conflict-regulating behavior. He highlights the significance of recognizing the

deeply divided nature of a society, and the necessity of acknowledging this interplay when pursuing sustainable peace.

In the following sections excerpts from the interviews confirm this point. From the interview respondents, I break down this classification of Identity into two sub-themes, namely:

- a. Interviewee identity
- b. Context of that identity alongside others.

What follows is an excerpt of an interview that demonstrates very well this theme of Identity. I chose to highlight this particular interview first because not only does the interviewee articulate the idea that violence is waiting to happen, but that he represents and speaks on behalf of young people in his position as African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) leader.

[56.] Senzeni Mphila, 31, *studying urban planning*

(As stated earlier, in the presentation of this and all following interviews, please note the use of boldface for emphasis. The words in italics are excerpts from the actual interviews. In this case, for example, “studying urban planning” is how the interviewee described himself during the interview.) Mphila is a young man highly placed in the ANCYL. He is what many call a “young bull” of the ANCYL, and holds the position of Western Cape Province coordinator. I had met him at an ANCYL meeting, during which members addressed each other as “comrade.”

The ANC and ANCYL follow a Marxist line, and during the interview I found it difficult to get Mphila to wander far from the party script. He spent most of the time defending Malema (the former—controversial—leader of the ANC Youth League), and added that the age limit for membership of this so-called youth league was 35, and not 30. This means that Malema, then at the age of 32, could still be a member. Mphila said, *“Power is all about race. There is no black middle class.”* This was in response to a question I had posed about the so-called “black diamonds,” or extremely wealthy blacks in South Africa, men like Malema. He used terms and expressions like *“uprising,” “ticking bomb”* and *“We are preparing for an uprising”*, throughout the interview.

In any case, only after I had asked Mphila if he had any children, did he say something unrelated to politics. Regarding his own personal dreams for his son: *“I pray my son, I wish that when he is my age that things will be different, that **he will enjoy wealth.**”* When I brought up those who have narratives of peacebuilding, Mphila called them *“coconuts,”* a derogatory term for blacks who are perceived by some to have betrayed their people by becoming “white” on the inside, though black on the outside. He referred to a leading education activist, Jonathan Jansen, as a *“PR exercise.”* I asked him who is *“the Other,”* and he said *whites*. But when I asked him to describe himself, as an individual, he said he was a *“planner. I study urban planning.”* So he was describing himself, in terms of education, and as with so many young people I interviewed, not in terms of race.

Then he added, "*In Joburg people are living across the street from wealth. We will cross the street someday.*"⁷

This echoes the behavior of the ANC political party which acts as big brother to the ANCYL, and perpetuates a discourse of reclaiming wealth. In addition, despite several cases of corruption in the government, many of South Africa's leaders continue a policy of cronyism and lining their own pockets. This was the single greatest complaint among the interviewees when I asked what they would change in South Africa. They saw government corruption as a betrayal of the Rainbow Nation dream they bought into when the ANC and Nelson Mandela came to power in 1994.

An interview with William Nicholson demonstrates a different perspective. Both interviews highlight the significance of certain identity issues, with regard to race and apartheid in terms of culture and youth in South Africa. It is important to note that Mphila's sense of disillusionment is also mentioned in the following interview. Both men share this aspect of the South African experience, but they do so from opposite ends of the racial spectrum.

⁷ As a side note, I asked about his first name, Senzeni which I knew was Zulu for "What have we done?" He broke eye contact with me and said when his mother was pregnant with him, both she and his father lost an uncle and an aunt. "*Then this child comes and they asked, what have we done.*" Finally, it is also worth noting that he addressed the waitress at the restaurant where we met as "*sister,*" and kept his ANCYL leadership cap on throughout the interview. She showed deference to him because of this. The last thing I noticed about Mphila when we said goodbye, was the lipstick on the left shoulder of his shirt.

[65.] part 2 (as multi-part interviews are labeled) William Nicholson, 25,
“wannabe” filmmaker (in his own words) who studied English Literature

(The words in italics are excerpts from the actual interviews.) William Nicholson is a young filmmaker from an Afrikaner background, living in Cape Town. The white privilege Mphila described is embodied by Nicholson. He acknowledges the same problems Mphila does, i.e. poverty and materialistic imbalance, but his solution is through storytelling, rather than staging an uprising. As Nicholson notes,

Art I think is the only discipline that kind of touches on that nerve ending of what it actually means to be human, be it music, or what I'm drawn to [which is] storytelling specifically. It's those little moments, those epiphanies... those little flashes of insight when you just see what it really means to be human.

If Nicholson's solution is story, rather than uprising, this raises the point of positionality. He refers to his race, wealth, and privilege and says that this is something seen, but not felt, while at the same time, one's options and how one uses one's voice are in themselves a result of privilege.

I suppose it's a part of the whole disillusion thing, I just realized what it is. It's just arbitrary and man-made, and yea, very often man-made not woman-made, um... boundaries and geographies and things that you know don't exist inherently anyway. I don't think there is an us.

Due to his positionality, he enjoys options that are not on offer for Mphila. Nicholson is also referring to his racial positionality, but his perspective is

different than most Afrikaners, because he has a black girlfriend. This shifts his positionality, demonstrating how his view on race is changing. Nicholson's positionality gives him options which are not fixed, and he recognizes this because of his girlfriend. Mphila represents one side of the deeply divided society and Nicholson represents the Other, but also a future. If his positionality is not fixed, as confirmed by Nicholson's comments on how his thinking about race and identity has shifted, due to having a black girlfriend, then perspectives can also shift.

When I asked Nicholson about his father's reaction to his girlfriend, he said,

*So he, I wouldn't say my dad is a, **no he is a racist, but not in an obvious way. Ya know he doesn't use the K word⁸ or anything like that.** But when he found out that I was seeing a black girl, the response was very much like "OH." And that was about 4 months ago. And he hasn't even asked about her since, ya know? But if she was a white girl I'm sure he would've asked, "Oh, how's Sandy doing". Ya know? But he doesn't ask how Tumi is doing. Because I think he wants it to go away, ya know? The relationship, even though I don't think he'll intervene but, yea. . . .*

*Her parents were in exile for, yea for almost about 20 years, since the 70s until '93/'94. So Tumi grew up in the States. She actually has an American accent. She grew up in Delaware and then came back. . . . **But like coming back for her was tricky because South African peers didn't know what to make of her. After she was back, she went to school in Pretoria, so the white kids were like oh she's black we don't want to hang out with her, which is generally the case. Um, well I mean they'll hang out with you but you'll never be like, well you'll seldom be not generalized, but you'll seldom be within buddies. But the black girls were like you don't even really speak a South African language and you got this like fake American accent. Who are you trying to be? Do you think you're Beyoncé or whatever. So I think for her, I think it was quite a bit of hurt there for her. She hasn't spoken about it that much, but she's open about it. But I think, I can only imagine how tough that might be, especially if your parents sacrificed that um, you know to bring***

⁸ "K word" refers to a highly derogatory and racist term used by some whites for non-whites during the apartheid era (*kaffer* in the Afrikaans).

apartheid to an end, then coming back and getting that from your own people.

It is important to note from this interview that Nicholson's moving positionality can be recognized as a link toward the sustainable peace, which is made more possible when young people exercise agency. The greater freedom he enjoys because of his privilege enables him to step out of his cultural confines. His relationship with his girlfriend has expanded his identity to include someone his parents do not approve of. A shifting positionality enables sustainable peace. Furthermore, this is an illustration of how voice breaks down othering.

Nicholson questions why people from one race would act in a racist way toward people from their own race. In mining the questions of identity during my fieldwork, I found clear evidence that generalizations existed for each group of "other," and for each sub-group of others. In general, stereotyping and generalizations lie at the crux of othering, and while voice and listening are important steps, it is also important to recognize that they are only preliminary steps to structural change. The liberal peace may recognize and hear various different groups (Richmond, 2006), but within the field of transitional justice, victims and perpetrators experience stereotyping and generalizations (Huyse & Salter, 2008). There might be recognition or even representation, but this does not take away from stereotyping. Victimhood denies agency (Said, 1979; Hall, Evans & Nixon, 1997). In South Africa, many generalizations are made by many

groups, both about other groups and about the sub-groupings within their own groups. For example, in my interviews, some Xhosa made generalizations about the Zulus. And the Eastern Cape Xhosa discriminated against Western Cape Xhosa. And British English whites made generalizations about Afrikaner whites, and vice versa. Likewise, generalizations about what is referred to as the so-called “coloured” (South Africans of Indian or Malaysian or mixed-race descent) community broke down whenever I asked about religious divisions within that community. This demonstrates that race and identity are about far more than just the color of one’s skin; rather, they also concern social position. South Africa’s deeply divided society is not just divided along racial lines, but also along social position, socio-economic privilege, and ethnicity. To bring this argument full circle, sustainable peace is about far more than listening, although listening is a crucial first step. But for a peace to become sustainable, then agency must be granted through structural change and policymaking, and there needs to be a recognition that positionality can shift.

As such, these interviews highlight much more than just issues of race and identity. The fact that one’s socio-economic position might be prefaced from race demonstrates intersectionality, and indicates the complexity of what is being explored here. An interview with Midge Hilton-Green, the principal of a primary school that buses children in from diverse communities, illustrates further the complexity regarding the issue of race and identity. Although a follower of a progressive agenda, Hilton-Green still uses language to differentiate among his students. This was a common theme in many interviews, as if the differentiation

of people according to race is no longer socially acceptable, but language substitutes. It serves the same purpose, however, as anyone who is a Xhosa speaker, for example, will almost certainly, also be black. Here identity is language.

[87.] Midge Hilton-Green, Christel House primary school principal

Here, I asked Hilton-Green what his biggest challenge was, with regard to his pupils, and we discussed language as an identity indicator.

AdG: So it's difficult for them to practice English (when at home and not in school). So the Afrikaans-speaking teachers, they can translate that into Afrikaans, but they are not teaching in Afrikaans are they?

*Hilton-Green: No they're not teaching in Afrikaans, so that's a challenge at the bottom end. And they're writing English like kids taking their final exam, so it's not a second language, it's a first language... **It's an aggressive nation.**⁹*

⁹ One thing that is of interest in this interview, as was the case in a number of other interviews, is that the interviewee also wanted to hear my experiences. I was asked questions about the other interviews I had conducted in South Africa. People were often very curious about the answers I had received from people groups they might not have been so familiar with. I also received questions about my own background, as being Dutch and American, teaching in The Netherlands, and studying in Scotland piqued a certain amount of curiosity. Finally, interviewees wanted to know about the books I had written. I realize that through that process, and especially when I shared comments from other interviewees that my subjects found surprising, I changed the perspective of the interviewee. In addition, the research itself was being disseminated back into the culture from which it originated.

It should also be noted that the way I interviewed was not with an expectation that all questions would be answered. The questions were more of a springboard and often, depending on the subjects that interviewees felt most passionate about, the conversations might go off on a tangent. This was all part of obtaining a qualitative response to my questions.

Hilton-Green's reference to South Africa being an aggressive nation was another way of saying that his pupils grow up in a difficult environment. In this case, he is referring to the need for them to read and write in a second language, as if it were their native language. Hilton-Green saw the question of identity and language as his country's biggest challenge.

This theme of juggling different environments, different representations of South Africa, or juggling identities and languages, plays an important role in a deeply divided society. Hilton-Green, for example, noted that students change their dialect when home. This juggling act also came up often in other interviews. Some young people from communities even described themselves as "schizophrenic" because at home, according to university-aged interviewees, they had to be responsible for their siblings, their parents were sick, and they had to do the shopping and cooking, while trying to complete their studies at the same time.

In terms of my research, this raises an important question: When children juggle languages, are they also juggling cultures and races? The interviews proved this to be true, as young people juggle several identities in this deeply divided society, just as they would in a post-conflict society, as discussed in previous chapters. This becomes evident, for example, in an interview with five children attending Hilton-Green's school.

[88.-92.] Naseefah, Tameeca, Liam, Likhana, and Luthendo, aged 11-12, learners at Christel House Primary School

They told me they could all speak Afrikaans, English, a little Xhosa, and Spanish. When I asked them *who they liked to play with, which groups of children* (in a not-so-subtle attempt at soliciting their own language of race,) they said that *everybody plays with everybody else.*

When I asked the children about stereotyping, they said they did not want to be friends with people who are “difficult.” When I asked who they were referring to, I said, “*Who is them? You know, there’s us, and them. Who is them?*” They answered: “*Difficult people, gangsters shoot people, don’t care who they shoot; smack children, groups chase dang weapons. I saw a man killed with a golf club, guns, knives, threaten bus driver.*”¹⁰ Their responses demonstrate that when different groups are thrown together, as in this school, the result is a decrease in an “us and them” sentiment because everyone plays with everyone else. Instead, these children are thinking in stereotypes of difficulty, such as people who are dangerous like gangsters. So their responses do refer to positioning, since their responses also reflect how they view certain groups. The children most certainly had something to say about these issues, and spoke in a sophisticated way about the effects of crime and violence and unemployment on their lives.

¹⁰ *Gangsters* are gang members living in the communities where the children come from. *Dang* is hash. Because Christel House buses in their pupils from the communities, there have been incidents of bus drivers being attacked.

The following interviews continue this theme of identity and explore the context of interviewees' identity alongside others. At the NGO SAEP's bridging class. [93.]

Willie Rapholo, 20, is Xhosa, and came to Cape Town from Limpopo. He said,

We're all different people, and we all say so somehow or in some way. Because as long as we are human beings, we are different, but there is something that we share, and there are those things that make us special and who we are, and other ones that can make us different as a group.

Rapholo's response reflects a longing to identify a shared identity. The ANC, when it was outlawed during the apartheid years, had members from all races. Their identity was one of fighting the oppression of apartheid. That was the defining characteristic, the unifying motivation, which crossed racial and socio-economic lines (Everatt, 2009). In post-apartheid South Africa, however, the lines between enemies and who has power are less clear. [101.] Mark Collier is a former ANC fighter from Zimbabwe, who later became a priest. I asked him about the *unusually high rate of sexual abuse, rapes, and child molestation*, that is reported in South African society and he replied, "*Sex equals power. You do these things because you feel so brutalized in yourself.*" When asked about the *South African identity*, he said, "*Language informs schooling and determines identity. If we know ourselves, we find peace.*" Collier spoke of the society transcending, "*so I am free to do what I can without panic, free to act freely. In order to survive, we must find a common identity.*"

I also explored these issues related to identity in my interviews with Tim Murithi, of the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR). The IJR is the spinoff

of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and ranks among the leading think tanks for peace and conflict studies in the world. The IJR conducts ongoing research on issues dividing South Africa, as well as running workshops in conflict and post-conflict areas throughout Africa.

[120 part 1.] Tim Murithi was acting director of the Institute at the time and from Kenya. Near the end of my stay in South Africa, I returned for a follow-up interview because he is at the forefront in driving how reconciliation is being formed in South Africa today.

Murithi said that South Africans, in their traumatized state, turned to violence as a form of communication. *“There is a prominent inability to articulate trauma and hurt. People do not or cannot say, ‘This is wrong—I’m angry.’ Lacking this linguistic ability causes violence or passive aggression—it’s a massive conundrum in South Africa, and a source of immense suffering. Kids in their 20s and 30s are unable to articulate huge problems.”* He explained that *a society’s inability in language is reflected back, since language is a medium of culture, “shaping and reshaping one’s world. But in a secondary language like English, you see the world through a secondary lens.”* So in South Africa with all its official languages, there is a Xhosa world, a Zulu world, an English world, an Afrikaans world, etc., for 11 languages. And in my research I had discovered that there were further breakdowns to these categories, namely Eastern Cape Xhosa, and Cape Town Xhosa, etc. Murithi said that *language could be a mediating force, rather than*

something divisive. *“The Swiss are choosing English to be a second language after French to unite them.” For young people, language “holds them back, keeping them out of the good schools. But also as they articulate, they hold back because they cannot communicate. **The result is someone else speaks for you, on your behalf.**”* This is a recurring theme in my research, that young people may be denied a voice, and as a result, agency, because of the adult voices around them.

We discussed how a society could transcend this, and Murithi said that *race was reinforced as an artificial reality construct. “Now, 18 years later it (racism) is still fully operational, the racial prism is still in place. Terms like black crime prove it. We need to see people as individuals. Peace studies education should start very young, at the age of 4 or 5. In order to learn how to heal, people have to want it.”*

I asked Murithi specific questions about trauma. This came up because I had discovered that very few of the teachers, NGO workers and community leaders I had interviewed were aware of intergenerational trauma. There was a general assumption that the “Born Free” generation, i.e. everyone born after 1994, was operating from a clean slate. But when I asked about the impact of having prejudiced parents who had suffered during apartheid, people told me no one was looking into this.

Murithi’s insights set the tone for the interviews that followed. The last interview that highlights this section on Identity is an example of what Murithi referred to,

and illustrates how younger generations see themselves within the context of their own identities alongside those of others. The IJR was set up by Desmond Tutu, who is also the patron of a girls' secondary school, St. Cyprion. I met with young women who are being groomed to become "leaders of the nation," according to the principal. St Cyprion has an extensive bursary (scholarship) program, so several of the young women came from less affluent communities, but it remains one of the most elitist and exclusive schools in the country.

[129.] Simo Sam, 17, commuted from a community notorious for its drug dealing and violent "necklacing" (setting a rubber tire on fire after forcing it over a victim's head). The societal healing Murithi referred to was something these women very much wanted, and they saw themselves as being trained to eventually bring it about.

Sam's friend, [131.] Rebecca Mort, 18, said this about racism: "*South African whites are racist because they're ignorant and because of their laziness—they just don't want to know people of a different race. Blacks are racist because of their anger with the past. Racism has changed; now it's insinuated, not blatant. The white middle class isn't used to competition, now they compete with the black middle class for university places.*"

When I asked Sam about the double life she led, she replied that, "*I get to learn from both sides, black and white. St Cyp helps people see the bridge, and still be*

*yourself—in fact the bridge is yourself. Most people want to learn, but they don't have bread. People will never understand how they feel regarding materialism and the past. After what my parents went through, there's no excuse to slack. It's a choice. Conflict is caused by misunderstanding. Whites don't understand black culture." I asked her how we could improve our understanding. "Learn about them. Be willing to learn. **All cultures are the same, the only difference is language.**"*

This interview, as well as the others in this section reinforce the awareness of the role of language. My research shows that within a deeply divided society such as South Africa's, many faultlines (Galtung & Webel, 2007) cut across society. People share identities, as cultures overlap with one another. Race, culture, language, and trauma can separate, but also unite, as a common vulnerability may bind people together. This echoes recognition theorists such as Turner (2006). In my interviews with both young and old, educated and non-educated, many articulated what it is like to have a voice, to bring about change. In their longing, they described what they hope will become the new South Africa.

If old South Africa was about race, then the new South Africa has created parallel faultlines (Galtung & Webel, 2007) along socio-economic divisions. After examining the societal faultlines of identity in terms of race, culture, language and trauma, both the interviewees' identity and the context of that identity alongside that of others within a deeply divided society, this thesis now moves

onto socio-economic disparity and what this means in terms of wealth, class, crime, and violence.

Theme 2: Socio-economic disparity

My fieldwork revealed that if language has become a code for racial disparities in South Africa—saying someone speaks Tswana, rather than calling them black—then class is the new basis for prejudice (Gqola, 2001).

One of the aims of the ANC government when it came to power under Nelson Mandela was to develop a new black middle class (Southall, 2014). The motivation behind this was held in the belief that a larger non-white middle class might be more willing to shoulder the crushing burden of poverty, and share responsibility for housing and education. Although a black middle class has emerged in South Africa, however, it, like the white middle class, is not taking on these responsibilities. This was revealed repeatedly in the interviews, with black interviewees such as Mphila (mentioned in theme 1), thus denying the very existence of these so-called black diamonds, rather referring to them by the derogatory term *coconut*.

Many interviews from my fieldwork indicate that this stems from a sense of betrayal. Some interviewees mention a motivation of entitlement, a sort of compensation for apartheid. Conversely, there is a fear and betrayal on the part

of whites who see their privileges slipping away. Meanwhile, so-called “coloureds” (South Africans of Indian or Malaysian or mixed-race descent) also resent the present, saying that they are not “black enough” to enjoy the privileges of the current ANC elite.

Privilege is becoming something claimed by people of means, rather than by people of a certain skin color. So this has proven to be of huge importance as an indicator of how divisions within a deeply divided society are shifting. There cannot be a discussion of youth and agency in South Africa, without putting the issues within a socio-economic context, for poverty has a significant impact on all aspects of young South African lives. A few statistics paint this picture, which will be outlined below.

In 2010, there were 18.5 million children in South Africa. According to the 2010 General Household Survey (Statistics South Africa, 2003-2011), the poorest 10% of the population receive less than 1% of the national income, while the richest 10% receive more than half (57%). Forty-one percent of children live in the poorest 20% of households, while only 8% of children live in the richest 20% of households. This means children are more likely than adults to be living in poverty. Indeed, 60% of South African children live in households with an income of less than R 575, or £32 a month. Meanwhile, racial disparities persist, with two-thirds (67%) of African children living below this poverty line, compared to only 2% of white children.

In addition, The National Income Dynamics Study of 2011 (Hall & Wright, 2011) reveals that only 23% of South African children live with both parents. Forty-one percent live with their mother only, and 23% live with neither parent. Not all these are AIDS orphans; however, the legacy of apartheid still scars in terms of labor migration, while many children are sent to cities to stay with their aunties or *gogos* (grandmothers). And there are child-headed households, where teenagers take care of their younger siblings.

The 2009 Stats SA's General Household Survey (Statistics South Africa, 2003-2011) estimates that 5.5 million children are cared for by their relatives (rather than by their parents), though not all these children are orphans. Most children cared for by relatives have a mother who stays and works elsewhere. An estimated 1.5 million of these children are orphans.

Child poverty rates in South Africa in 2009 reveal that 60% of children live in households which could not provide basic nutritional and living requirements. Furthermore, child poverty is linked to adult unemployment, as over one third of children (37%) live in households in which no adult is employed (Hall & Chennells, 2011).

Child poverty is also linked to child inequality. Among the children who are poor, 68% are African, 33% so-called “coloureds” (South Africans of Indian or Malaysian or mixed-race descent), 6% Asian, and 4% are white. And there is now the phenomenon of white townships, or informal settlements. In South Africa, more than 25% of the labor force is unable to find work, and that figure rises to around 36% when including those not actively looking for work (Hall & Chennells, 2011).

According to my research, as evidenced by the interviews in the previous section, adults claim that race divides. If race divides people in South Africa, then poverty and grief may bind people together (Leibbrandt, Woolard & Woolard, 2007). Grief is not only because some areas in South Africa suffer an approximate 40% infection rate of HIV while funeral insurance is sold on pay cards that can be bought in supermarkets. As previously mentioned, grief also concerns the dream sold to them by Mandela and Tutu.

The Mandela dream was about freedom and equality. But after 20 years, people do not feel they are equal in terms of materialistic wealth. As mentioned above, their poverty is a daily reminder that they are still not enjoying the benefits of the new South Africa, as some are. The following interviews refer to *wealth, class, crime and violence* as a result of the crushing poverty that remains the reason for so much of the despair South Africa still endures.

Some might argue that it is economic interests and opportunities that drive violence, rather than a lack of voice (Mercy Corps, 2012). But if you have a lack of economic opportunity, you are not in a position to be heard. This is largely due to the liberal framework that results in mostly the economically privileged who are heard (Richmond, 2011).

A discussion with [26.] Hussein Solomon, senior professor of political science, and [27.] Professor Theo Neethling, head of the political science department, at the University of the Free State (UFS) in Bloemfontein, Free State, sets the tone for this section *on socio-economic disparity*. I had come to UFS because of the rector, Jonathan Jansen, a fellow alumnus from Stanford University, and a friend I met during a previous trip to South Africa. Jansen has created a unique space for wrestling with issues of race at his UFS campus by taking a racial incident that made international headlines involving white students and black janitors, and turning it around into an example of reconciliation and public debate, something the ANC has criticized him for.

Bloemfontein is situated in the province of Free State and is considered by many to be an Afrikaner stronghold. There is still an active “us vs. them” discourse regarding the Boer Wars (1880-1881 and 1899-1901) and the English, which remains fresh as stories are handed down generation to generation from

Afrikaners.¹¹ This white-against-white conflict reverberates with the same socio-economic disparities that I am tracing 130 years later.

During my interview with Neethling and Solomon, I asked about the new master's program UFS would be offering in reconciliation studies. From that point onward, an interview about expectations quickly moved in another direction. Solomon said:

I don't want to have anything to do with the MA in reconciliation studies. It's all about power, a bunch of hot air. Indian culture was not dealt with in the TRC. Societal justice is nonexistent; it's just so much political maneuvering. The people in charge are just a bunch of monkeys, playing in the filth.

I asked him what he meant by the filth, and he said *anything political*. Then he left the room. My own reaction was to treat this as an extreme view, yet as the number of interviews increased, I discovered this level of anger was actually quite normal, and especially among academics. The anger confirmed the frustration, this time concerning systemic corruption and a lack of power sharing. As far as the racial overtones used by Solomon are concerned, this is a sign that emotions such as fear and betrayal come into play.

¹¹ An example of one such story I heard several times during my time in the Free State, is that of concentration camps set up by the British for Boer women and children, and how they were fed tins of food containing chips of broken glass. I found it extremely interesting that the Afrikaners, who have sustained a victim position for this conflict, then turned around and victimized others during the apartheid period, fifty years later.

In contrast to UFS, with its Afrikaner-dominated history, the University of Western Cape (UWC), located outside of Cape Town, calls itself the home of the ANC. During the apartheid era, this university was a vocational school, since non-whites were not allowed into universities. Ever since, UWC has been a center for activism. I interviewed [51.] Antjie Krog, a former journalist who covered the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and is now a poet and philosopher. She has published numerous books on social commentary and recently UWC had invited her to teach on its campus.

In response to the question on *whether language influences the level of frustration in a society*, she said:

So you have to translate yourself and that's where I think most of the racist problematic talk, anger, transgression comes to the fore because people have to express themselves. In English—and I am fluent in English, but Afrikaans remains my native language—for example, there is always that when I'm expressing myself in English that I'm blunt, that I'm not as nuanced and sophisticated as I would be if I was allowed to speak Afrikaans or even witty, or light hearted, or ironic, or sarcastic.

This response links themes 1 and 2, as socio-economic factors impact language and identity (Akerlof & Kranton, 2000).

She was outspoken about the dynamics of *wealth, class, crime, and violence*, and in particular in her *solution for the inequality in South Africa*. (Because of the significance of this exchange, I have included a large amount of text.) As you can

see, the next segment notes that violence could be the answer. She begins by referring to the recent Arab Spring:

Krog: *My concern, when I watched Egypt and the first rising, I was thinking, what do they want? Can they formulate it? Do they want a better life for everybody? Or when the London riots happened people looted. . . . I'm convinced that the people want the right to shop. If you say ignorance [is the problem], you want to know how to get money so you can shop for bread. I often find there is really no concern for that your vision is that everyone must have a good life, and understanding what good means. It means you have a TV, it means you have a smart car, it means you wear that kind of jeans, phone. It is all over the place, you can see it is just the buying, the buying, the buying.*

AdG: *But in Egypt they articulated dignity. They said that this was part of it; they wanted more, they wanted a life with more human dignity.*

Krog: *But what do they understand about dignity? Do they understand the clothes, or do they understand a lack of fear, respect of, at least parts of these things. The thing is that you can be employed, unemployed and could live the kind of Eastern kind of dignified life. You know, I, I'm deeply concerned about the rot of capitalism, it's just huge.*

AdG: *And there's always a loser isn't there?*

Krog: *Always.*

AdG: *It is a bipolar system so . . .*

Krog: *Yes, and you have to buy in to it.*

AdG: *But what is the alternative?*

Krog: *Yeah, I say revolution to radically change this sort of hierarchies, because the hierarchy is based on money. Ok, now, the problem is that now you have new black crooks, instead of all, what we once had, white ones, but it's that scrambling. Sometimes I want to clean it all up, and it's only violence that will bring that about.*

Thus, Krog names violence as the means by which the corruption and socio-economic disparities in South African society might be corrected. Similarly, later in the interview she compares South Africa with Zimbabwe, calling for “*violent*

revolution” as the way to regain the dream articulated by the TRC, but betrayed in the last 18 years.

However, whereas Krog believes a violent cleansing of South African society to be the answer, the following interview offers an alternative view as we continue to explore this section on socio-economic disparity.

[59.] Gary Kleyhans is the owner of Gary’s Surf School in Muizenberg.¹² In his interview, he referred to a growing resentment among the young surfing

¹² He is a former South African soldier who fought in Angola and says he wanted to *make up for what he did during the war*. So in the early 2000s he started working with local street children, teaching them to surf. In 2005, one of his protégés, Kwezi Aika, became the first black, Under-18 South African Longboard champion. Kwezi inspired the main character in my teen novel. I first met Kleyhans when I was writing this book on AIDS survival in June 2010. When I interviewed him here for my thesis research, in February 2012, it was nearly five years after my first contact with him regarding Kwezi, an email in June, 2007. At that time, Kleyhans had just set up an NGO for a life skills program, in which he could teach street youth skills that would help them get jobs.

That was in 2007. In February 2012, during my fieldwork interview, however, everything had changed. Kleyhans referred to a *“sense of entitlement—they all think now, ‘You owe me.’ The boys could earn so much more, but once they have R 100-200 (£5-10), they stop and blow it on drugs.”* I asked about Kwezi. And he said, *“Kwezi went bad. He’s a part-time (surf) instructor when he needs money. Could have represented Puma, I gave him the opportunity with Puma SA selling samples, but he was fired after two months.”* Kleyhans talked about the different young men he had mentored, like Clement, whom he made manager of the store. He also gave Clement a house. *“Then I caught him stealing R 1000 (£56) per day for how long? Now I’m saying, ‘Get out of the house. After everything I’ve done, this is how you repay me?’ Noble, from the original crew, recorded half the boards rented and pocketed the rest.”*

I asked about Kleyhans’s motivation, something I’d asked about years earlier when he told me of his military background. This time, however, he said, *“I slept in the streets as a kid, it’s hard—I slept in sheds.”*

community he works with. He said they see things they want, and that having those things affects their identity. This confirms an original contribution of this thesis: namely, that the frustration of living on the lower rungs of a society deeply divided by wealth and class pushes many young people toward living a life of crime and violence. In the following interview, this thread is picked up and analyzed as a means of increasing self-esteem. Materialism and improving one's wealth raises confidence, self-esteem and young people's sense of who they are—their *identity*. This is crucial to understanding the dynamics behind this particular societal faultline (Galtung & Webel, 2007): namely, *socio-economic disparity*. Kleyhans offers another example, like Nicholson, of positionality. His views shifted in time and with increased contact with different groups of people. But being white and privileged, like Nicholson, meant he could also afford to shift perspectives.

I asked *what he thought had happened with the boys*. He told me the phrase he hears often. “*Because I’m poor’ means entitlement. It’s been a rocky road, very disappointing in a lot of ways. They think that survival means the same as stealing.*” I asked about the reaction of their parents, knowing he also visited their homes. “*They said please pay his school fees.*” Although he did not agree to this, he did offer his bus as a taxi, “*but they said, ‘It takes too much planning.’ I do it because there’s a good energy. I realize now, you can’t just give them something; they have to earn it, own it, then they take care of it.*” He said he had thought he was onto something. “*There’s already a level of commitment because it takes balls to paddle out there. Before, I had Kwezi when he was 11, I didn’t think, what happens when he’s older and there are drugs, drink, women?*”

[66.] Rachel Bray is an anthropologist from the UK, who has lived in South Africa for several years. She highlights the emotional impact of socio-economic disparity in terms of, for example, the impact that low self-esteem has.

Regarding the impact of *trauma*, she said:

It's honesty, it's trust, it's reciprocity, but it assumes that an adult has enough personal self-esteem and psychological health, integrity, whatever you want to call it. And the problem in this country, I think, with its historical legacy, is that we sort of have a huge amount of adults who are still very traumatized.

She explained the themes of *materialism, crime, and violence* as wrapped up in *identity*. While referring to *expectations placed on young people*, she said:

And what usually often happens is the child consciously or subconsciously realizes that that contract is going to be very hard to deliver and takes another path—either through drugs within school—and also builds self-esteem in another way. And that usually is through cash, cell phones, looking good, having a good partner. I mean all those things that are important to a teenager. The other big dilemma, of course, is just to sustain that image and to find finance when you can't find an income. Yeah, and education delivers middle-class kids self-esteem because they can excel and they do well whether it's through a sports club or passing their exams or whatever it is; they are ticking the boxes that are expected of them or that their parents expect. For kids in poor neighborhoods with difficult schooling, one of the problems is young people's aspirations and then what actually are their aspirations in mid-teen, their aspirations in late-teen and the reality and the two are holes a part... and it's not a race thing - it's an income kind of thing.

Bray made a key observation here that resonates in later interviews and highlights intersectionality, namely, what often appears on the surface to be a race issue is, in fact, a poverty one. Although race and poverty are not easily divided, one has deeper roots than the other. As post-apartheid racism appears

to be fading somewhat, socio-economic class lines of division appear to becoming stronger, further underlining the need for structural change. It should be remembered that although I have highlighted four themes, these remain interlinked as one cannot separate identity from race or from poverty or from reality vs. rhetoric, or from history and truth and reconciliation. The additional element of compensation relates back to the TRC and whether there could even be a viable or adequate means of compensation.

[103.] Samela, 20, was one of the young people I met in Masiphumelele. Masi is a community bordering Fish Hoek, a popular beach town about 30 minutes outside of Cape Town. Samela said she was from the Eastern Cape, and spoke Xhosa, English, and Zulu. I asked her general questions about what was on her mind. She told me about the *high rate of teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, alcohol, "taking crystal meth," cocaine, and sniffing glue*. I had already heard in a previous interview that sniffing glue was a way of tricking your body into forgetting you were hungry. "*Some girls try to keep their boyfriends by getting pregnant, but they leave anyway.*" Samela was talking about one of the few sources of income open to young women in South Africa, which is a child allowance of 200 rand per month (£ 11) per child.

In contrast to Samela, [118.] June Luna, has enjoyed extreme privilege as an American who studied at the University of Cape Town (UCT) Law School. She told me that her "*South African posh friends can't wait to leave South Africa. No*

one wants to stay." This was a theme I had heard often among the whites I interviewed.

"Young people are voting with their feet," a guide at a winery said ([135.]). Both the rich and the poor, despite their many differences, share a longing to change their circumstances and exercise agency by fleeing what they view as a situation where they feel trapped and must escape.

But this need to escape is shared by both sides of the socio-economic spectrum. [114.] Philippa Township School is located on the side of a major freeway that runs in and out of Cape Town. I sat in a classroom and had difficulty hearing the 14-16-year-olds talking to me because of the roar of the traffic outside the windows without glass. Dust coated the table we sat around; carbon-monoxide choked the air. I asked the children *what they were afraid of*. Abona Magaba, 14, answered: *"Gang stabbings in classes. There's a gap in the fence and anyone can come in here. The principal, he stays in his office."* I asked them *how this made them feel*, again, expecting them to answer that they felt afraid. Instead, they said *they were angry*. *"The black rich forget about us."* Athandile Nkcaza, 15, said, *"In our schools many things happen. Areas (gangs) against each other. Men run when trouble is coming."* They told me *noise from the other shacks made it difficult to study*. Remembering what Imam Appleby had said about incest (see interview [107.] two pages further), I asked *if they felt safe at home*. Some said *yes*, but one boy said, *"No, our shacks are made of zinc, so the bullets shoot past and go right through. When the police shoot with rubber bullets, they can shoot*

right into the WC.” When I asked what they wanted in the future, one of the girls answered, “To get pregnant, Miss. Then I get R 200 a month.”

The issue of safety is one young people all share, despite their differences. In contrast to Philippa Township School, the Herzlia Jewish High School boasts the tightest security measures of any school in Cape Town. Metal detectors, gates, and armed guards protect the property. I was asked to sign in and to sign out. The teens go to Israel once a year on a field trip. When I asked [123.] Elisheva Sacks, 17, president of the student council, who she thought of as the Other, she admitted that she *did not inherently trust all whites, but “I do trust them a little more than blacks.”* Then I asked, “What about when you’re in Israel?” “That’s different,” she said. “Then we have another Other.” She also described the many outreach and twinning programs Herzlia had with neighboring schools in other communities. “How can we be a rainbow nation when there’s no black or white in the rainbow?” she asked me at the end of the interview.

¹³Returning to Masi, we find [105.] Jandisa Mbolaothuana, aged 20. He arrived late to the interview, with his friend [106.] Solulele Mjandana, and both admitted they wore borrowed suits because they had *just walked several kilometers to a job interview and back because they could not afford the bus fare. “No one supports*

¹³ I have purposely arranged the interview excerpts in a back-and-forth order as this mirrors the “schizophrenic” (a term consistently used by young interviewees) manner in which socio-economic disparity is often experienced by South Africans.

us.” Nineteen-year-old Mjandana is part of a child-headed household. He cares for his grandmother, a younger brother, and two cousins “*who only say give me this and that, so I must bail them out, and then get food on the table.*” I wrote in my notes: *Suits of boys light brown and soiled. Rubbing his face with his entire hand when he sighed, he said: “Must get food onto the table.”*

Poverty is an underlying factor for much of the violence and lack of agency revealed in many of the interviews conducted (Stewart, 2002; Kett & Rowson, 2007). I made certain decisions about how to approach this. For example, I would never ask someone how it feels to be poor. But I would ask what they do with their free time. In one such interview, [79.] Tammy-Lee Gertse, 11, said she goes to the big shopping mall at the Waterfront. When I asked why, assuming it was because she wanted to look at things she would like to buy, she surprised me and said, “*It’s clean, Miss, and because of the colors.*”

This despair of poverty, and the shrill contrast of socio-economic disparity, is one of the driving forces behind the crime and violence in South Africa. And the violence takes many forms, sometimes directed against members of the same community, the same family, and even against oneself. In a very frank interview, a leader of the Muslim community, [107.] Imam Schuaib Appleby, explained to me how *it is individuals* (not groups) *who turn to violence*. When I asked him what his *main challenges* were, I expected him to say drugs, which was the answer I had heard elsewhere. Instead, he said *incest, child raping, crime, molestation, and*

*dicing.*¹⁴ He wondered *why anger management was not taught in schools because there was so much frustration among his congregation.*

We need healing therapy, to talk and learn how to vent anger; we need organizational skills, to learn how to think critically. It is difficult to teach young people to co-exist; people are still divided, though upwardly mobile, the process of talking hasn't started.

Appleby spoke of the deep divisions. To hear an educated community leader refer to incest as his community's greatest challenge startled me, but this only reflected my own white, privileged background, I felt. What was infinitely more moving, however, was to hear the children's voices refer to the violence that stalks their ordinary lives. This violence reflects the daily ramifications of the socio-economic disparity that exists.

The theme of safety for minors flowed in and out of many interviews that dealt with *socio-economic disparity, wealth, class, crime and violence*. *Molosongololo* is an NGO working for children's rights and greater youth participation. When I asked [124.] *Patric Solomons, the director of the organization*, about the security of young people, he said that *there has been an increase in child murders and sexual abuse*. I told him how I had come across cases of child sexual abuse in my previous research among AIDS orphans. And he agreed that *the vulnerability of these children made them easy targets for abuse*. In addition, it should also be

¹⁴ *Dicing* is speed racing with stolen cars until someone dies.

noted that often the feeling that children are at risk, becomes the motivation behind much of what is offered to those in underprivileged positions.

The theme of at-risk youth and their exposure to *violence* because of *socio-economic disparity* also came up in my interview with [126.] Jennifer Wallace. Wallace is a manager at the previously mentioned St Cyprion Girls School, the most prestigious school in Cape Town. She said that there is a “*massive increase in doubt and uncertainty*” among the girls at their school, as girls, she admitted, *are being groomed to be leaders “of their nation. It is huge that our girls have a safe space physically.”*

Because of the *socio-economic disparity*, young people are exposed to *greater risks of violence*. There is also a lack of financial security. I interviewed young women attending St Cyprion and young men and women at UFS and UWC who repeatedly told me they were the chosen ones. In other words, they carried the burden of benefitting from their villages, where many families had contributed funds and saved up to put them through school. They feel the pressure to succeed quickly and take advantage of their opportunities, since these funds might dry up at any moment. In addition, they need to graduate as soon as possible, so they can get a job and send money back to pay the school fees which were provided by other family or village members.

At a follow-up interview with Solomons, he reminded me that *the poverty level in South Africa is at 64 percent*. This brutal reality chafes against the rhetoric of what South Africa presents itself to be.

Theme 3: Reality vs. rhetoric: The disconnect between children's rights and consequent policy ramifications

One of the major reasons for choosing South Africa as the case study for this research was to investigate a place with some of the most wide-ranging rights for young people in the world. South Africa can boast pieces of legislation like the Children's Act, and the adoption of the UNCRC into the South African constitution (1996), which all look promising on paper. As previously discussed, Article 12 of the CRC guarantees the right of young people to have a voice in decisions affecting their lives. This thesis aims to explore whether actual voice and agency measure up to the rhetoric about voice and agency, and any such related implications in policy terms. Time after time I asked my interviewees if they knew of any examples of when young people had said something that played a role in policy making. Their answers proved discouraging, as again and again adult respondents shook their heads. Only a handful could give me examples, and those examples of positive agency are briefly summarized below.

The examples highlighted in the following pages all concern young people and communities. They were chosen because the research that looks into how the disconnect between rhetoric and reality affects policymaking tends to be more

community focused rather than on a national level (Theis, 2003). Legislation can potentially work at the community level, but in terms of building sustainable peace, structural change must also occur at a national level in terms of legislation—in order for it to become a societal norm (Dunne, 2006).

The *founder of the NGO SAEP, [100.] Norton Tennile*, provided me with several key examples of youth participation in policymaking within his own NGO. SAEP provides special tutoring to teenagers so they can pursue a university-level education. Most students from communities “*come from schools with 50-60 students per class and the teacher might have six classes a day, so you can see that the opportunity for even a motivated teacher to provide individual attention is really not good.*” SAEP, however, aims to provide this type of individual attention. Tennile said,

SAEP tutors high school graduates whose level of education has not prepared them for university. But this only happens after kids come to us and ask, ‘Do you have anybody who could help us out in biology?’ Later they may ask about someone to tutor them in mathematics, as well. So that is how our academic tutoring program got underway. In 2000, kids wanted an English-language debating society, but they had no one to debate with since the white and coloured schools wouldn’t come out to the township to debate.

When asked *why* Tennile said,

Because the other schools said it wouldn’t be safe. But they [the SAEP high school students] continued on anyway, and we helped find a debate coach who volunteered and a year later, she coached them to the national debating championship. That was an amazing moment for their school and their community, because students and principals began to come to us and say how did you do that?

The Township Debating League came into being because of young people's voices and their agency. It now includes 25 schools, all of which have been adopted by the University of Cape Town's debating team, whose members mentor and coach the high school students. Here these students literally improve their voices as well as realize the impact of voice on agency. The Township Debating League was an idea that came from the young people themselves, and it is a clear example of youth voice and agency.

Another SAEP idea initiated by young people is the establishment of ten crèches that have been set up across different communities. These were established after students came asking for them on behalf of their mothers. SAEP also provided tertiary educational support when former bridging year students came back to the organization and said they felt stranded at university—both financially and psychosocially. Tennile said, *"There was a steady stream of kids coming in to ask for help. We recognized this as a need and raised money for stipends, medical assistance, etc., with donations from the UK, French, Swiss, and Norwegian couples."*

Tennile's way of running his NGO is an exceptional example of young people's voices being listened to and acted upon in order to bring about change. It is a good example of children's agency at the community level. The NGO Molosongololo, introduced in the previous section, is an NGO devoted to

increasing youth participation and advocating children's rights. During the same interview referred to earlier, with its director, [124.] Patric Solomons, I asked if he knew of *specific cases when young people were being listened to, and policy based on their views*. Solomons said,

Young people's voices are in a precarious position. Young people are either forced, or claimed into political spaces. The Children's Act calls for participation, yes, it is happening, but there are still gaps. Here at Molo we aim to elevate the voice of children. The position of children is strange: cultural versus rights versus personal and family—these are all contested spaces competing with each other. In 1992 youth voices were taken on board for the constitution during the 1992 Molo children's summit, out of which came the Children's Charter. Young people were empowered by the process, had ownership of the new constitution, but then came the bigger challenge—sustaining children's participation. The Children's Act was the next step and young people were consulted and recommendations were drafted. But at present, participatory rights are mostly neglected. There is a basic misunderstanding of what participation is.

When I asked what the *greatest challenges* were, and Solomons said that:

politicians with a mandate to include youth voice will come to them, and assume children do not, cannot understand. They like the idea of being seen to include youth, but this is not reflected in their allocation of resources. They don't think about providing a lunch, or transport. Young people feel marginalized because they might not have shoes for the event.

I asked *what they should do, instead*. He said,

Create an environment where young people have participation and have ownership and empowerment. Ask them, "What can we do?" Sometimes adults just want to hear ideas, but we have to deal with the child as a whole, deal with what the child comes with.

He added *that the change of guard among politicians meant that no sooner was a minister on board with youth participation would a new one come along as a replacement. "This sets back children's policy, and women's issues also suffer."*

Lately the government is more and more impatient, if a policy does not work

quickly, then they change the policy. Only so-called quick results receive funding, he said.

I asked him what he hears children saying. He said that they want to feel safer at home, and in school, they want their parents to go back to school. "Children feel their parents are not involved in their lives. They say it's not just about survival." He added that older children often are not involved in the process, since young boys who look like adults are treated as adults, although still minors. "Young boys feel blamed, and they feel their needs are not addressed. They are also vulnerable to pressure to be a certain way. They are expected to be men."

Near the end of the interview Solomons admitted that *young people's conditions actually rarely change.*

There is still little or no participation, the world is unfriendly and they feel their livelihood and lives threatened on a daily basis. We need a different way of thinking, a child-centered approach. We need to ask every time and time again, when it comes to policy, "Is this in the best interest of the child?" Ask how does this impact on children? Engage with politicians, use a different language, have a political framework. Court cases must find out what is in the best interest of a child. The education department needs to consult with children. More and more children will be using the courts to protect their rights and participation. This gives children more agency. Molo will be providing a legal advice service to young people for this reason.

On the one hand youth engagement with politicians seems nonexistent, and on the other, what children want is not to talk about the political process, but to rather discuss topics closer to home. My interviews reveal that they want to feel safer and have their parents around; this means that they are concerned with

everyday life concerns. This highlights the disconnect between how court rulings might be establishing precedents, based on the law, and how in practice, the more general reality is still that of adults using the CRC for the benefit of their communities, rather than individual young people. As a result, young people's participation may not be sustained once adults receive this benefit. The political will is lacking. The difficulty is that the space in which agency can be activated, or even, the personal disposition when a person feels that they actually can activate it, and does so, needs a mix of structural and internal factors to become active before the agency can be so too. The question needs to be asked, is there political will for greater youth agency, and if not, why not? The answer may be because political will exists for political expediency of adult aims.

This interview with Solomons confirmed several conclusions I had drawn, including the one in the previous paragraph, based on what I was hearing among young people and the adults who worked with them. Many South African youth are at risk, and very few people are listening to them. In fact, this was often said to me at the end of interviews, "*Thank you for asking us what we think; no one else ever has.*"

¹⁵Solomons's follow-up interview a year later [134.] proved to be one of the most valuable of all 144 interviews I conducted. Solomons confirmed that *the last year*

¹⁵ A year later, I returned to Cape Town in January, 2013. I conducted several follow-up interviews, two of which resonated with the *reality-versus-rhetoric disconnect around children's rights*. The first one was with a social worker, [132.]

had seen several high-profile court cases in which minors took adults to court because they were not receiving rights and services guaranteed them by law. "There is still no sensitivity on the part of business and government, on how to involve young people. So instead, young people organize themselves—the challenge is effective long-term support." Furthermore, he told me about

court cases brought on behalf of children that had benefitted the entire community. The communities took municipal governments to court, suing them for a lack of services such as decent housing and water, that their children have a right to, according to the CRC in the South African constitution. The municipal governments were described as corrupt, and the cases were not successful, but there was no way of forcing them to deliver [services], until the media took up the cause, and several months later, after a campaign of naming and blaming, the government delivered.

This example illustrates how when young people benefit from a policy, their communities might also benefit. Also worth noting is the fact that an awareness seemed to be growing in that court cases might be more successful if filed on behalf of children, rather than for adults. Most importantly, the rhetoric of youth rights is being claimed in courts and enforced by the media, equaling a growing agency and possible shrinking of the disconnect between children's rights and consequent policy ramifications. But when analyzed more closely, these apparent steps forward prove misleading, especially when Solomons's interview is put alongside Bux's (see footnote 15). For Bux's interview sparked the questions I had asked at Solomons's follow-up interview. And while Solomons

Razia Bux, director of the NGO Life Start programme. She is a psycho-social worker who works with children and teachers in the communities. She told me, *"South Africa is becoming more American because there are so many rights suits. Even children are taking people to court now."* Although she had meant it as a criticism, I became very excited by the implications and re-visited Solomons for his assessment, since he had predicted this ten months earlier.

notes that youth agency is increasing, Bux, who is a social worker, and represents people on the ground, so to speak, sees these court cases as a failure of the system, and not as evidence that youth agency is increasing.

B. Franklin states in his *New Handbook of Children's Rights* (2002), "Perhaps what is at stake here is the idea of actually listening to children and treating them with the same equality of concern and respect you would adults" (p. 71). This child's right to participation, as outlined in Article 12 of the UNCRC, guarantees voice. It is meant to "Assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child. . . Children have a right to have a say in processes affecting their lives" (p. 100).

Franklin adds that the feelings and attitudes of children themselves have been systematically excluded from the vast majority of studies in general. Instead, children are defined almost exclusively in terms of their impact on adult lives. He calls for children to be valued and respected, both individually and collectively. "What children need is our understanding" (2002, p. 151).

This thesis suggests that the future of deeply divided societies such as that in South Africa, and increasingly throughout Western Europe, rests on a new framework for listening to young people's needs and concerns and ideas. There is often a disconnect between rhetoric and reality with regard to children's

rights. One way to bridge this is by both listening and acting upon the voices of young people, granting them agency through structural change in the shape of policymaking.

This analysis of the 144 interviews has thematically addressed identity, socio-economic disparities, and the disconnect between rights rhetoric and reality and the related consequences in policy terms. The last theme that emerged from these interviews concerns the ways in which South Africa, as a deeply divided society, might move forward by changing its historical narrative, a part of which is rooted in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Theme 4: History

The very phrase, “truth and reconciliation” became known worldwide because of South Africa’s TRC. This has since become a model for post-conflict nations, who may adopt or change it according to their specific cultural demands. In South Africa, mention of the TRC brings mixed reactions, however. Many people I interviewed said that the TRC had raised hopes of compensation and justice, but then betrayed those hopes. Victims were brought face to face with their perpetrators, and if the latter admitted to their wrongdoings, they received amnesty (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, 2002). Twenty years on, however, the same sores still fester as people I interviewed wrestle with how to deal with the apartheid past within the new “born-free” generation, that is, anyone born after 1994.

The importance of history and sustainable peacebuilding (White, 1990) undergirds this fourth and final theme of the interview analysis. The role of historical narratives in either crippling or enabling a society to heal from conflict has already provided a framework for better understanding (Sen, 2011; McDowell & Shirlow, 2011). Every new generation has to be taught their history and that of others. In this way they own a history, or several historical narratives (Lund, 2003). When the historical discourse expands to include multiple perspectives, a space opens up for peacebuilding.

At a teachers' workshop sponsored by the Shikaya NGO [62.], I heard Afrikaner teachers say that *when our students learn about apartheid, they say, "We are sorry. We didn't know."* The adults who lived through apartheid admit to *struggling with this, since the human rights violations occurred "on my watch."* The teachers participate in modules on xenophobia, ostracism, and bullying. They use Nazi Germany as a case study to learn about the often-overlapping roles of bystanders, victims, and perpetrators. The adults look at individual choice and behavior and the consequences that come out of individual narratives. This is about changing the historical narrative (Lapsley, 2002). The reason for any TRC is that it changes the narrative by adding voices: those of the perpetrators' and the victims' alike.

What is important here is the recognition of history and having a historical narrative that might not have been included beforehand, thus increasing the number of voices participating in the conversation, so to speak. Yet one of the major themes the interview responses revealed was that although having an accurate history of what happened in South Africa was viewed as an important aim of the TRC, this was not achieved.

A teacher from a community school said, *“Young people have a narrow view of the past—‘We’re done with the past—we don’t want to learn about apartheid’—that’s what they say.”* At the end of the workshop, teachers admitted this was the first time in their lives they had sat *around a table and talked about this, engaged at this level with the Other*. The workshop leader said, *“This is one story; there are other stories. Expect anger, hear complexities, take nuance to class [speak with nuance, rather than in a polarizing manner]. When feelings are expressed and heard, young people feel more confidence to approach difficulties.”*¹⁶

When I asked, *what is the most difficult legacy* the community teachers all agreed on one answer: *humiliation*. *“We internalized inferiority.”* The other teachers said *that as whites, they internalized superiority*. A primary aim of the workshops is to expand the historical narrative. *“We try to teach young people about the past and therefore about their present.”* Another case study is the civil rights movement in

¹⁶ An unexpected benefit and dissemination of this research is how it has informed my own teaching style. The previous quote is a description of what I try to bring into my own classroom, when lecturing on human rights, violence and conflict, and peacebuilding.

the U.S. *“Our philosophy is to go far, deal with somebody else’s history, and then bring it to yourself.”* One teacher said, *“Before I came here I used to teach my kids with quite a lot of anger and I used to express that anger to them, and I used to tell them I thought that the TRC was this and that and whatever, and I used to tell them about the hard time I had while growing up.”* This teacher said that after the workshop he realized he could teach with less anger and more understanding.

In continuation of this section highlighting the need to change the historical narrative within a deeply divided society, I include an interview with someone who cultivated many of the traits mentioned above. [77.] Deo Rwagasore, 28, is Rwandan and came with his mother to Masi as a young boy in 1994, during the Rwandan genocide. He told me that his life motto was something his mother told him: *“You make the things you’re not good at your strengths.”* Rwagasore used to take the bus to work, which took two hours there and two hours back, in order to work as a dishwasher in a Cape Town restaurant. He did this for nearly three years. Now he is a restaurant manager, and rugby player. When I asked him about the *xenophobic riots of 2008 that broke out in Masi, targeting families like his*, he avoided the answer, laughed, *admitted he was terrified*, then changed the subject. So I asked him *about the future* instead. He said, *“We need to move away from that negativity of the past, it shouldn’t be forgotten, but in the moment, it should be because the only way we all are going to heal is if we all integrate.”* Rwagasore has yet another view of history, and believes the only way to heal from history is to move past it. His solution is a form of reconciliation through changing the historical narrative.

At the NGO SAEP's bridging class. [93.] Willie Rapholo, 20, is Xhosa, and came to Cape Town from Limpopo. Regarding apartheid abuses, he said "*I'm not saying let's forget it completely, but let's not use it as torture, let's not use it as revenge.*"

Then [97.] Mekhoba Luthando, 17, said,

Let's not use it as an excuse, because now we are using it as an excuse because we're not affected anymore. We just know what happened. We have other challenges that we're facing and we need to make sure that we come together. We forgive but not forget.

These young people struggle with their roles in post-apartheid South Africa. How much should the apartheid crimes affect them? An interview with [85.] Vimla Pillay of the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) was the only one of the 144 in which reference was made to *intergenerational trauma*. She talked about her previous job as the Director of the Trauma Center and said,

We worked with prisoners who were tortured by the apartheid government. We worked with the children and now grandchildren who were brought up without their parents being around. We worked with children whose parents were deeply, deeply traumatized from torture. And we also worked with first generation victims of torture where we did lots of things like body mapping and applied unique methodologies. We used unique trauma methodologies but with the children it was mainly psychological scars, financial challenges, and the knowledge of having parents who were tortured in the old regime. But we organized many camps, we used to take them out into the open fields and into the forests and have days of field sessions with them and we found profound success.

Pillay also commented on the point of identity raised by Collier, the former ANC fighter-turned-priest, quoted in an earlier interview. He spoke of inner peace,

and said, that *to be secure in who I am, is to grow into social identity, and this will equal the new South African.*

These new South Africans include teens who have graduated from secondary school and are spending a year preparing for university entrance at the NGO SAEP's bridging class. One of them is [97.] Mekhoba Luthando, 17, who said,

Basically, I grew up, my mother was a domestic worker and working for whites, and in school I was taught that whites were discriminating, but when I met up with the people my mother worked for they were a different story. They were nice to me, they played with me, we were happy together. Now this takes me think of another point, even though others experienced apartheid racism and everything, people change, things change. Now we can easily communicate with those people. You can do whatever: talk with them whenever you have a problem. Whenever I had a problem at school my mom would call them and say "Maybe my child has a problem like this" and they would call or help out. My school is a disadvantaged school, but the best school at political debate, so I participated in a lot of competitions like (model) United Nations.

Luthando added, *"The white people also have compassion. You can stand next to a white person in the grocery store and know that they have also suffered. This history defines us as a nation."* This quote recognizes the significance of history and the importance of adding diverse perspectives to a changing historical narrative.

The voices of these young people reach out, trying to bridge an unfamiliar past with the new future they have been promised, now that they have a chance to attend university. At the opposite end of the generational scale is a voice

introduced previously in the section on socio-economic disparity, [101.] Mark Collier, a former ANC fighter from Zimbabwe, who later became a priest. When asked about the *uniqueness of South Africa*, he said, “*Mandela created a space for everyone to be generous to each other. But now there is inverted violence in the townships, which will be continuous if there is no opportunity to develop further.*”

Another voice previously introduced speaks about the need for a revised historical narrative from another perspective, [51.] Antjie Krog, a former journalist who covered the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and is now a poet and philosopher. Here her response refers to reactions in 1994 to the apartheid violence:

I think, why was it so peaceful? That's my question. I mean, after WWII thousands of Europeans were killed in revenge cases, thousands. Say, not a single one here during that period, so they didn't understand. Blacks thought (about whites), let them just do this because they will change, they will become humane and we can work together and we can change the country, etc. But why is that, good God, we didn't even ask for forgiveness now they forgive us. I mean, I'm saying here some . . . were raised to hate these people, they can't even hate properly, now they're learning to hate properly, it will come. Is learning to hate properly the first step to processing the events and the emotions?

Krog is saying that, for the most part, the non-white population during apartheid and immediately after apartheid was willing to choose to turn away from violence as an act of revenge. But 20 years later, South Africa is experiencing violence because it has taken people that long to process apartheid. “*Now they're learning to hate properly, it will come.*” People are learning how to hate because of their sense of betrayal, as they are still mired in poverty, even after 20 years,

and the promise of freedom and equality has not measured up to their expectations of materialistic equality.

This fourth section of the interview analysis addressed the theme of history, the impact of history, how to recognize it, and how to move past it. It is about recognizing oneself within a changing landscape of identities, and realizing that these identities may be based on wealth and class, crime, and violence, as well as race or religion; but foremost, recognizing one's place in history, and the role played by one's family and friends and very culture (Arendt, 1958; Honneth, 1995). The recognition theorists cited earlier in this thesis all speak of the significance of recognizing the so-called Other, or contrasting people groups who inform our own identities. As previously mentioned, positionality may shift, and in doing so, the identification of the Other may also shift accordingly.

The Other

The act of *othering* has been researched extensively in conflict studies and other sub-disciplines. It occurs because of identity issues, and whenever a common enemy is discovered. Indeed, nothing unites a population like the threat of an Other. There can be a "them," no matter the size of "us," whether that is as a family, a clan, a tribe, a city, a nation, a continent, or as a planet (when aliens threaten to invade) (personal communication with Gerard van der Ree, 2012). The process of identifying an enemy as such, though, can be complicated, drawing on stories and ancient hatreds (Milosevic in the Balkan wars), or it can

be chillingly simple (9/11 and U.S. President George W. Bush's War on Terrorism). Whenever a differentiation is made, a majority to a minority, even and especially in the name of democracy, others appear. This often coincides with the creation of a marginalized group. This is an important concept to this thesis because of the positioning of youth as one such marginalized group who have been othered.

Jeffrey Murer writes in "Law and Outsiders: Norms, Processes and 'Othering' in the 21st Century" (2011),

Yet, just who constitutes a majority is not so obvious. Moreover, the very law [...] can be used to distinguish who is recognized within a polity and who is not; who is counted and who is ignored; and who is afforded rights and who is denied. (p. 1)

Murer explains further the initial steps in othering within another article, "Who is the Enemy Other?" (2012). He explains how groups must be made. This may occur in terms of ethnicities, nations, classes, races or even status groups. These may emerge from specific historical, social, and economic contexts. Murer refers to Miroslav Hroch who detailed the dynamics of a large group identity formation in three steps: 1) there is an academic or scholarly interest in articulating arguments for a distinct group; 2) agitators who are enthralled by the idea of a distinctly separate group engage in the promotion of an origin narrative; and 3) these ideas are received, internalized and re-transmitted by so many other people as to constitute a mass movement.

Otherring, or exercising exclusion, is one of the most immediate and easiest ways of creating a sense of unity. All that is needed for commonality is to be excluded from a group. Murer says that rather than search for some element around which “we” could construct a superordinate identity, “we” only need to find some element which creates a common “them.” And here we find the link with violence.

For many caught in such situations, the only sufficient performance of membership is to kill the other within. A young man, who considers himself Yugoslavian, because one of his parents is Croat and the other Serb, can only demonstrate his Croat-ness by killing a Serb - killing both the enemy out with and the “enemy” within. To not do so, demonstrates that he is not sufficiently Croat, and therefore must be killed as if he were a Serb. This was very frequently the case during the atrocities in Rwanda. Young members of the Interahamwe challenged “suspicious” Hutus to kill Tutsis. If they did not, then they too were killed as being the enemy-other. (Murer, 2012)

Theoretical and philosophical takes on othering

In the previous sections this thesis initiated an exploration of violence as a means of communication when marginalized groups such as young people feel they have no voice. When young people become marginalized, this involves the youth being othered, and feeling ignored or humiliated, and turning to conflict as a way of being heard. This has been examined further in Chapter 4 with a typology that arose from my research. Within the exploration of youth as a marginalized group, it is necessary to examine the nature of conflict, with relation to identity and othering.

Conflict by its very nature requires an Other. From a theoretical point-of-view, Kochi (2009) discusses the standpoints of several philosophers. His book considers contemporary moral, political and legal debates over the legitimacy of war and terrorism. In terms of agency, he writes,

One of Hegel's more controversial claims about war is contained in the following statement:

[W]ar should not be regarded as an absolute evil [Ubel] and as a purely external contingency whose cause [Grund] is therefore itself contingent, whether this cause lies in the passions of rulers or nations [Volker], in injustices etc., or in anything else which is not as it should be. (p. 156)

This links back to the critique of liberal peace structures as discussed in Chapter 1. This particular piece is relevant because it connects back to the argument of this thesis. For example, Kochi adds that Kant's approach to war shares a crucial element with the development of the moral ordering of war within the UN framework, which he calls the "moral force of international law." He describes this as a:

forceless force; it is a radical normative demand which is both immanent within the structures and institutions of international law and stands above, and outside of, all positive international law. The moral force of international law demands that war should end and that global society be organized around the notions of peace, freedom and human rights. In its radical sense the moral force of international law presents a normative demand powered not simply by the notion of what ought (*sollen*) to be, but, by what *must* (*müssen*) be. The moral force of international law can be thought as simultaneously a point of *critique*, a *hope*, and a *demand for action*. (Kochi, 2009, pp. 108-109)

This idea of a moral force in international law creates a powerful space for denouncing and criticizing states who act with disregard to human rights internally, and who wage aggressive war. Examples include the protests in the U.S. against the Vietnam War (1964-75) and the protests which began in 2003

against the invasion of Iraq by the U.S. and its allies. Kochi brings up voice, linking it with agency, and pressure placed on those in power by civil society (2009).

This is significant for this thesis because this moral force of law grants authority to the voices of civil society, not only when they demand peace, but also when they demonstrate against oppression, lack of freedom, and violations of human rights. There is something attractive and legitimizing about the very culture of human rights (Forsythe, 2009). When demonstrators such as young people tap into this voice of authority, it strengthens their claims with added legitimacy. This is a powerful example of voice and agency, influencing policy at an international level.

Voice with regard to memory, law, and repair

This discussion of agency and voice continues with another example of how voice and agency have been studied within the context of marginalized groups, or othering, which concerns post-conflict peacebuilding and memory, law and reparations. Minow (2002) explains the motivation behind granting greater voice to victims, and outlines the need for reforms aimed at making the criminal justice system less intimidating to victims and encouraging them to come forward.

In other words, this is about how to open a more conducive listening space, which is also what my research demonstrates. Such measures could include staffing courts with victim-witness advocates, who could explain the complexities of the legal system, help victims prepare for trial, and accompany victims in court. In addition, should an offender be convicted or plead guilty, then victims could be granted the opportunity to address the court at sentencing, giving what is called a “victim impact statement.” Minow’s measures are designed to give the victim a greater voice in the justice system and to restore trust between the victim and their community.

Within the political arena, post-conflict countries face similar questions of justice and restitution. Victims of intimate violence and/or political violence need a respectful and open forum for public witness to and acknowledgement of the wrongs done to them. Granting victims a voice is particularly important where crimes have been committed under the cloak of state legitimacy. In addition, the significance of memory for people, both personally and individually, should underlie every discussion focusing on addressing the needs of victims. The following quote highlights the effect of such traumatic memories.

The trauma of violence, especially when it is personalized and designed to be humiliating, has distinctive characteristics: recurring terror, difficulty controlling anger, difficulty sustaining relationships, loss of the desire to live. These point to some of the psychological obstacles to reconciliation and repair. They also point up the complex needs survivors have for assistance in remembering safely and recovering the capacity for agency if they are to break out of the cycle of hatred. Comforting the victim and ensuring that her needs are taken care of before dealing with the offender expresses the right order of values and rejects the wrongdoer’s frame on the matter. (Minow, 2002, p. 100)

The above section emphasizes the interconnectedness of agency and voice. An additional aspect included calls for even more flexibility and self-determination for victims. She also warns that intervening on the behalf of victims could prove ultimately self-defeating if the intervention is not based on a “strong cooperative alliance between the victim and the intervening third parties” (Minow, 2002, p. 194).

This means that victims need to feel like full participants in the justice process. My own research has demonstrated this, as well—participation linked to agency, as victims tell their stories in the knowledge that they will not only be heard but that their voices will make a difference.

Individual voices and common voice

Another example of how voice enables youth to claim agency can be explained by the difference between individual voices and a common voice (Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010). Youth councils exemplify a means of empowering young people, and yet, these same young people often report feeling a lack of personal power. “They recognized that their voices were regarded as a common voice which was dependent on being a member of the group” (p. 256). As my own research shows in this chapter, there is a delicate balance between promoting a group voice (such as the so-called youth voice), and doing so to the detriment of individual voices. This is important to remember when examining the implications of youth voices claiming agency within divided societies, as it may allow for young

people's voices to continue going unheard, as they are spoken on behalf of, and all that is heard instead is an assumed, but inaccurate, ubiquitous (and singular) youth voice.

As already discussed in Chapter 1, the CRC provides young people with the right to a voice, the right to make decisions, as well as rights to the freedoms of thought and expression. Furthermore, states that have ratified the CRC (that is, every state but the U.S.) are committed to implementing those rights and are accountable for doing so (OHCHR, 2014). This is a crucial aspect of the CRC, and for this thesis, it lays the foundation for a right to individual voice, as outlined in Article 12 of the CRC. As already explained in Chapter 1, Article 12 appears on paper at least, to affirm young people's right to a voice or say in matters affecting their lives. However, the practical legal ramifications are still very much in their early stages. EU countries, for example, adhere to the CRC, but how exactly the practice of including young people in decisions that affect them should be promoted, is often an unknown variable. What are the legal ramifications in terms of divorce cases, for instance? And how should young people be consulted regarding medical decisions? Education is another area where it is unclear to what extent young people voice their preferences. All too often these realms remain in the territory of adults.

And within this territory, asking questions or challenging adult opinions is strongly disapproved of. In fact, there are very few

realistic avenues through which to challenge violations or neglect of their rights. In these contexts, little will change unless considerable investment is made in working with adults to sensitize them to children's participation rights and the positive impacts of their realization. Furthermore, in addition to continuing to create opportunities for children's participation, it is also important to build partnerships with other social movements and human rights initiatives to ensure that children's rights are reflected in, and are a part of, any broader advocacy for greater democracy and participation. (Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010, p. 15)

In order to open a listening space for young people, they must feel confident that what they say will not only be heard, but be acted upon, and that they need the assurance that they may make a difference. Here we see the dependence of voice and agency in certain circumstances. Once we see that agency can be dependent on people listening and the environment, then the question that needs to be asked is how can agency be built? (Lee, as cited by Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010).

As my research demonstrates, one answer is to stop seeking the so-called youth voice, and instead attempt to listen to individuals. Opening a listening space involves pro-actively looking for opportunities to highlight the resources children draw on in expressing agency, and exploring how these shape their participation in different ways. To do this and respond in an authentic way can be challenging. It involves asking open-ended questions like "What do you suggest?" or "What do you think?" One of the most empowering questions is: "What do you need?" or even better, "How can we work together?" This involves recognition of the worth of children's voices, which, in turn, accords agency to young people. Agency enables, empowers and educates young people in their potential roles in conflict and peacebuilding.

Because agency and voice are so integrally linked with each other, it is often not enough to simply want to listen to young people. “Responding authentically” is also important. This entails, other things, acting on what has been said in a way that is initiated by young people, meeting their needs as they have stated them to be, and following up to see if their meanings have been accurately understood.

It should also be pointed out that just as not all adults wish to participate and exercise agency, so too, not all young people wish to assume this role. Those who do, though, often encounter great difficulties. In the case of a youth parliament, for example, youth are sometimes labeled as

[...] “super participators,” as they were involved not only in the youth parliament but also in a large range of political, social and religious organisations, yet these confident and experienced young people still required support from professionals. They felt the importance of their ties with parents, friends, peers and the other young people they represented. However, they felt a tension and a disconnection in their roles as youth parliamentarians and their “other lives” of family, friends and social lives. Thus, advancing a children and young person’s voice was a tremendous struggle. (Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010, pp. 314-315)

As one final perspective on voice and agency, the following section addresses the question of identity (as a means of othering), since it is the great influencer of voice and agency.

Recognizing the Other in us

Human rights and recognition theories, as discussed earlier in this thesis, provide a prism through which to view marginalized groups, such as young people. Seeing someone, truly seeing their pain and hopes, seeing them as an individual rather than a member of a group, identifying with them, is a major step on the path toward conflict resolution, and this carries weight within the field of international relations.

To recognize someone is to identify from knowledge of appearance or character. It also means to identify, or to know again, and to acknowledge the existence, validity or legality of a person. The verb “to recognize” comes from the Latin *recognoscere*. This means to know again, recall to mind—literally—to learn again.

Kristeva (1991) proposes that what is crucial is not so much recognizing ourselves in others, but rather recognizing others in ourselves.

In the fascinated rejection that the foreigner arouses in us, there is a share of uncanny strangeness [...] *The foreigner is within us* (emphasis added). And when we flee from or struggle against the foreigner, we are fighting our unconscious—that “improper” facet of our impossible “own and proper.” Delicately, analytically, Freud does not speak of foreigners: he teaches us how to detect foreignness in ourselves. [...] To discover our disturbing otherness, for that indeed is what bursts in to confront that “demon,” that threat, that apprehension generated by the projective apparition of the other at the heart of what we persist in maintaining as a proper, solid “us.” By recognizing *our* uncanny strangeness we shall neither suffer from it nor enjoy it from the outside. The foreigner is within me, hence we are all foreigners. If I am a foreigner, there are no foreigners. (pp. 191-192)

As Kristeva suggests, if we recognize the Other in ourselves, what does that make us? When studying youth, the child in all of us enables adults to better hear the voices of young people, and in the hearing grant them agency so they develop more fully their potential roles in (divided) societies.

Conclusion

Based on the fieldwork conducted for this thesis, excerpts from certain interviews have provided a deliberate sampling of the four themes that emerged: Identity; Socio-economic disparity; Reality-versus rhetoric disconnect around children's rights and what this might mean in policy terms; and History. Out of the 144 interviews, only a small percentage could be cited here as representative of the greater body of work. The answers were sometimes surprising, and always interesting, as I mined the research question of how voice enables youth to claim agency within deeply divided societies, and what the implications are in terms of conflict and peacebuilding?

As a record of research, this thesis leans heavily on the fieldwork described here. The individual voices speak of problems and solutions as detailed in the four identified themes which arose consistently during the interviews. I discovered

that these themes provide a framework for analysis, thus deepening an understanding of the concepts this thesis addresses.

These interviews articulate the relationship between violence and voice. Because of these responses, in the course of this fieldwork I saw not only the need to further develop Hart's categories, but also the need to describe this process of voice and agency in more nuanced terms. The interviews often revealed these broad themes of being Marginalized; Humiliated; and Ignored. In addition, at the end of my fieldwork, I realized that, through the words I had heard, there is a direct relationship between voice and violence.

As is often the case, additional questions arose. Questions like: If language equals identity, then what does that say about people who cannot speak well, cannot communicate well due to the language of education, or if the language of the privileged class is not their own native language?

These questions arose from the fieldwork, and this chapter has explored the hypothesis that unless it is known what people feel, unless their voices are heard, then effective policy cannot be made. Furthermore, the responses of those interviewed demonstrate that race and identity are about far more than just the color of one's skin; but rather they also concern class and social status. South Africa's deeply divided society is not just divided along racial lines, but along the lines of socio-economic privilege, and ethnicity. The link between this

recognition and steps toward sustainable peace is the fact that listening is not enough, although it is a crucial first step. But for a peace to become sustainable, then agency must be granted through structural change and policymaking, and there needs to be a recognition that positionality can shift.

As post-apartheid racism appears to be fading somewhat, socio-economic class lines of division appear to be becoming stronger, further underlining the need for structural change. This was reinforced during an interview with several [74.] *researchers at the IJR*. Among other topics, they discussed what they called the “*compensated element*,” that high crime rates tied in to the sentiment that non-whites should be compensated for having suffered under the apartheid regime. This refers back to the discussion on *identity and traumatization*, and Bray’s claim that most of the population suffers in this way, and how this affects their sense of who they are. So, it also affects what they feel entitled to. But the most significant parts of the interview were made in a matter-of-fact way, tying back to what Bray said, and only upon later study revealing startling insights. The IJR researchers said, “*The majority of black kids are from poverty.*” In addition, this was also the first time that someone admitted to me that he *did not like to be called coloured, but preferred to be called black*. “*During apartheid we were not white enough, now we’re not black enough.*” Statements like these when made in a deeply divided society like South Africa, look on the surface to be about race, and they are, but they are also about poverty. And that it is so widespread, it is almost overlooked. This is a key tenet of my research.

Several of the interviews demonstrated the negative effects of a static historical narrative that showed that the color of one's skin is not so much the major problem in South Africa, but rather socio-economic faultlines (Galtung & Webel, 2007) run even deeper than racial ones. In a deeply divided society, faultlines must be identified and explored in order to merge them. The 144 interviews uncovered not just this fourth theme of History, but also Identity, Socio-economic disparity, and Reality-versus-rhetoric disconnect between children's rights and consequent policy ramifications. Both intersectionality and positionality are important as significant indicators of identity. All four themes are intertwined and entangled, but they all reveal an underbelly of South African's deeply divided society, namely the deadly drag of poverty on the economy and especially on young people's ability to exercise agency. Many of the people I listened to said that they felt empowered by contributing to this research, by voicing their opinions, while several also asked for a summary of my findings.¹⁷

It should also be mentioned that many interviews touched on emotional topics such as prejudice, racism, revenge, entitlement, compensation, anger, fear, vulnerability, identity, shame, and abandonment. This is not language that lends itself easily to an academic context. Western scholarship asks certain things and gatekeeps. Related to this is the issue of decolonizing Western scholarship

¹⁷ I had several people I turned to in order to discuss my research, and many of them asked in return for a copy of the thesis once it was finished. This provided me with yet another way of disseminating the research, and I will certainly send copies to these interested parties.

(Vrasti, 2013; Sabarantam, 2013, 2011). In the analysis of the fieldwork narratives, I was struck by the apparent fact that youth may not be listened to not just because of who they are and what they say, but also because of the way they say it. Their language may be labeled as unsophisticated.¹⁸

This led to an exploration of the many ways agency and voice can be studied, with respect to the Other. Theoretical and philosophical takes on othering were considered; as well as the role of voice with regards to memory, law, and repair; individual voices and the common voice; and recognizing the Other in us. The next chapter outlines the significance of the four themes to practically evaluate the Vortex model as a final analysis to conclude this thesis.

¹⁸ For fifteen years I have interviewed people in post-conflict situations and translated their fact into fiction because the emotional depth of their stories lent itself better to the shape of fiction based on fact. While finishing this thesis I have been confronted yet again by the lack of space within academia for emotive concepts.

Chapter 6: Conclusion—Speaking Peace into Being

Introduction

This concluding chapter of the thesis is broken down into the following sections. First, it will briefly attempt to demonstrate the applicability of the model illustrated in Chapter 4, namely the Vortex of Voice and Violence, within a wider peacebuilding context. By using this tool for analysis, the case study of South Africa's deeply divided society, voice and violence will be examined and the hypothesis that voice might enable youth to claim agency within divided societies will be discussed. This will be followed by a chapter-by-chapter breakdown of this thesis as a whole, and then a discussion of its contribution. The subsequent section reinforces the research by highlighting the theoretical framework of recognition theories. The next section demonstrates the layered analysis by means of moral imagination, a concept discussed earlier in the thesis. The concluding part points the reader in the direction of continued use of this research, for peacebuilding purposes, and provides an example of the shape this might take.

Applying the Vortex

This research identified the following four themes in the South Africa case study analyzed in the previous chapter:

- 1) Identity

- 2) Socio-economic disparity
- 3) Reality-versus-rhetoric disconnect around children's rights and what that might mean in policy terms
- 4) History.

This section will now apply a brief analysis by means of the Vortex typology introduced in Chapter 4, and specifically by using the three additional steps:

- 1. Ignored
- 2. Humiliated
- 3. Marginalized.

As previously demonstrated, all four themes are entangled. Seen from both the 1) Identity and 2) Socio-economic points-of-view, the young people interviewed for this research signaled examples of all three Vortex steps, being ignored, being humiliated, and being marginalized. In terms of 1) Identity, this occurred on two levels, namely the interviewees' identities and the contexts of those identities. For Socio-economic measures, this took place on the four levels identified, namely regarding wealth, class, crime, and violence. Interviewees talked about being ignored by the adults in their lives, being humiliated by the systems in place, such as prejudice against poverty, and they demonstrated marginalization by describing how they are shut out of higher education, for example, due to lack of social and cultural capital.

The third theme 3) Reality-versus-rhetoric disconnect around children's rights and what that might mean in policy terms can also be better understood if the

Vortex vocabulary is applied. When young people are ignored, humiliated and/or marginalized, then the policy applying to them is often misdirected, as was demonstrated in both the South African case study and the global examples provided throughout this thesis. The greater the gap between the rhetoric and reality, the greater the humiliation of young people who remain unheard, as not only their voices, but also their needs may go ignored. And to be marginalized is the state of those young people in South Africa who remain unemployed and minimally educated due to the restrictions of their poverty, as quantified in Chapter 5. The Vortex also demonstrates how youth feel about the promise of agency, and become frustrated when they see ways in which they are lacking it. And their lack of voice fuels anger as violence may become their chosen means of communication.

Lastly, 4) History can be better understood if seen through the lens of absent stakeholders. The Vortex illustrates how not only some of the individual interviewees, but also how whole segments of South Africa were ignored, humiliated, and marginalized. Indeed, the analysis stretches from the individual (interviewees) to the national (apartheid) to the international levels when the history of the anti-apartheid movement is scrutinized. As was discussed in Chapter 3, international sanctions against South Africa helped bring about the fall of the apartheid regime, and using the Vortex, this could be explained as an international application of marginalization and in fact, humiliation and even, being ignored. The Vortex can also be used to help explain the youth activism that helped bring down apartheid

The preceding exercise briefly demonstrates the use of the vortex as a tool for determining the level of participation young people enjoy, and the levels still to be reached if this enjoyment does not (yet) exist. It provides an analytical advice for examining how far a particular society has progressed in terms of developing participation. As such, the Vortex provides both a roadmap for greater youth participation, and a warning, as at this lower level of participation, there is also a greater risk of spiraling violence. By means of providing both language and an expanded vision of what greater participation might look like, the Vortex illustrates how voice might enable youth to claim agency within divided societies, and as such proves significant for understanding post-conflict peacebuilding, especially at a communal level.

A chapter overview now follows in order to further illustrate how the research question, repeated in the previous sentence, has been answered.

Chapter Overview

This section provides not just an overview, but also points toward possible practical uses of the research, in terms of its contribution. In addition, it demonstrates coherent structure that explains and argues why one section should follow another. In [Chapter 1](#) this thesis outlined where young people are situated within the field of international relations. That involved an initial discussion of voice, youth, and agency. The research question was then

introduced: **How does voice enable youth to claim agency within divided societies, and what are the implications in terms of conflict and peacebuilding?** Thereafter, the proposed contribution of this thesis was discussed. This led to an exploration of human rights and the liberal peace, as well as gender and generational concerns. The themes of youth and identity then identified the significance of the UNCRC and specifically Article 12, which addresses youth voice. In addition, important terms for this thesis such as voice, youth, and agency were defined.

This chapter introduced the concept that linking voice and violence could provide a means to reduce youth violence in post-conflict areas. Listening to young voices can contribute to a sustainable peace, envisioned and cultivated by the very generation who must own that peace if it is to become lasting.

The research reveals that seeing, hearing and understanding more about young people's perspectives accesses previously underexplored tools for peacebuilding, including local ownership of peace initiatives.

Chapter 2, entitled *Voice and Agency*, looked at the first thread of a threefold strand consisting of voice, agency, and youth, and builds on the foundation of Chapter 1. As subtexts, youth, violence and marginalization were discussed within the frameworks already researched by several theorists, including Arendt, Turner, and Honneth. Through the prism of recognition theory, human

rights and vulnerability were examined. Definitions of voice were discussed, as well as the phenomenon of othering, and how voices of marginalized groups go unheard, and the people they represent go unrecognized.

The analysis in this chapter provided a new dimension, adding to the already existing conversation, by bringing together the concepts of voice, agency, or power, and hidden transcripts. A discussion of hegemonic power followed, including how subversive discourses are forms of resistance and indeed, examples of power, or agency, being realized. This chapter also highlighted the connection between the processes of young people being listened to, and how they thereby come into agency, what mechanisms lead from increased agency to enhanced voice. One leads to the other; voice and agency are intertwined.

Chapter 3, *Youth and Agency*, further explored the relationship between the liberal peace and youth roles. The South African case study was placed in context by means of a section on historical perspectives on South African youth, agency, and voice, comparing post-apartheid South Africa with apartheid South Africa, in which youth played a significant role in resisting the apartheid regime. A discussion of recognition and perceptions of the roles of youth as problematic subsequently revealed roles in addition to the standard ones of troublemakers and peacemakers Youth participation in development policy was discussed, followed by examples of agency which illustrated the peacebuilding potential of young people. The upside and downside of youth bulges were considered,

including the involvement of young people in terrorism, i.e. not terrorism as such, but the ways in which unheard and disenfranchised groups communicate—one of which is through violent means.

This chapter expanded the applicability of my research, suggesting its potential as a means of influencing policy making. This could take the practical shape of focus groups including young people, surveys aimed at them, and generational impact studies. Several examples were provided that demonstrate how young people in a deeply divided society benefit from participation. When young people face choices, they can capitalize on opportunities to claim agency. Young people can be major contributors of ideas aimed at peacebuilding, enabling greater local ownership of a post-conflict peace. How young people perceive themselves—as agents of change—and how their societies perceive them, play a major role in envisioning peacebuilding measures.

Chapter 4, *Voice and Youth*, presented the methodology, explaining the choices made and analysis used by means of phenomenology. This chapter completed the three threads of thought, as a typology was introduced that helps assess youth participation, and links voice with violence. The Vortex of Voice and Violence illustrates different stages of participation and connects voice and violence, establishing violence itself as an act of communication. The Vortex provides a scale against which to gauge the level of youth participation, or lack thereof. It also illustrates the need for youth-oriented benchmarks and youth-

narrated visions. Several examples were provided in which violence speaks, both politically and in war-to-peace transitions.

This chapter analyzed several participation models, analyzing the benefits of certain models over others. New steps in understanding how violence becomes a form of communication were introduced with the Vortex, based on these models. It demonstrates that when the motivations of young people are better understood, their reasons for choosing violence can then be better addressed. For example, one way of providing an alternative script, or an alternative sense of belonging, would involve increasing youth participation elsewhere, so that they do not have to turn to a radical group and/or violence for inspiration and a sense of fulfillment.

Chapter 5 set forth the *South Africa Fieldwork and Analysis*, which I conducted over a period of three months. The phenomenological approach explained in Chapter 4 was built upon and demonstrated, as well as the method of coding and the data storing used. An interpretation of the more than 140 interviews was explained, as it revealed four different themes: 1) *Identity*; 2) *Socio-economic disparity*; 3) *Reality-vs.-rhetoric disconnect around children's rights and what that might mean in policy terms*; and 4) *History*. Extracts from these interviews are the value-added content of this thesis, the actual examples of youth voice, which serve to demonstrate their agency, or a lack thereof.

An examination of the relationship between voice and violence accentuates the exploration of the relationship between voice, youth, and agency in South Africa. This chapter illustrated what it means for young people to juggle different worlds, that is, different identities, languages, and realities. It also opened up a space for and discussion about youth voices, as well as the emotions described. There is a discussion of voices not heard and the systemic denial of recognition, framed around the four themes emerging from the qualitative research conducted.

In addition, the potential for violence was described as a source of power, or agency, for young people in South Africa. And the apparent contradiction of South Africa's rights regime on paper was explored in light of the lack of agency among many youth, who still suffer from a form of socio-economic apartheid. This builds on the discussion regarding hegemonic power from Chapter 3.

Chapter 6 concludes this thesis and brings together the several strands of the research. It demonstrates how the Vortex might be applied to enhance understanding of youth participation (or lack thereof) and possible consequences. It provides a chapter-by-chapter overview and then highlights the contribution made by this research, further proposing both a better understanding of voice, youth, and agency by viewing (and listening) through the prism of recognition theory, and the concept of moral imagination, both concepts revisited. Lastly, there is an attempt to share some of the wisdom gleaned from

this research, in the hope that recognition occurs both at the societal and individual levels.

Contribution

Throughout the thesis the implications in terms of conflict and peacebuilding have been illuminated. The nature of voice and agency were examined, as well as the framing of the present research in this area, particularly within the field of international relations. The potential extension of the current literature has been realized through embedding this thesis in the complex interrelationships among human rights, youth, liberal peacebuilding, and human security. This thesis contends that when a segment of the population is not listened to, violence may become an alternative way of communicating, and perhaps their *only* way of being heard.

Young people are not the only marginalized groups within societies. Any group positioned on the lower steps of the Vortex, such as groups that are being ignored, unheard or humiliated and that are thus excluded from society, are relevant to the models concerning participation, voice, and agency as discussed in this thesis. These groups may be women, a racial minority, a religious minority, an indigenous group that has been colonized, or children.

My research attempts to highlight issues of voice and peacebuilding among youth—how to listen and how to create listening spaces. Throughout, there has been a critique of how Western societies marginalize certain groups, according to class or socio-economic group. The discussion of agency has attempted to bring to the fore not only children and their voices, but what they can do in terms of conflict and violence. Even more significantly, I have tried to point to the need to listen and elicit other marginalized voices. The concept of agency discussed in these chapters can also be applied to adults who feel they have no voice.

Agency may be developed along the lines discussed in this thesis for the indigenous, the disabled, LGTBQI, and other groups who find themselves unheard. Whereas the rhetoric that exists about peace agreements often includes references to children, this can be considered often as tokenism, as theirs is a marginalized voice. This study of voice has tried to stress the need for opening up listening spaces for all individuals, so that they receive greater levels of recognition. It has ramifications both in policy terms for peacebuilding and conflict resolution. By seeing, hearing and understanding more about the potential contribution of youth to IR, by comparing and contrasting methods of creating listening and speaking spaces, by listing examples of youth agency in conflict and peacebuilding, and by examining the nature of their existing and potential contribution to peacebuilding efforts, it will become possible to draw conclusions regarding the significance of incorporating youth as a category within existing theoretical frameworks. This may help solve problems such as youth violence, and open a listening space for young people by means of tools for

helping build a sustainable peace, such as generational impact studies, so that policy in post-conflict areas might become more inclusive of young people.

There is further significance to this research in terms of providing language and indicators, or benchmarks in measuring participation in policy frameworks. Informed perspectives, especially among young leaders. They could make valuable contributions to policy decisions on security, institutional building, democratization, rule of law, human rights, marketization and development. If this takes place within the context of responses to the root causes of the conflict, then peacebuilding occurs at two starting points, i.e. not just in stopping the violence, but also establishing a greater understanding of a local and everyday peace.

This thesis has demonstrated that as young people participate in the (re-)building of their worlds, their proposals and peacebuilding initiatives can only be utilized if they are actually listened to. This was demonstrated by means of thematic disconnect between rhetoric and reality, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, but it is also apparent in the discussion on power which has built throughout the thesis, and when explored theoretically. The following section brings full circle the theoretical argument underpinning the analysis of this thesis.

Recognition

To listen is to recognize. Recognition theories provide a lens through which to understand better the concepts of both vulnerability and recognition. It draws on G.W.F. Hegel's recognition ethics, which stipulate that an ethical relationship can only exist where there is a prior act of mutual recognition (Honneth, 2012). So, recognition can occur between individuals, but also between communities, despite the fact that power and inequality are constraints on ethical recognition. Mutual and free recognition are required if people are to be recognizable as moral agents. Rights presuppose free, autonomous, self-conscious agents capable of rational choice. Some theorists claim redistribution must be a condition of recognition (Fraser, 2003), and others say that recognition ethics are the baseline for the enjoyment of rights in multicultural societies. Without the recognition of minority rights, no liberal democratic society can function. Recognition theory is about safeguarding dignity.

According to Honneth (1995, 2003, 2007, 2012, 2014), the individual is capable of unfolding a practical identity to the extent that he is capable of reassuring himself of recognition by having a growing circle of partners with whom to communicate. Subjects capable of language and action become recognizable individuals solely by learning, from the perspective of others who offer approval, to relate to themselves as beings who possess certain positive qualities and abilities. And so, as others' consciousness of their individuality grows, they come to increasingly depend on the conditions of recognitions they are afforded by the life-world of their social environment. Furthermore, a concept of morality based on the theory of recognition would rely on the support of historical and

sociological studies that are capable of showing that moral progress is born out of the struggle for recognition.

In this deeper analysis, using recognition theories, it needs to be noted that any kind of sustainable peace is difficult to achieve without recognizing the complexity of the links between voice and violence, and power and lack of power (Arendt, 1970).

Young people struggle for recognition at all strata of society: politically, economically, emotionally, and personally. This thesis has attempted to contribute to the conversation about the recognition of youth as viable, societal agents by highlighting the voice-youth thread, the youth-agency thread, and the voice-agency thread, and weaving them into a tapestry that reveals how voice and agency might serve other marginalized groups.

Some might argue that young people included in the legal framework of the CRC are better off than other marginalized groups. But as the Vortex typology in Chapter 4 shows, the participation levels for other marginalized groups run parallel with that of youth. Even for women, there is still a great deal of tokenism and they are often ignored, which can be linked to political power, or a lack thereof. This is only exacerbated within the context of a deeply divided society (Guelke, 2012).

My study of recognition theories demonstrates that agency and voice can be connected to marginalization. Although there may already be a growing human rights discourse, and a discourse about individuals, when the marginalized are discussed in the sphere of international relations, it is done so rarely in terms of voice, or emotions or freedom, which can be a criticism of the liberal peace framework. Where things are more emotive, these are issues not looked at enough because the language itself is often not acceptable within the liberal peace framework and indeed, within the field of international relations (Newman, Paris, & Richmond, 2009).

One example, concerning identity that serves to deepen the analysis, could be taken from the concept of othering, previously discussed. The theme of integration, more contact with individuals from different backgrounds, also came up in the interview with [85.] Vimla Pillay of the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR). (Text in italics indicates quotes from the interview transcript.) This example is provided at the conclusion of this thesis in order to demonstrate reinforce the arc of the argument, and to provide an illustration of how youth perspectives can enrich the surroundings. She described an *example of youth voice, when children aged 8-12 wrote their own stories for a project called Make Peace happen 2010*. She said that *children from all backgrounds were extremely interested, that there was great excitement and enthusiasm and the impact was great. "Now there is only frustration and anger, though, because there is no more funding. Instead these children live in places where there are no trees, and they have gangs and gun shots, kids get caught in gang crossfire, they have no spark in*

their eyes." Pillay referred to their "*true wealth.*" When I asked her to define this, she said,

I think it starts with your sense of self, sense of worth, your value system, what makes up your moral fiber. What you know—often the culture forms part of the individual as well, education forms part of an individual, and you see your potential, whatever it is that you do, you do it really well.

This definition of true wealth fits with the final thesis goals as an example of everyday peacebuilding, the local referred to by Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013). My research argues in favor of voice, as this thesis is about voice in so many ways: finding voice, listening to voice, allowing emotional voice to be heard, recognizing voice. However, local peacebuilding and sense of self-worth and identity, as mentioned above in the definition of so-called true worth, all involve being able to imagine peace in the first place.

Moral imagination

Moral imagination is a topic that was introduced earlier in this thesis. It resurfaces here as a means of completing the thesis discussion. When young people participate in peacebuilding it shifts their lack of agency, providing an alternative to violence. This thesis has looked at various ways in which peace might be spoken into being, such as how youth voice could be used as a benchmark to measure the viability of an imposed peace. But such a peace needs to be envisioned by both the peacebuilders and the keepers of everyday peace, including youth. Peace must first be envisioned before it finds its way into voice. Part of this process involves the need for a moral imagination. For instance, this

might be done in the previously mentioned focus groups, surveys, and generational-impact studies, whenever young people are asked for their own ideas on peacebuilding.

One definition of moral imagination can be heard in the South African voice of Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela. She is a professor in the department of Psychology at UCT, and senior research professor at UFS. I include her quotes here because it adds to the cohesion of this thesis and provides yet another example of voice with agency. During my interviews with Pumla, she spoke of her time spent serving on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa as coordinator of victims' public testimonies, and as facilitator of encounters between family members of victims and perpetrators who appeared before the TRC. She has been involved in the study of the process of forgiving in order to deepen the understanding of its reparative elements in the aftermath of gross human rights violations and mass trauma (Eomega, 2013).

In her book *Memory, Narrative and Forgiveness: Perspectives on the Unfinished Journeys of the Past* (co-edited with Chris Van Der Merwe) (2009), Gobodo-Madikizela further defines moral imagination.

Bringing victims, perpetrators and beneficiaries on the stage of the TRC—both the real stage of the public hearings and national witnessing through public broadcast and television—seemed to have inspired an unprecedented moment of hope and moral imagination in the South African public. The possibility of forgiveness at TRC hearings was probably borne out of this sense of moral imagination, which was supported by an ethos of acknowledgment, and underpinned by the nationally constructed language, cues, and symbols of reconciliation that defined the TRC's work. (p. 152)

At a lecture on September 9, 2010, Gobodo-Madikizela spoke on “The Face of the Other: Moral Imagination in an Environment of Uncertainty and Change.” Here she elaborated on what moral imagination specifically means for South Africa: “In order to build the society we all love, we need to take the first step of starting the necessary dialogue. Identify what our country lacks and what we can do and what our responsibility is to make that change happen” (Carolus, 2010). The act of othering is about history and learning about apartheid. This thesis has demonstrated that when interviewees talked about reconciliation, the process of speaking to the Other, and listening to one another initiated peacebuilding.

Imagining change, as moral imagination describes, as a precursor to then making change happen is a form of agency. My research shows there are different stages of being denied agency, in relation to not being heard: being a decoration, being a token, being spoken on behalf of, being ignored, being humiliated. This is not just true for children, but it can also be so for families and whole societies and all marginalized groups. It works for all marginalized groups who would turn to violence because it is perceived as the only option to voice society grants them. Thus, this research is applicable in all circumstances where people feel they have little or no voice, little or no agency. The Vortex provides a measuring stick for societies to rate themselves in terms of minority-group participation. It illustrates the potential consequences of not listening and how this might lead to violence as a desperate last resort to communicate.

Listening in a deeply divided society

Nelson Mandela wrote in his book, *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994), “No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite” (p. 115).

Mandela’s words set the tone for how South Africa chose to change in 1994. But with the hindsight of more than twenty years, the changes made were not so progressive. Although the apartheid regime has ended, South Africa remains a deeply divided society. It is important to recognize that progress was made in the country’s far-reaching constitution and the legal framework set up around human rights, but that this progress was not linear and absolute, but rather, conditional (Dunne, 2010). On the face of it South African society is still healing, but when examined more closely, there are still huge segments of its society without a voice, and without agency. The TRC, for example, is viewed by many as a failed attempt to deliver justice. This demonstrates the parallel roles of youth and peace within the field of transitional justice.

The youth play an inherent role in peacebuilding. Because I have used specific examples in this thesis, I am adding something about peacebuilding to the literature on deeply divided societies and how to build peace there. Wherever

there are divisions, where there is youth, wherever there are societies in transition, there is a need for recognizing individual voices, asking what they need, how can there be more cooperation, and looking for the unseen, listening for the unheard. There are broad parallels about dispossession and division, massive differences, but great similarities as well. Individual youth voices and individual experiences take the place of a non-existent so-called youth voice, in the singular. What one child experiences can prompt listeners to engage in topics they might otherwise shun.

The top level of participation is all about listening, which might include requiring NGOs to conduct generational impact studies before initiating projects. A generational study would mean pro-actively listening to the opinions of youth. Sustaining youth participation equals sustainable peace.

In the listening to others, to our own hearts, we find peace and healing. And often this healing may take a form which does not fit Western frameworks (Pupavac, 2002). In my own research, young people who have survived conflict situations often display courage and wisdom without therapy, and know what needs to happen in order to survive. In searching for the Imbalis of the world, vulnerable young people who go unheard, with voices and agency, I discovered that listening to the children's voices could benefit us all. Significant gaps of knowledge exist, not least within the field of IR, where both emotion and youth narratives remain outside the consideration of mainstream research.

In South Africa, during the TRC, emotions often ran high. Language, identity, past crimes, present trauma, a hope for freedom and equality, all swamped the tree glades and classrooms where the meetings took place. Often at the end of the sessions, people spontaneously began singing. Their language abilities could not express the longing for peace they felt at such moments of truth and reconciliation, lies and a lack of forgiveness. The Zulu/Xhosa song they sang at those times is called *Senzeni na* which means, "What have we done?" It is an old apartheid-protest song, crying out at the injustice, wondering why they were being targeted to suffer. The verse's meaning changed, however, as during the TRC, people broke out into song, the same question now directed toward and representing both perpetrators and victims, when their emotions proved too strong for words. It was still voice, still communication, but a different use of voice to express the deep feelings of relief and release, fear and hope. This chorus called together voices of all backgrounds and skin colors, as together, as individuals and as a society, they found themselves speaking peace into being.

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