

## Editorial

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The concept of 'power' has been largely used in International Relations to explain nations' behaviors, in particular the use of violence in order to preserve some kind of international balance. More generally, power has usually been associated with the degree of influence one actor has upon another, and has been at the centre of international politics. As commonly portrayed, nations pursue power in order to preserve their sovereignty, often doing so coercively.

Considering its origins and normative drive, it is not surprising that in Peace Studies the discussion about power is somehow different. In fact, and perhaps as a reaction to the conflict-prone picture of classical IR theory, 'power' is often undermined as an explanatory concept. Moreover, when discussed, it often reflects different sociological approaches that replicate a more positive view of power - the capacity that an actor has to accomplish something and that does not necessarily clash with someone else's interests. Power is also related to the ability to integrate and create relationships, what Kenneth Boulding calls integrative power (1990: 10) and which is related to love, legitimacy and respect.

The positive connotation of power is also reflected in the more recent literature on empowerment, a term increasingly used in Peace Studies, and particularly trendy in the Development literature. The irony surrounding empowerment is that it is often discussed

without a clear reference to power, in particular the role played by power asymmetries and domination when empowerment occurs. At the same time, the term has become an increasingly important policy guideline, as well as a legitimising principle for action, which begs the question as to whether its very use reflects a specific kind of structural power.

Regardless of its shape and manifestation, power is at the basis of every social relation, at every level. The main difficulty is in how to capture its essence while it operates. As pointed out by Barnes (1988: ix), "Power is one of those things, like gravity and electricity, which makes its existence apparent to us through its effects, and hence it has always been found much easier to describe its consequences than to identify its nature and its basis." Perhaps because in situations of violent conflict these effects are so obvious, issues of power are easy to capture. Conversely, in peace scenarios, these manifestations are more subtle and sometimes require an extra effort to be perceived.

This issue of P@x is an effort to depict some of these subtle power manifestations. Timothy Donais sets the general picture of the debate on power and peacebuilding, stressing how issues of power are still not properly addressed in the extensive peacebuilding literature and the practical problems arising from this gap.

Rescuing the discussion on hybrid peace, Oliver Richmond discusses the role played by local infrastructures of peace, and how their interactions with external actors also reveal power disputes during processes of peace formation. Gwyneth Sutherland focuses on a very subtle and very little explored dimension of power, which is the power of translating and controlling narratives through technology, in particular, in scenarios of violent conflict. In an interview with a community mediator that works with drug traffickers in Brazil, Jared Ordway reflects on the role played by non-dominating power as a potential tool to interrupt violence. Finally, using an example from Mozambique, I discuss some of the problems with empowerment-promotion policies that are designed based on standard principles that do not reflect actual local power dynamics.

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## P@X Theory

### POWER AND EMPOWERMENT IN PEACEBUILDING PROCESSES

Questions of power permeate virtually every aspect of contemporary peacebuilding. From managing factional power struggles, to restoring the state's monopoly over coercive power while simultaneously empowering society to hold state representatives accountable for their uses – and abuses – of power, to navigating inherent tensions between international and domestic actors over 'ownership' of the peace process, power issues lie at the very heart of the contemporary peacebuilding *problematique*. Furthermore, as Diana Francis has recently noted (2010: 38), many of conflict transformation's most vexed issues are in fact questions of power.

Somewhat surprisingly, therefore, as a field peacebuilding has yet to seriously confront questions of power in the context of war-to-peace transitions. While this may be in part a logical consequence of peacebuilders' lingering self-image as helpful fixers – and of an unwillingness to relinquish the traditional peacekeeping values of neutrality and impartiality – the failure to come to terms with the realities of peacebuilding as an inherently political project may in fact have more to do with fundamental, and unresolved, dilemmas over the nature of peacebuilding itself. More precisely, from the perspective of external actors, it remains unclear who we are trying to empower and, since power is a relative term, who we seek to disempower (or at least constrain) in the process.

As Paul Kingston suggests, the broader peacebuilding project has long displayed contradictory impulses in its relationship to the domestic power structures of post-conflict states: while the practices of elite pact-making tend to legitimate, even consolidate, the power of existing elites (whose participation in peacemaking processes is usually contingent on such legitimation, and whose commitment to the principles of liberal democracy may be questionable), the centrality of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in contemporary peacebuilding is simultaneously aimed at empowering "the unorganized, and poor, and the marginalized" (2012: 333-34). In other words, the exigencies of achieving negative peace

through elite accommodation often stand in direct tension with the demands of positive peace, which almost necessarily require a more fundamental re-ordering of socio-political relations and re-arrangement of political power. This tension between reinforcing and transforming existing power relations has often led, unsurprisingly, to both inconsistent policies and suboptimal outcomes. International efforts to deal with post-conflict 'warlords' in contexts as varied as Afghanistan and Sierra Leone, for example, have often run the gamut from appeasement and co-optation to criminalization and marginalization, and local power-brokers have proven both willing and able to exploit international ambivalence for their own ends.

Whether deliberately or inadvertently, liberal forms of peacebuilding have tended to sidestep these tensions and contradictions within its own practice. Driven by an institution-building logic and underpinned by a normative commitment to human rights, democracy, free markets and the rule of law, liberal peacebuilding has come to conflate peacebuilding with statebuilding, on the assumption that political conflict in war-torn environments can be contained, controlled, and ultimately transcended via the establishment and consolidation of formal state institutions. Despite the ritual acceptance of 'local ownership' as a prerequisite to sustainable peacebuilding, liberal peacebuilding has defined ownership more as responsibility and less as autonomy. The goal, as Caroline Hughes and Vanessa Pupavac have suggested, has been to establish "a disciplined politics, regulated by international norms" (2005: 883). What has emerged, then, has been a fundamentally *disempowering* form of local ownership, where internal political forces are expected to uncritically adopt and to actively implement external blueprints for post-conflict transformation. Post-Dayton Bosnia offers a cautionary tale of the limits of a peacebuilding model that takes international actors as the primary subjects, and local actors as the objects, of peacebuilding: nearly a decade of intrusive international statebuilding, in which political elites were disciplined by international overseers rather than by their own

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democratically-empowered citizens (who were themselves largely marginalized in the process), has arguably left Bosnia no closer to sustainable peace than it was at war's end.

To the extent that the underwhelming returns on peacebuilding investments in Bosnia and elsewhere have generated a crisis in liberal peacebuilding (Cooper, 2007), this crisis is prompting some much-needed reflection on both the means and ends of peacebuilding. New thinking on peacebuilding, however, may in fact be at odds with emerging shifts in peacebuilding practice. On the one hand, where liberal peacebuilding has long been pre-occupied with institution-building and with elite relations across the international-domestic divide, there is an emerging consensus that, as the OECD's Development Assistance Committee has suggested, "the evolution of a state's relationship with society is at the heart of statebuilding" (OECD, 2011: 13). If the broader goal of peacebuilding is the establishment of mutually-empowering state-society relations (Sisk, 2009: 222), then finding ways strengthen both sides of the state-society divide – and creating the conditions in which each evolves as a result of its interactions with the other – is not only desirable but imperative.

At the same time, war-affected states themselves have begun to push back against the outside-in assumptions of liberal peacebuilding. The so-called 'New Deal' for engagement in fragile states – driven in large part by the recently-formed G7+ group of fragile and conflict-affected states – re-asserts the primacy of such states in their own peacebuilding processes. While the practical manifestations of these developments are only now beginning to unfold, there is a very real danger that the New Deal will in fact reinforce a state-centric model of peacebuilding, leaving post-conflict societies once again on the margins of peacebuilding efforts carried out in their name. In this shifting peacebuilding context, therefore, questions of power and empowerment are more relevant than ever. Increasingly, international actors must begin to re-cast their engagement with post-conflict states in terms of fostering and facilitating renewed social contracts between states and

societies, at the core of which are fundamental – and inherently conflictual – questions around how power is enabled, exercised, and controlled. In the process, they must also learn to strike a delicate balance in terms of enabling and supporting the efforts of societal actors to hold their own leaders and elected representatives accountable without at the same time alienating political elites whose cooperation and consent is remains essential if peacebuilding is to succeed.

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### PEACE FORMATION AND LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE

*Peace formation* refers to localised, social, customary, religious, ritual, as well as historical, political, economic, and civil society derived practices of peacemaking. It represents relationships and networked processes where indigenous or local agents of peace in a range of settings find ways of establishing peace processes and sustainable dynamics of peace. In many cases women can be at the forefront, such as in Burundi, Somalia, and Liberia, among others. [1] Often the objective is to provide what are usually public services, such as health and education, in the everyday setting. Peace is made locally in this framework, perhaps individually in hidden and public spaces across a wide range of everyday life activities, but may be supported internationally. One might say it puts society, the village, community, and city at the centre of peace, rather than the state, security and markets.

Peace formation approaches interact with contemporary international approaches to peacebuilding and statebuilding. They may occur in the family, community, village, town, or within the state. They may be formal or informal, aim at shaping the state or merely mitigating and improving everyday life. Peace formation processes may be hidden from view to escape sanction from power because they are resistant, they may engage with mundane everyday issues, they may offer ritualistic and historical approaches to conflict, they may shape the state, and they may also shape the international and its peacebuilding practices- directly or indirectly. Localised practices of peace formation are complex but increasingly visible expressions of critical agency aimed at ending violent cycles of state formation, and related power inequalities, often where more formal peace processes have entrenched them.

By focusing on hybrid forms of peace, and how they are influenced by local patterns of politics, peace formation may represent a more accurate depiction of the results of peace processes worldwide (Mac Ginty, 2008; Richmond, 2011). More generally, it represents a synthesis of conflict management, resolution, peacebuilding and transformation approaches,

but it also transcends these mainly western/northern typologies. It highlights the domain of power and its distribution within societies that are pursuing peace autonomously, or with international support. In this regard, the identification of hybrid forms of peace implies that an emancipatory form might emerge reflecting the interests, identities, and needs of all actors, state and non-state alike, but most importantly resting on local legitimacy which in turn then influences international norms (rather than vice-versa). In parallel to recognising inequalities of power between internationals, state elites, and local peace formers, hybrid forms of peace represent a mixture of local and international agency and legitimacy. Peace formation dynamics are essential for the requisite mutual accommodation and social justice.

Much is known about the workings of state level peace processes as well as the architecture of liberal peacebuilding that has developed at the international level. Far less is known about the local dynamics, institutions, processes, and agencies involved in forming peace and the state locally. Van Tongeren argues that there are at least 12 post-conflict countries, including Afghanistan, Colombia, Ghana, Kenya, Nepal, and Sierra Leone, where informal and formal, local peace committees and other institutional frameworks have autonomously developed (as in Sierra Leone), or have been assisted by external actors (as in Colombia or Nepal), operated informally (as in Columbia, Sierra Leone and many others) or have gradually been drawn into the formal state (as in Ghana, Timor Leste, and the Solomon Islands).[2] Many more examples are mentioned directly or indirectly in the literature and in policy documentation. This has often occurred with international support, perhaps in the form of an official peace ministry, or related institution, and through peace processes, so shaping the emerging peace and the state. The phenomena of emerging local infrastructures for peace is derived from peace formation dynamics, and dictates that the essence of the state is to make and support peace.



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The resulting hybrid forms of peace have emerged in unexpected places, such as Somalia, [3] Cambodia [4] and Bosnia Herzegovina. Such cases may represent a slow and often arduous movement beyond the liberal peace towards what might be called a post-liberal peace, [5] where international norms and institutions interact with different, contextual, and localised polities. They also pose an important question, which is whether local forms of legitimacy and norms of peace can equate or connect with international forms, not least when local practices (religious or customary) seem to clash with international human rights standards. This process exposes local-international power relations making plain that peace also demands their redressal.

In summary, what is emerging is neither strictly a liberal nor a local form of peace, but a complex assemblage - of related but also separate associations, actors and networks - formed through political contestation involving a range of local and international actors (Latour, 2007: 5, 121). It challenges traditional notions about the power of elites, internationals, the state, or social actors, as well as the normative frameworks that peace requires. It also challenges conventional wisdom about the need for public mobilisation *en masse* in formal space, institutions, or formats. If a peace process is to be comprehensive then it needs to reach beyond such limitations.

Comprehending these dynamics, as Chambers (1983: 84) has argued in another context, involves 'putting the last first', a partial reversal, and certainly a refinement of western knowledge about peace. In many cases, such peace formation agency has eventually been integrated into the state and the state should as a result become more fully representative of all local identity groups in society. This blending of the formal and informal aspect of peace and governance is now perceived to be essential for a sustainable form of peace.

Given the widespread nature of these peace formation phenomena in many post-conflict environments around the world, and the interest of governments and civil society actors to turn informal local peace committees into

state institutions, as seen in places such as Kenya, Ghana, Nepal and Timor Leste, it may well be that it represents a phenomena of convergence between the western, rational-legal state, and more local and socio historical processes of peacemaking.

These dynamics endorse the common goal of the state and civil society actors in creating a system to ensure peace as the *raison d'être* of the state and the political process. On the one hand it represents the translation of local aspirations for peace, security, development and identity into the state, while on the other it represents the translation of the state into a more localised polity, less formal, less rational-legal, and more contextual. This recent phenomena might indicate the emergence of a post-liberal peace depending on local forms of peace praxis as well as international capacity and enablement. The emergence of a hybrid form of peace such as this is a difficult but necessary part of any new agenda for peace. Clearly there are many more questions to be asked and answered about these processes, not least how they may be bridged and enabled, without being instrumentalised. The recent turn to a more reflective understanding of the relationship between international intervention and the local, the opening up of critical agency, and the recognition of the hybridity of any state or peace, has offered a significant advancement on older, monolithic narratives of peace, security, and the state.

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Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, Oxford University Press, 2007, p.5. p.121.

Robert Chambers, *Rural Development: Putting the last first*, London: Longman, 1983, p.84.

### Notes:

[1] UNESCO, Women and Peace in Africa, UNESCO, 2003.

[2] For an analysis and list of these and other examples, see Paul Van Tongeren, "Overview on Infrastructures for Peace", 2011, [www.parliamentariansforconflictprevention.net](http://www.parliamentariansforconflictprevention.net). In a personal interview he mentioned at least 30 cases. *Personal Interview*, June, 2012.

[3] P Johnson, "Local vs. National Peacebuilding: The Richness of Somali Peacemaking", [www.prio.no/peaceethics/PeacE-Discussions](http://www.prio.no/peaceethics/PeacE-Discussions), 2010.

[4] SIDA, "Civil Society and Democracy in Cambodia. Changing roles and trends", *The Fifth Report of the Sida Advisory Team on Democratic Governance*, [www.pnyx.se/docs/Cambodial.pdf](http://www.pnyx.se/docs/Cambodial.pdf), 2003.

[5] For a detailed discussion of this concept see Oliver P Richmond, "Eirenism and a Post-Liberal Peace", *Review of International Studies*, Vol.35, No 3, 2009. Oliver P Richmond, *A Post-Liberal Peace*, Routledge 2011.

## P@x Observatory

### Resources on Peace, Power and Empowerment

- Alsop, Ruth (ed.) (2004). *Power, Rights, and Poverty: Concepts and Connections. A Working Meeting Sponsored by DFID and the World Bank*. DFID, The World Bank.
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## Peace Builders

### Poverty Net: Empowerment

<http://go.worldbank.org/S9B3DNEZ00>

This is the World Bank gateway on empowerment. It is part of the broader Poverty Net and provides resources access to the main resources published by the World Bank on the matter, as well as the areas in which the Bank operates regarding empowerment promotion.

### United Nations Social Development Network: Empowerment

<http://unsdn.org/?cat=96>

This website offers a series of posts of projects and stories related to empowerment promotion. It is part of the United Nations Social Development Network web portal, which provides a “global platform for sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices in social development from around the globe”, following the aims of the World Summit for Social Development and the World Summit on the Information Society.

### The g7+

<http://www.g7plus.org/>

The g7+ is a response to externally-driven models to conflict response. They propose a “country-owned and country-led global mechanism to monitor, report and draw attention to the unique challenges faced by fragile states” and are willing to act in coordination to external actors in order to resolve their ongoing problems. The website presents several documents and reports related to the group and its member countries.

**Peace Earth**

<http://www.peaceearth.org/>

Peace Earth is an NGO founded by actor Forest Whitaker and which “is dedicated to peace- building and community empowerment in areas of conflict everywhere.” The website provides several media resources, discussing themes as broad as the drought in the Horn of Africa as well as cyber war. It also offers some educational tools and peace talks with peace activists and intellectuals.

**Pathways of women’s empowerment**

<http://www.pathwaysofempowerment.org/index.html>

This is an international and communication program that has both a practitioner as well as an academic feature. The website offers several publications on the topic as well as resources of different nature, such as news, movies, and events. Pathways of Women's Empowerment was funded by UKAid from the Department for International Development from 2006-2011. The programme is now supported by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). They have projects worldwide.



## TRANSLATING EMPOWERMENT

There are many subtle ways in which translation influences power<sup>1</sup>, some of which are quite obvious while others may be less apparent. In the following examples taken from contexts of violent conflict, I describe how translation technology claiming to facilitate communication, is sustaining a power imbalance. The disempowerment delivered by the inherent hierarchy of the technological medium treads a familiar neo-colonial path. As part of peace-conflict research, this aims to look at who is controlling the narrative.

In December 2011, Al Jazeera English launched an SMS polling initiative with Ushahidi, a crowdsourcing platform, designed to give a voice to the people of Somali and share a picture of how current violence is impacting everyday lives (Al Jazeera English, 2011). A call for translators in the diaspora, particularly Somali student groups, was issued online, and phones were distributed on the ground throughout Somalia so multiple users could participate. These volunteers translated the SMSs and categorized the content as either political, social, or economic. The results were color-coded and aggregated on a map. The stated goal of the project was to give a voice to the Somalia people, but the Somalis who participated had no say in how their voices were categorized or depicted on the map.

The SMS poll asked an open question: "How has the Somalia conflict affected your life?" (Al Jazeera English, 2012).

Even though the purpose was to capture the voices of the Somalis, it was the translators' choices and the format of the visualization tool communicating we were seeing in the answers. In one response example, "The Bosaso Market fire has affected me. It happened on Saturday" (Anonymous, 2011), the response was categorized as 'social.' Why didn't the fact that violence happened in a market, an economic center, denote 'economic' categorization? There was no guidance for maintaining consistency among the translators, nor any indication of how the information would be used later. It was these categories chosen by the translators, represented as bright colorful circles on the map, which were speaking to the

lost through a crowdsourcing application which was designed with a language barrier. They could not suggest another category that better suited the intentions of their responses. The danger is that these categories become the framework for aid donations and policy endeavors; the application frames the discussion rather than the words of the Somalis. The simplistic categories become the point of departure for aid agencies and policy-makers to understand and become involved with translated material.

An 8 December 2011 comment on the Ushahidi blog described in compelling terms how language and control over information flow impact the power balance during a conflict:

*"A----, My friend received the message from you on his phone. The question says "tell us how is conflict affecting your life" and "include your name of location". You did not tell him that his name will be told to the world. People in Somalia understand that sms is between just two people. Many people do not even understand the internet. The warlords have money and many contacts. They understand the internet. They will look at this and they will look at who is complaining. Can you protect them? I think this project is not for the people of Somalia. It is for the media like Al Jazeera and Ushahidi. You are not from here. You are not helping. It is better that you stay out."*  
[4]

Ushahidi director Patrick Meier, responded to the comment:

*"Dear A----, I completely share your concern and already mentioned this exact issue to Al Jazeera a few hours ago. I'm sure they'll fix the issue as soon as they get my message. Note that the question that was sent out does \*not\* request people to share their names, only the name of their general location. Al Jazeera is careful to map the general location and \*not\* the exact location. Finally, Al Jazeera has full editorial control over this project, not Ushahidi."* (Meier P., 2011).

As of 14 January 2012, there were still names featured on the Al Jazeera English website.

Another example is the new project Mali Speaks, which is underway asking: "Do you think France

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should have intervened in northern Mali? And why? Thanks for responding with your city and first name.” (Al Jazeera English, 2013).

The *Al Jazeera* website reports that the responses, translated into English and grouped into five pro-intervention categories based on tone, are overwhelmingly favourable (96%) to the French military intervention. The categories are: stability, security, necessity, gratitude and anti-terrorism. Just 4% of responses were anti-intervention (*Ibidem*).

The gratitude category is particularly tricky. Are translators picking up on notes of gratitude to the forum, *Al Jazeera*, the possibility of a Western audience, or something genuinely related to the situation? In my experience as a translator, respondents are polite and positive in countries with little chance of free expression. Their responses should be measured against the context. Previous *Al Jazeera* projects similar to this one have encountered problems in which the respondents were concerned about retaliation for their comments, so perhaps the high positive response is related to perceived power relations on the ground.

Here are two examples pulled from the website which illustrate the misleading nature of the visualization and problematic translation/categorization method.

*“Evidently France had to intervene in the north of Mali since the Islamists were progressing so rapidly and our soldiers lacked the means and often the motivation—whereas the enemy is supported by invisible hands.” (Ibidem).*

This was categorized as ‘anti-terrorism’ demonstrating an (un)conscious equivalency between Islamists and terrorists.

*“The Malian army doesn’t have enough force to confront the groups here.” (Ibidem).*

Categorized as a security issue, this statement is substantively similar to the first, except for the mention of Islamists. Has the evidence two categories been exaggerated or skewed?

While *Al Jazeera* is a news organization, it plays an important role in informing electorates who can put political pressure governments involved in the conflict such as France and the U.S. Furthermore, this same type of technology

is being used on the ground in order to gather information in crisis situations at the governmental and UN levels (The Standby Task Force Admin, 2011). Decisions and policies developed from the translated information are less connected to ‘real voices’ than decision-makers at the final end of the information chain believe. Negotiating the language/power dynamic so that Malians are directing the information flow about the future of their country should be the goal rather than perpetual simplification into the client/victim that is waiting to be given a voice (Mavhunga, 2012).

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## **“DAÍ CARA, PÁRA, PENSA UM POUCO”: COMMUNITY MEDIATION AS NON-DOMINATING POWER IN THE URBAN PERIPHERY – INTERVIEW WITH A COMMUNITY MEDIATOR**

Power is no stranger to *organic community mediators* whose interventions aim to prevent violence and generate transformative experiences for youth. I asked Luisa,<sup>1</sup> a *community mediator* from south Brazil, about how she understands power at work in the context of intimate engagements with traffickers who often perpetrate violent behaviors. Luisa targets geographic and social spaces wherein most organizations and professionals external to periphery communities cannot or will not go, while her violence intervention efforts run counter-intuitive to the dominant logic of observed suppression strategies (Soares, et. al., 2005, Alves & Evanson, 2011). Micro-level reflections reveal the mechanics of Luisa's *mediative capacity*<sup>1</sup> (Lederach, 2002), which I argue align on an individual level with what Pearce (2007) calls *non-dominating power exercised by civil society groups* to interrupt multiple manifestations of violence.

**J: I wanted to ask you about your interventions in terms of the violence that you experience in the community ...**

**L:** *Different moments yes, fighting, retaliation, because that's the way of young people in Brazil, retaliation ... attacking somebody because some guy said something offensive, the first will retaliate just to save face.*

**J: What is the role of the organic mediator in these cases of violence?**

**L:** *I got into this because I wanted to take [kids] out of drug trafficking, away from violence and trafficking. I saw many teens dying for nothing. So what was bothering me was knowing that they do not have any way out and their only way out would be to die, that's what was happening. Then I started talking to them ... I started to create a bond of trust with them ... They have a code amongst them, the code of trust ... So if they give you their word, their word will be valid and your word has to be good for them too, and it's like that.*

**J: If you hear retaliation will happen, do you interfere?**

**L:** *What we have to do is go to the head dealer, you know, come to terms with them, you know [...] And show him that there is a different vision and another conversation in order to interfere in the retaliation... because ... it's a bond of trust ... They know I [...] I will prevent to the extent possible that they suffer the consequences of their actions. <sup>1</sup> [...] We try to show them that they are citizens ... we show them that they have rights, they have the right to live, to move ... provided that [they have] the will [...] to continue with us<sup>1</sup>... Today the community is working more with them because there was actually a time when traffickers [were isolated] ... and not today ... Today we can bring them to us ...*

**J: You can't talk about traffic without talking about power. What's the difference in terms of intervention between the power you exert and that which the police exert?**

**L:** *The difference is that we want to solve their problem in the best way. And the police have a stronger power, a power to go in, beat them, arrest them, etc. I see many policemen who are corrupt. Our role is the following: we don't use money from trafficking, period. The police do. We want to show [traffickers] that there are people out here who make money that is not illegal, it may be little, but he'll be able to live well [...]. And [...] there are very honest cops, but there are corrupt ones, right? [...] They beat them, take drugs, take money, you know? And they'll hold them just to get their money. They [traffickers] see that we do not need the money, we're not helping them because of material interests [...].*

**J: When you talk to the traffickers, what do you talk about?**

**L:** *We try to detour the conversation. We try to show them that drugs aren't everything. Same with a prisoner – he's imprisoned! What's the conversation he's gonna have in prison? They*

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are begging for people go talk to them, to give news about the outside world. It's the same for those who live in drug trafficking – dealing with guns, drugs, etc.. In fact you have to show that out here there is another kind of life for them. I've sat by their side... when they sell. But the conversation [I have] with them is completely different. They talk to me about mistakes they have no courage to talk to their friends about...

**J: Do you think these conversations can change their participation, and even some violent behavior?**

**L:** *It doooooes! It doooooes! My God ... just sitting there... many of them come with me and confess things ... [I say] You think it's worth leaving his mother crying? The guy is young still has much to learn ... Smack'm around a bit, a few taps, but don't kill ... Stop, think a bit ... don't leave him critical. [...] Stop and think, give'm another chance ... If you want I can go talk to him, tell him he's on thin ice, that he's screwing up ... think a little if he's worth killing, and they would go but the wouldn't kill him.*

**J: But which power is more powerful, Luisa?**

**L:** *Well, it's different from their perspective ... he's just gonna go kill... His friends will say if you don't kill him, you're a punk! It's different when someone else says - look, man, he's not worth it, stop and think, if you get another prison sentence, is it worth it? That mother won't cry, she won't suffer ... I think the [power of] conversation ... to change their thinking... and flip the script, right? That power, them pressuring ... you say, fine, I'll go, I'll kill him, if I were you I'd kill him [...] that's when you gotta flip the script, you know? And that gets results... It avoids a number of conflicts between them ... Sometimes they are even confused about wanting to do it, they're undecided ... [...] Then they get closer to me - Luisa, you think I can get a job to get out of trafficking? They trust me. We've got three big ones out. Today even the biggest dealer completed university entrance exams [in December 2012] and wants to study to be a social worker.*

Luisa's use of connective capital fosters dialogue with a potentially transformative outcome; one in which the normative reproduction of violent actions is effectively challenged. While avoiding a naive labeling of such interventions as part and parcel to a pacification project (see Cardoso & Roque, 2010 and Francis, 2010), further research into these micro-interventions within the context of the "newest wars" in Brazil (Moura, 2010) is called for to illuminate the relationship between non-dominating forms of power and the deconstruction of socio-structural violence in the urban periphery.

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## EMPOWERMENT PROMOTION AND ITS LIMITATIONS, AN EXAMPLE OF MOZAMBIQUE

One of the main challenges in peacebuilding and development is to assure that the policies implemented will be sustainable in time and seen as legitimate in the eyes of local and international counterparts. The term 'empowerment' captures precisely these concerns, which are reflected in the increasing use of the term by practitioners of peace and development (Moore, 2001; Cornwall & Brock, 2005; Ramsbotham et al., 2007; Donais, 2009).

As fashionable as it is, however, the notion of empowerment is often contradictory, as it is based on the idea of the 'local' owing and embracing a specific policy, which is often designed somewhere else and/or based on premises that are borrowed from other social contexts. At the same time, these assumptions are so globally accepted that even when programs are nationally or locally designed, they may fall into the same trap of reproducing exogenous models that are hardly adaptable locally (Cleaver, 2001).

One example where this is visible is the case of a credit scheme implemented in Mozambique. Since 2007, the government decided to provide a yearly budget to each of the 128 rural districts in the country to be used as credit concession to local small entrepreneurs. The empowering effect of the scheme, a policy popularly known as the '7 million', would result not only from the direct effect of the credit (increasing food production and job creation) but also from the way the credit is allocated. As stated, the decision of who should get the credit lies in the hands of the local consultative councils, a body formed by local influential people that best represent the local interest. These councils have regular meetings to discuss local development and act as connectors between the communities and the district authority.

If we look at the '7 million' empowering rationale, it is based on a series of assumptions that are embedded in the liberal democratic state model, such as the existence of freedom of expression, an active civil society which engages in participatory practices, the legitimacy of representativeness, and a reasonable degree of distribution of political power across different layers of society. This is ultimately what justifies the *participatory* emphasis of most empowerment policies, which reinforce the *procedural* aspect of empowerment, assuming that specific forms of operation will lead to a specific kind of result.

In a two-months visit in the northern district of Angoche, I had the chance to speak to people in several communities<sup>1</sup> and their statements presented a picture much more complex and detached from the above rationale. First, the way the councils were constituted (first in 2006 and later in 2011) cast several doubts about its actual representativeness. In spite of efforts to make the process more transparent and participative in 2011, there is strong evidence to suggest that many of the candidates to the body were actually pre-chosen by local leaders, so when people had the chance to choose their representatives they did so within a group of pre-chosen individuals. Whether this alone should not be a problem (if the local leader is trusted by the community to legitimately represent their interests), what is most impressive is that many people in the communities reported *not* being aware or not taking part of the process of selection of these members. So whereas it is possible to say that there was a 'voting' procedure locally, it is dubious that this naturally translates into inclusive representativeness of the local constituencies.



Focus group with the community, Angoche district, June 2013

Another important aspect relates to the existence of strong power dynamics within the councils themselves. If technically members have equal power to speak and decide, in practice some are clearly disadvantaged because of factors such as illiteracy (which hinders their capacity to efficiently express their views), gender (at least 30% of the members

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have to be women, however for cultural reasons they tend to speak less when in a group of men), as well as the fixed position inside the group (for instance, the two members who sit next to the president are seen as more powerful than the rest of the group and their points of view seem to be less contested than other members').

A further procedural aspect refers to the role of the councils in connecting the community with the district government. Overall, it was impressive the amount of people in the villages who showed no proper knowledge of the councils (neither their members, nor their actual functions). Further, very often the councils were primordially linked with the role of exhorting the beneficiaries to give back the money borrowed to government. In this regard they were seeing as performing a government role, instead of a civil society one.

Finally, pervading all this is the problems of corruption. Most beneficiaries interviewed, and many who applied for the loan but did not obtain it, reported having to pay some kind of bribery, either to the councils, or (and often also) to the lower echelons of the local administration. This reflects a power dynamic that pervades the state more generally and that is locally reproduced to the extent that bribery is taken for granted when ordinary people talk about the '7 million'.

The problems above ultimately affect the effectiveness of the '7 million'. From the point of view of the communities, the main question is who is being empowered and whether this empowerment has a collective benefit at the end of the day. From the individual point of view of the beneficiaries, it is further the case to assess the extent to which corruption affect the choice of those who will get the loan and the capacity of the beneficiary to fully invest in its business in order to generate the necessary income to pay back the loan.

When it comes to empowerment, the question remains: is it possible to efficiently *adapt* general models of empowerment promotion locally? Radical views would argue that perhaps the problem is the very use of the words 'empowerment' and its ambitious promises which deviates us from the bigger picture where major power dynamics operate. But another way to see

it is as an opportunity to look deeper into the micro level and its interactions with the other levels where policies operate. Assessing empowerment *along* with these power dynamics would ultimately emancipate the concept and reinforce its analytical use.

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## THE TWO FACES OF HUGO CHÁVEZ AND THE LEGACY OF THE XXI CENTURY SOCIALISM IN LATIN AMERICA

Hugo Chávez Frías, one of the first great personalities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, was a singular politician. An unusual character, eccentric and caricatured, both worshiped and hated by many, he could have been brought to life in the magical realism of a García Márquez or Jorge Amado's novel.

Chavez had two faces. In a world tending to look at reality in black and white, few could or wanted to consider him in his fullness and complexity. Chávez had a sparkling and popular side as well as a "dark side". There are the two sides of the coin in the 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism of Chávez.

On the one hand, 30 years after Salvador Allende, he showed that it was possible to build a more democratic and peaceful way for socialism. He left a more egalitarian Venezuela, a country where illiteracy was eradicated, poverty substantially reduced and life conditions of the social lowest levels improved – facts that gave him a tremendous popularity and victory over eight elections. On the other hand, his populist and (semi) **authoritarian** style of government, combined with his inflamed and Marxist speech gained him countless enemies and sprouted an aversion and animosity of Venezuelan and Latin America large sections. Besides, like Lenin once did, he threw an anathema over socialism by putting into practice an authoritarian version and conception of this ideology, where the personality cult was stimulated and both individual rights and freedom of expression were if not quite abolished, surely mitigated.

His stamped mark and impact on a regional level were quite meaningful. After his arrival to power in Venezuela, a pink wave swept across Latin America like neo-liberalism did a decade before. From Brasília to Managua, from La Paz to Buenos Aires, from Quito to Montevideo, Chávez and his 21<sup>st</sup> Socialism inheritors set down a different form of government and claimed autonomy from the USA from within their own "backyard".

And now "what's next," Latin America? What does future hold for a "pink" continent without its red guiding light?

The first victim of his absence might ironically be its neighbor, Colombia, a country politically located on the opposite side of Chávez policies.

With Chávez passing, the Peace process this country is currently undergoing loses an important player. Although the negotiations future involving a five-decade armed conflict don't naturally rely on Chavez sole presence, an extraordinary speaker and mediator is now missing, one with dialogue ability and the power to influence the FARC, and one that could contribute to persuade this guerrilla that power can be reached and socialism can be built without weapons, through electoral process. No other actor can, regionally, perform, to a short-term, this role and Maduro is not matured enough to assume that part.

To a regional level, Hugo Chávez legacy will take time to disappear. The "pink wave" holds its strength in the continent. Its icon may have disappeared, as well as its symbol and main impeller, but these processes will go on. The sons of Chávez will survive their father and the regional integration organizations inspired by his leadership, like UNASUR and CELAC, will follow its course.

In Venezuela, Maduro has run for elections on the deceased president's back, thus appointing a ghost for the Miraflores Palace. In Latin America, after Bolívar, Fidel Castro e Péron, yet another leader will be politically embalmed. As the old monarchic saying goes, "Chávez died. Long live Chávez!"

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## THE MIDDLE EMPIRE IN MIDDLE OF TWO EMPIRES: THE THIRD NUCLEAR TEST BY NORTH KOREA

The third nuclear test conducted by North Korea in February 2013 may not have yielded any residual effect in the surrounding countries - China, Japan and South Korea, leaving doubts regarding the composition of the nuclear explosion. However, it ideologically disturbed one of its major allies, with a government recently overhauled. The recently elected Xi Jinping has been distinguished by its patriotic positions, reflected in persistent resurrect war games with Japan around the issues of sovereignty of the islands Senkako / Diaoyu. However, rather than look to the East Sea of China, Xi Jinping seems more determined to engage in bilateral relations with the United States than the previous President Hu Jintao, accused of "willful blindness" by Washington after the second North Korea nuclear test in 2009.

There are strong possibilities that a program of ballistic missile defense from USA is developing faster because of the circumstances in Northeast Asia on behalf of Japan and other allies in the region. China has long functioned as a buffer against an intrusion of the United States in the Korean peninsula. It has provided North Korea with oil, food and allowed private investment in the country while tolerating the manufacture of nuclear weapons. However, this kind of threatening positions in relation to ballistic missiles in Northeast Asia by the U.S. government may force China to pressure Pyongyang. To perform this pressure, China has at its disposal a range of possibilities, such as stopping the infusion of oil or cut with investments that lead to North Korea to its survival as a state. Xi Jinping said on a visit to the United States during last year wanting to "A new kind of relationship between the two great powers."

China has thus more likely to support tougher sanctions at the United Nations, accompanied by severe reprimands from Beijing against their stubborn ally in Pyongyang. One of the biggest fears of Beijing has been a collapse of North Korea resulting in unification with South Korea, U.S. ally. However, a dialogue between China and the United States to address the issue of North Korea would certainly enhance strategic mutual trust between the two countries. The Chinese military strategy is not in a position to lose a valuable ally, regardless of their unpredictable behavior.

This is due to the fact that the People's Liberation Army and the International Liaison Department of the Communist Party's political leaders and its traditionalists have strategic control regarding the foreign policies of the PRC.

The Chinese public opinion in online platforms like Sina Weibo (microblogging system, Chinese clone of twitter) is a complete disregard for policy support to North Korea. In addition, documents released by Wikileaks in 2010, reveal that there is a growing frustration in relation to North Korea between party members and some desire to abandon the cumbersome ally. Hu Xijin, editor of "state Global Times" commented on his Weibo profile that "North Korea is testing an artificially earthquake created by man, it is as if to say, a nuclear test. North Korea is in a wrong way and their people will pay for the price of their mistakes. Legitimacy of North Korea should be reconsidered." A simple nuclear test in commemoration of the birthday of Kim Jong-il, father of the current leader, Kim Jong-un, might not be enough motivation for a shift in relation to absolute affinities maintained between the PRC and North Korea.

However, for more than ten years nobody heard someone in the Chinese Communist party giving an opinion about Pyongyang's nuclear tests. We may be witnessing a gradual change in strategy between the big players China, North Korea and United States.

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## PEACE AS WAR: LESS PACIFICATION, MORE PEACEBUILDING

At the end of last year, four years since the first Pacifying Police Unit (PPU) was installed were completed. This police aimed at dealing with a major problem in Rio de Janeiro - its public safety. Although there are elements to be celebrated, the UPPs are still far from solving the main problems of the most deprived communities of the state.

The limitations of the PPU stems mainly from the fact that they envisage peace departing from an observation of reality that rests, not on peace itself, as it would be expected, but on a war mentality. The name of the policy in question is already elucidative – Pacifying Police Unit. Contrary to what it may seem, pacification is far from peace. This statement may at first seem a mere matter of semantics. However, it highlights the core thought of the current political elite in power in Rio de Janeiro towards the population with less state resources.

Pacification only goes together with peace if we frame the question from a war point of view. After all, we must remember that peace is essentially a military term. Therefore, to understand peace as pacification demonstrates an extraordinarily militarized understanding of peace concerning PPU, which is already vicious in its origin. It is vicious because it tends to favor some instruments over others to deal with the issue. No wonder that much of the narrative with respect to UPPs revolves around words such as "war", "order", "territory", "occupation", "intelligence", "strategy", among others. Not surprisingly, the main instruments allocated towards this issue were, and still are, essentially warlike and military devices.

Even visually, which is certainly not a least dimension, to install a PPU resembles a lot to a war maneuver. We just need to recall, for example, the "operation" of the Complexo do Alemão. Therefore, it is not innocent the fact that PPU, according to the Government of Rio de Janeiro, is an important "weapon" when it comes to security policy.

This obviously does not mean that there are no positive elements. The fact that a considerable part of the population is out of the control of drug traffickers and criminals, and all the consequences that arise from it, it is extremely valuable. More than that - the simple fact that there are fewer deaths in the communities in question is indeed something commendable.

However, despite the importance of all that, this is itself a limited vision of peace. Besides the absence of visible violence in these communities, when we talk about peace building, and not of pacification, we must also talk about the necessity of overcoming invisible violence, which is not less disturbing - social structures, and economic policies that have been marginalizing for long time such communities.

These structures are far from being even touched by PPU. As a matter of fact, the Security Secretary Jose Mariano Beltrame is the first to assert that the PPU are not enough. Accordingly, in Rio de Janeiro a social PPU, to which I wish great success, has started to be drawn.

However, UPP Social is in itself, a priori, a contradiction. A pacification can not have a social nature. Unless, of course, what is sought is not the actual transformation of people's lives and therefore the inclusion of these but rather merely calming the areas of the state understood as turbulent. A social policy starting from a logic of pacification can only aim the mere maintenance of order in such places. Again, an understanding of the issue at the outset vicious.

Therefore, changing this reality also involves reframing the question. Consequently, those men and women who want a real social integration of poor populations must also act in the dispute involving the narratives of such policies. These disputes are very little abstract matters. After all, the way an issue is framed is critical in shaping policies and practices aimed at dealing with it. In this sense, from the point of view of peace, and not war, it is crystal clear that the Rio de Janeiro have definitely less peace and more peace building.

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## THE SPANISH CRISIS AND THE RADICALIZATION OF CATALAN NATIONALISM

Spain is one of the countries in which the consequences of the economic and financial crisis of the euro zone have been more violent. Despite not being under direct intervention of the European Financial Stability Fund (except banking) mechanisms, the current situation is particularly complex to the Spanish State. Within this context, four aspects particularly illustrative of the difficulties that are being experienced in the country should be highlighted:

### 1. Rapid decline in the European context -

Spain had no time to enjoy the status that seemed to have acquired in late 1990 as European power. Until the beginning of 2008, it was taken as an example, with an economy that grew consistently above the EU average since 1996. The behaviour of public accountants was faultless, with consecutive budget surpluses between 2004 and 2007. The number of unemployed also decreased at a remarkable pace, dropping down to 8.3% in 2007.[1]

**2. Property bubble** - The economic strength of 1996-2007 was based mainly on a deregulated real estate sector and encouraged by the autonomous communities and municipalities. House building, developed by private companies, was encouraged and authorized by public local and regional authorities and financed by *cajas de ahorros*, public banks owned by the autonomous communities and the regional deputations. When the demand for real estate began to decline, bankruptcy of enterprises and construction companies were followed by the realization that public banking was totally undercapitalised due to investments without any return.

**3. Territorial decentralization** - The crisis also made clear that the highly decentralization of the state, which had started with the process of democratization in late 1970s, hinders the democratic control of public accounts. The control over 50% of public spending, including health and much of the non-university education, are in the hands of the 17 autonomic governments, controlled by 17 regional parliaments.

**4. Asymmetries** - Spain is a country of territorial inequalities, with some poor autonomous communities, such as Extremadura or Castilla La Mancha, and other rich and prosperous (even taking into account European standards) as the Basque Country, Navarre and the Community of Madrid.

In the case of Catalonia, the combination of the four set out factors assumes characteristics especially problematic due to the national and cultural identity of the region. While the economy recorded positive growth rates and the state had financial margin to expand social spending, it was possible for the central government to negotiate and manage balanced financial transfers for Catalan autonomy. It is necessary to take into account that this autonomous community, in absolute terms, is the largest contributor to the Spanish gross domestic product and that part of the wealth generated in Catalonia is transferred to other regions

Unlike the radical Basque nationalism, the Catalan nationalism, both in its moderate and radical versions, never showed prone to violent action. Over more than three decades, advocates of political materialization of Catalan national identity made their autonomic institutions (Generalitat) their own brand image, and worked on its development and consolidation. However, under the new restrictive scenario, nationalist aspirations in Catalonia began to be felt much more strongly.

The crisis has encouraged a shift from Catalan nationalist discourse towards a greater demand for fiscal autonomy. In Spain, with the exception of the Basque Country and Navarra, most revenues are collected by the central government, which redistribute them among the various regions. Catalan nationalists now mention a deficit of almost 10% between the amount charged in the territory and the one that is repaid by the centre. The refusal of Madrid to negotiate this scenario encouraged the dialectic of secession with great force.

The central government at this time has not much room to negotiate a new funding model and this refusal eventually feed the growing demands of Catalonia. The moderate nationalist coalition,

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Convergència i Unió, which led the regional government, insists on proposing a referendum on the sovereignty of Catalonia and appoint committees to prepare plans for the transition to independence. The tension is growing. So far, Madrid has managed to avoid a bailout extended to its economy, limiting European intervention into banking. However, the consequences of a large-scale loan may be unpredictable not only from a political and social point of view, but also concerning the own territorial integrity of the State

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**Notes:**

[1] Source: *Instituto Nacional de Estadística*, <http://www.ine.es/>.

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## PSG's Attic

### PublicationsPS

**Barrinha, André** (2013), "Pressing the Reset Button in Euro-Mediterranean Security Relations", *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 9 (1), pp. 203-214.

**Freire, Maria Raquel**, "A política russa para a Ásia-Pacífico: as relações Rússia-Japão", *Nação e Defesa*, 134, março 2013.

**Freire, Maria Raquel** "Challenges and opportunities at the EU's vicinity: assessing policies and practices", in Teresa Cierco Gomes (org.), *The European Union and Its Immediate Neighbourhood*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013.

**Simão, Licínia** (2013) "Coming of age: dilemmas for the EU's foreign policy in the wider Europe", in Cierco, Teresa (ed.) *The European Union neighborhood*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 99-121.

**Simão, Licínia** (2013) "Non-state actors and South Caucasus security: the role of NGOs, transnational corporations and religious organizations", *NOREF Policy Briefs*, 19 March.



**MARCH**

**Daniela Nascimento** participated in the final conference of the Cost Action: "Achievements | Failures | Perspectives: EU's Role in Multilateral Crisis Management", Vienna, 22 March 2013.

**Katia Cardoso** presented the communication "**O lado masculino do género: masculinidades e (não)violências**", GenderWorkshop, CES, 23 March 2013.

**Maria Raquel Freire** and Maria Grazia Galantino presented the communication "**CSDP – A Critical Appraisal. The Road so Far**", International Conference Achievements | Failures | Perspectives. EU's Role in Multilateral Crisis Management. Final Action Conference, COST – European Cooperation in Science and Technology in co-operation with the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management/NDA and the Austrian Institute for International Affairs. Austrian National Defence Academy, Vienna, Austria, 21 March 2013.

**Maria Raquel Freire** lectured "**A política externa da nova Rússia: um processo dinâmico em contexto de mudança**", Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, New University Lisbon, 15 March 2013.

**Maria Raquel Freire** lectured "**A Rússia e a sua área de vizinhança: uma política externa neorevisionista?**", Faculty of Humanities, University of Oporto, 8 March 2013.

**APRIL**

**André Barrinha** presented the communication "The future ain't what it used to be': the Copenhagen School and the ethical challenge of post-modern security", ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 03 to 06 April 2013

**Daniela Nascimento** presented the communication "**One step forward, two steps back?: humanitarian challenges and dilemmas in crisis settings**", ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 03 to 06 April 2013

**Daniela Nascimento, Paula Duarte Lopes** and **Maria Raquel Freire** presented the communication "**More than words? The role of the African Union in the face of regional complex humanitarian and political emergencies**", ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 03 to 06 April 2013

**Licinia Simão** and Vanda Dias presented the communication "Sociological securitisation: understanding how Russia and Turkey influence EU security policies in the Wider Black Sea Area", ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 03 to 06 April 2013

**Maria Raquel Freire** presented the communication “**Russian Ambivalence towards the ‘Arab Spring’: Pragmatic Caution or Reactive Policy?**”, ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 03 to 06 April 2013.

**Teresa Cravo** presented the communication “**Reconstrução Social após os Conflitos**”, Masters in Peace and War in New International, Lisbon Autonomous University, 15 April 2013

**Katia Cardoso** presented the communication “**Novos Desafios das Migrações Cabo-Verdianas: O caso da Deportação**” at the International Conference «Cabo Verde: Novas Paisagens Humanas do Século XXI”, Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde, Cidade da Praia, Cape Verde, 15 April 2013.

**Katia Cardoso** participated on the book launch of “**Jovens e Trajetórias de Violências. Os casos de Bissau e da Praia**”, Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde, Cidade da Praia, Cape Verde, 16 April 2013

**Teresa Cravo** presented the communication “**A Estratégia da União Europeia para situações de fragilidade: como intervir em Estados frágeis**”, Course in Crises Management, National Defense Institutel, Lisbon, 17 April 2013.

**Teresa Cravo** presented the communication “**Contemporary Trends in Peace and Conflict**”, Course in Human Rights, Ius Gentium, Faculty of Law, University of Coimbra, 20 April 2013

**Teresa Cravo** presented the communication “**From Humanitarian Intervention to Responsibility to Protect**”, Course in Human Rights, Ius Gentium Faculty of Law, University of Coimbra, 20 April 2013

**Sofia José Santos** lectured “**Media e diplomacia: modelos teóricos, debates e desafios**”, Faculty of Economics, University of Coimbra, 22 April 2013.

**Sofia José Santos** lectured “**Manobras mediáticas ou mediaticamente manobráveis? Media e política-externa dos Estados**”, Faculty of Economics, University of Coimbra, 24 April 2013