

Spaces of Peace

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1) Introduction

Whilst peace has often been considered a primarily symbolic concept (cf. Bar-Tal, 2009) it equally has concrete material implications on people's everyday lives (Williams, 2015). It plays out in the multiple spaces in which people live and move (Forde, 2016) and impacts upon social relations as they are constituted in the material realities of urban and rural inhabitants. Drawing on the previous research on peace and spatial transformation we have conducted (Björkdahl & Kappler, 2017), this chapter advances the spatial turn in peace and conflict studies (cf. Soya, 1989; Björkdahl & Buckley-Zistel 2016). It suggests that peace has a spatial component and can thus be read through the prism of space and place. Yet, this does not mean that the relationship between peace and space is a linear, causal one. Instead, we will show in this chapter that a focus on the spatial dimensions of peace requires a relational and contextual reading in order to appreciate the non-linear ways in which peace impacts on spatiality. Intrigued by the everyday spaces and places of peace and conflict in post-conflict landscapes we ask: how do places of conflict transform into spaces of peace? Who are the peacebuilding agents driving such transformation? How can we, as researchers, read the spatial narratives of contested spaces and places?

Our thinking is inspired by three strands of research that can be seen to make up the spatial turn in Peace and Conflict Studies: first, Critical Peace Studies helps us rethink what peace is and for whom and where it takes place. Second, Critical Human Geography helps us focus on the mutual constitution of space and place. Third, we draw on the broad field of research which centres on the notion of 'agency' in order to theorise the latter as situated in the transformation of space and place.

Critical Peace Studies has explored the essentially contested concept of peace. It has come to question the neat distinction between war and peace (Mac Ginty, 2006; Richmond, 2014; Richmond, 2008) as well as the assumed linear development of transitions from war to peace. It has concluded that peace and war often co-exist and that the binary of war and peace has become unsustainable. Furthermore, scholars find that peace means different things to different people in different times and places (Visoka, 2016; Richmond, 2016). Consequently, peace holds multiple understandings and the evolving critical peace research agenda captures peace not in singular but as plural peace(s). It can be built in different places and spaces, as well as at different scales, such as the individual, family, community, the city, the state, the regional and the global. As peace has increasingly been seen as embedded in place and existing on different scales, geographers seem well placed to explore "how peace makes place and how a place makes peace" (Williams, 2015: 2). Critical Peace Studies has therefore opened up for a dialogue with Critical Geography to advance the spatial understandings of peace and to probe where peace takes place.

The analysis of a “bridge that divides” and a “wall that unites” casts light on the benefits that a spatial reading of peace can provide to understand the ways in which spatial infrastructures are lived by the people who use them. Peace is no longer fully determined by the top-down planning of space, but material places are transformed by the communities that use them. It is therefore impossible to label a particular space as contentious or cooperative. Instead, we will show that the role and function of a given social space is subject to the agents and communities surrounding it. The process of space-making (the generation of meanings from a material location) will help explain the agency that emerges by the creators, users and inhabitants of (post-)conflict spaces. Investigating peacebuilding agency through space-making requires reflexive research methods. Thus, we need to rethink the methodologies of peace and conflict research in order to explore where peace develops and to map peacebuilding agency. To do so, we focus on material ‘place’ as this is where people experience peacebuilding and conflict dynamics in their everyday. Secondly, ‘space’ explains where competing ideas of peace circulate. The peacebuilding process and its agency are reflected and manifested in the dynamics at the chosen sites of this chapter, namely the bridge in the city of Mitrovica in northern Kosovo and the peace walls in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

2) Spaces and places of peace: trans-scalar dynamics

In the field of Peace and Conflict Studies, spatial concerns are central, yet they have so far received limited attention. This chapter shows that war-making and peace-making ‘take place’ and that sometimes the legacy of conflict obscures the visible, symbolic and tangible manifestations of peacebuilding. The chapter brings to the fore how social spaces and material places shape, and are shaped, by agonistic processes. Here such social spaces are constituted by and constitutive of material places. They relate to spatial practices that project narratives of peace and conflict onto material places (Low, 1996; Lefebvre, 1991). The physical environment shapes social interactions, governs movement through space and enables or hampers the likelihood of peace being built, while also moulding the manifestations of peace on the ground. In this, the potential for peace is tied to many material places, but not determined by them. Often, mutually incompatible concepts of peace will remain in and among different places and communities.

There have been a number of calls by geographers to pay attention to peace, and the engagement with peace research has expanded and advanced the research agenda of geography. A new agenda for peace in geography is developing (Megoran, 2011) and it has contributed to the conceptualisation of peace across time and space. Specifically, Koopman’s effort to unpack peace by “taking peace into pieces” helped to rethink peace and the research on geographies of peace. This unpacking defines peace as a contested spatial process comprised of practices and actors at multiple scales (McConnell, Megoran & Williams, 2014) and how the notion of everyday peace (Williams, 2015) has helped emplace peace in peoples’ everyday lives. We are particularly inspired by Williams’ (2015) understanding of peace as a political, spatial and relational construction. It is both the product of, and the context through which, the political is assembled and negotiated across scale, articulated through different forms of peace narratives and informed by uneven geographies of power. Rather than upholding the binary view of war and peace, new research points to how the social

construction of post-war spaces can be considered as a war legacy and an embodiment of peacebuilding alike, because these spaces both reflect prevailing peace(s) and produce new peace(s) (Megoran & Dalby, 2018; Björkdahl & Kappler 2017; Björkdahl & Mannergren Selimovic, 2016).

Thinking in terms of space and place also opens up for the possibility that peace can move between different scales, such as the local and the global. Inspired by the concepts of *scale*, *scalar politics* (Swyngedouw, 1997; Dannestam, 2009; Megoran & Dalby, 2018), often applied by geographers and critical scholars, and the notion of *trans-scalarity* (Scholte, 2008) we coin the term *trans-scalar peace* in order to investigate peacebuilding across various spaces and places. The type of scale we are interested in claims that social patterns and processes take place at multiple scales at once and any scalar process can intersect with processes at local, national, regional and global levels. When applying this to peacebuilding, we can rethink peace(s) to grasp how various actors strive to define and possibly change the politics of peace at different scales (Swyngedouw, 1997: 137-142). As such it reveals the contestations between multiple actors trying to shape peacebuilding in different spaces and places, which are not ontologically given. Instead, spatial scales do not rest as fixed platforms for social processes that connect up or down, but are instead the outcome of social activities. This approach offers a means to probe the empirical site in order to establish exactly where peace occurs and also how different actors re-scale peacebuilding. Thus, we are able to envision multiple spaces of peace and ways in which both conflictual patterns and actions seeking to resolve them interact at various scales (Bank and Van Heur, 2007: 596). If peace is not manifested in one place, such as on the bridge or at the wall, peacebuilding actors may try to utilize a trans-scalar approach to peacebuilding, in order to empower peace at a different scale. In that, the interplay between local and global peace actors may produce different peace processes and interpretations at different levels. When adapting a scalar approach to a peacebuilding context, we hope to provide a stepping-stone for further theory-development concerning the local and the global frictional dynamics of peacebuilding. Through the notion of trans-scalar peace, we can thus move beyond the binary opposition of the local as a space of dependence and the global as a space of engagement (cf. Cox, 1998). Instead, this approach allows us to view spaces of peace as situated in trans-scalar networks of agency. Rather than fixed, the function of any material place can be seen as the product of the interplay between actors situated at different points of social hierarchies.

3) Peacebuilding agency

Agency is a buzzword of critical peace and conflict research. In that, research has aimed to provide a fine-grained understanding of agency as socially and politically situated – an understanding that attempts to move beyond the view of agency as resistance to power (Richmond, 2011; Kappler, 2014; Björkdahl & Mannergren Selimovic, 2015). Empirically, the field has been able to provide a contextualized account of agency and revealed how it is expressed through negotiations at different sites and scales. Of particular interest is how peace is reproduced from the margins by agents working under the radar, in the shadow of uneven power-relations, unseen and rarely recognized by the relevant authorities. Such a conceptualization of agency is able to differentiate between various types of situated agents producing peace.

This contribution on space-making and place-making adds to the critical debate about the materialisation of peace and the emplacement of peacebuilding agents. By conceptualising peacebuilding agency in relation to space and place we link expressions of agency to spatial practices and thus contribute to the re-theorisation of agency. In previous work (Björkdahl & Kappler, 2017), we have argued that peacebuilding agency can be read in a process of spatial transformation. Assuming that 'place' denotes a material, physical aspect, the physicality of a site determines the ways in which it is socially used and understood. However, whilst this may often be the case, this is not an automatic, causal phenomenon. Instead, what we sometimes see is that a place with certain preconditions is used in very different ways than what its material infrastructure would suggest. This is where we observe agency: the ways in which a set of actors is able to distort, transform and multiply the ways in which place is socially and symbolically used and, therefore, made a 'space'.

Thus, the approach of this chapter takes place at the intersection of place-making and space-making. The ability to turn space into place, and place into space within a broader process of conflict transformation reveals peacebuilding agency and its role in spurring change. We argue that agency is constituted of, and constituted by, practices of place-making and space-making. This means that, where imaginary ideas of peace are given a physical presence, agency is involved ('place-making'). This also holds true vice versa: where physical places are given new sets of meanings, this is where we can find agency ('space-making'). Spatial transformation that has an impact on the ways in which peace is emplaced and imagined is thus a product of peacebuilding agency. Rethinking agency in this sense means that we are able to move towards an emplaced understanding, shaped by interaction with the ideational and material environment. The empirical illustrations below illustrate the process of space-making and its relationship to trans-scalar peace processes. They demonstrate the emergence of a trans-scalar peace by showing how a multitude of actors are able to mobilise new symbolisms to given physical infrastructures. As a result, our given sites have to be read as situated in non-linear processes of meaning-making and in constant negotiation between different peacebuilding actors operating across scales.

Of course, such processes operate within the wider structural constraints which set the limitations on which repertoires of action are even possible (Megoran & Dalby, 2018). Indeed, particularly critical geopolitics has emphasised the power of top-down spatial governance in its ability to frame and govern particular locales (cf. Kappler, 2018). Yet, within such constraints though, it is crucial to acknowledge the extent to which different sets of actors – ranging from global and national political and economic elites to ordinary citizens – are able to shape and change the meaning and uses of particular places. It is in such processes that we can observe agency as a tool to interfere and produce 'unlikely spatial outcomes'.

4) The bridge that divides and the walls that unite: unlikely peace spaces

Peace has important reference points. We even often think of it in terms of its spatial symbolisms: a bridge, a crossing or a meeting room are common spatial markers of peace. The famous bridge of reconciliation in Mostar, which was bombed during the 1990's war in the Balkans and reconstructed in 2004, is perhaps the most prominent example of such spatial

metaphors. In contrast, walls and checkpoints tend to be associated with conflict and war – often, peacebuilding ambitions aim to remove such barriers in order to prevent further spatial division of society. Such have been questions around the future of the buffer zone in Cyprus, South Africa’s gated communities or the inter-entity boundary within Bosnia-Herzegovina. A range of local, national and international actors are reflecting on the ways in which the spatial outlook of a (post-)conflict landscape impacts on the quality of peace. Will a bridge help bring communities back together? Will a buffer zone be necessary to keep combatants apart? Will a border settle a complex conflict over land?

Yet, we find it to be too simplistic to equate the physical outset of a place with its symbolic and social functions (space). Instead, we investigate two case studies to show that the transformation of a place into space, i.e. the creation of a socially significant meaning, is product of peacebuilding agency.¹ It is the social structures and agents in any given context who establish the meanings and functions of places in a wider context. In that, they are part of an ongoing process of transformation during the course of which spaces of peace are (re-)created and (re-)purposed.

a) Dividing the Bridge and Bridging the Divide in Mitrovica

The legacy of the Kosovo war divides Kosovo-Albanians from Kosovo-Serbs and has created a geography of fear. In this post-conflict landscape, the Ibar River has become the demarcation line to the Serbian North-side of the city of Mitrovica, and the Albanian South-side. Since 1999 the Main Bridge over the river and its barricades have been the centre of contestation. To prevent Kosovo Albanians from crossing, the ethno-nationalists among the Kosovo Serbs in Mitrovica North built a barricade made of stone and sand on the Main Bridge. It is a material manifestation symbolising the reluctance of the Kosovo Serbs to become part of the emerging state of Kosovo. During the years 1999-2002, bridge watchers guarded the bridge and monitored crossings, sitting on rooftops and in cafés near the riverbank, controlling the space and discouraging people from making interethnic contact (Clark, 2014). In recent years, the bridge has been watched around-the-clock by the men of the Kosovo-Serbian Civil Protection Force. As the barricades are removed, new ones are put in place in response to political tensions and insecurities felt by the Kosovo Serbs (Balkan Insight, 2014; OSCE official, authors’ interview, Mitrovica, 2016). For most inhabitants of Mitrovica North, keeping the bridge closed for traffic is key to their sense of security.

For several years, the Kosovo Force (KFOR) reproduced the divisions of the city by putting barbed wire and vehicles on the bridge in an effort to prevent inter-ethnic clashes. A stillborn KFOR project set out to fortify the bridge to keep the two communities apart (Lemay-Hébert, 2012: 36). As part of confidence-building measures, KFOR removed the two-metres-high sandbag barricades, barbed wire and armoured vehicles from the bridge in order to return the city to normal life (New Europe, 2005). When Kosovo Police and KFOR troops dismantled barricades, Kosovo Serbs came out to protest and the barricades were quickly rebuilt. As a consequence, the Main Bridge remains guarded by Italian Carabinieri accompanied by a

¹ The two cases studies are also part of the chapters “Kosovo State building: Emplacing the State and Peace(s)” and “Northern Ireland: The Maze of Peace” (Björkdahl and Kappler 2017), but the cases are here analysed through a different theoretical lens.

Serbian member of the Kosovo Police, occasionally KFOR troops and at times a number of European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX). UN marked cars can also regularly be seen on the bridge (OSCE official, authors' interview, Mitrovica, 2016).

The barricade is made of stone and sand was removed in 2014 after three years and replaced with a large patch of soil in preparation for what would become a 'peace park'. The mayor of the Kosovo Serb part of Mitrovica, Goran Rakic, intended to have a peace park built on the bridge to replace the barricade. The transformation of the bridge materialised by replacing the barricade with concrete flower boxes (Rakic, 2014). However, the flower pots were placed at the exact spot where the barricades once stood. As a consequence, the bridge was open only for pedestrians and remained closed to traffic. Still, the peace park attracted a lot of attention from the diaspora visiting the town and the park allowed people to come together, the trees and the flowers were tended to, and the benches in the garden were used (OSCE official, authors' interview, Mitrovica, 2016). According to Goran Rakic (2014) who stated that "the aim of the Peace Park is an expression of the desire that the point which separated the two nations over the past 15 years becomes a place where they meet," the removal of the park could be seen "as a threat to peace". From a Kosovo Albanian perspective, the peace park was regarded as a new barricade, and the mayor Agim Bahtiri of South Mitrovica stated that the bridge would be cleared "very soon". The decision by Rakic to build the peace park followed from consultations with Belgrade (Rakic, 2014), but when the peace park sparked violent objections by Kosovo Albanian protestors, he was instructed by Belgrade to remove it. This unpopular action was carried out in the middle of the night to avoid protest from the Kosovo Serbs. Yet, it resulted in the Kosovo Serbs erecting yet another barricade.

Space-making transformed the Main Bridge and these efforts transcended the immediate locality of the place. They demonstrated that peacebuilding takes place at multiple scales at once, involving municipal, national and international actors. Clearly, the Main Bridge has attracted the attention of the EU Special Representative in Pristina, Samuel Zbogar, who has been engaged in the transformation of the bridge. During the Brussels normalisation talks, he proposed a resolution of the dispute concerning the bridge in Mitrovica to participants at the technical dialogue in Brussels (IEWB, 2015). The aim of the talks was to reopen the bridge in June 2016. At point of writing this has not yet happened. However, Kosovo-Serbia relations faced a number of setbacks in 2018, which resulted in Kosovo quitting the normalization talks and the Main Bridge across the Ibar is still a pending issue (Balkan Insight, 2018).

Standing at the bridge that has been equipped with contradictory narratives by the two communities, it becomes more apparent than ever that places and spaces are transformative (field notes, 2016). Frequently, those driving the transformations are guided by different ideas and understandings of peace. It is possible to see 'peace' in its plural manifestations at different times on the bridge. The eventual removal of the Peace Park will not be enough to reverse or accommodate these clashing spatial narratives. Thus, it becomes apparent that the bridge is an ideational space containing competing meanings in the narratives of the Kosovo Serbs and the Kosovo Albanians. As such, it is a product of the material manifestation of the ethnic divide in Kosovo, the politicisation of ethnic cleavages, and the difficulties of both ethnic groups to co-exist in one state (Kostovicova, 2005; Gusic, 2015). Moreover, this contestation transcends the immediate locality of Mitrovica. It demonstrates trans-scalar, contested peace politics as it is linked to the relationship between Belgrade and Mitrovica –

which impacts upon the tools that the Kosovo Serb leadership can use – and the involvement of international peacebuilders in urban reconstruction. In that sense, the bridge has been a key marker for division and unification, depending on whether it is seen from the perspective of KFOR, the communities next to the bridge or national elites. It would therefore be a simplification to view a bridge as a place of dialogue only, but, as our Mitrovica example shows, it is situated in the constant tensions between division and unification, depending on the dynamics of the surrounding peace process.

b) The walls that connect: Belfast's Draw Down the Walls

The second empirical illustration draws attention to a 'different' kind of spatial practice embedded in another urban peace process. We are investigating a public arts project in North Belfast, which also deals with the urban infrastructure of separation and segregation. Belfast, like Mitrovica, can be considered a divided city, shaped by a presence of so-called 'peace walls' in what are assumed to be hotspots of violence. Cunningham and Gregory (2014: 65) consider the peace walls as both liminal and performative spaces, in which social relations are enacted boundary-making and boundary-breaking practices. In their position and role as interfaces between conflictive parties, the walls are public and visible material markers and reminders of the violence that took place in Belfast's 'Troubles', representing the peak of sectarian violence in the city and beyond. The painted and printed murals, which can be found on most of the peace walls as well as on buildings and smaller walls within residential areas, serve to mark territory as belonging to a particular national group and are often rather militaristic in nature.

At the same time, Belfast has not had the same kind of internationally-led peacebuilding intervention that Kosovo has had. As a result, there is not the same level of international peacebuilding presence, whilst the spatial dimensions of peacebuilding still reflect both local and global characteristics – albeit in different ways – yet revealing the trans-scalar efforts of space-making. Certainly, cities can be considered as hosting global and local actors alike (Stevenson, 2013: 135). In Belfast, it is indeed remarkable that many of the murals are directed at domestic and international audiences, whilst the latter are often mobilised to lend some credibility to domestic audiences (cf. Kappler & McKane, 2019). And whilst the murals on the walls have, unsurprisingly, long been acting as markers and key sites for urban violence itself, we want to show here that this is not an inherent property of the walls themselves. Instead, we show that walls as markers of division have been used as sites of transformation, dialogue and peacebuilding at the same time. The use of public art techniques is key to understanding such transformational processes.

The project we are referring to is entitled "Draw Down the Walls" and was initiated in 2012 in a context in which the majority of those living near the walls were reluctant to see them torn down, even decades after the cessation of open sectarian hostilities in the city. It was the Golden Thread Gallery who, in cooperation with the North Belfast Interface Network and the Lower Shankill Community Association, initiated a project through which the removal of the walls could, if not realised, at least be imagined. To do so, different community actors were involved and a Colombian artist was hired to implement the arts-based dimension of the

project. The idea was that a series of arts projects, involving both communities and leading to multiple encounters in the physical sites of separation – the walls – would be able to bring people together and generate a degree of momentum in the peace process. The project included a variety of smaller formats such as film productions, youth work and exhibitions. There were a number of artists and activists involved in the different artistic and peace-related aspects of the project. Overall, the curators placed emphasis on public involvement in the curatorial process and invited to a public meeting in the run-up to what was a somewhat controversial arts project (Young & Bell, 2013).

Perhaps most famously, the Colombian artist Oscar Muñoz created the ‘Ambulatorio’ exhibition, located at the Crumlin Road / Flax Street interface and exploring “universal themes of memory, human loss and impermanence” (Golden Thread Gallery, 2012). Here, it is important to understand the deliberate decision of the curators to reach out to a global vocabulary of peace and memory in the sense of transporting a message that was relevant beyond the immediate urban context of Belfast. Working with a Colombian artist, who brings his own interpretation to such global themes, was a key step in being less vulnerable to criticism of bias locally, but also a way of respecting the sensitivity that public art in conflict contexts requires (cf. Clarke, 2012). The ‘international peacebuilders’, in this example, are therefore not the usual suspects of UN peacekeepers, or internationally-subcontracted NGOs, but instead a partnership between a gallery, community associations as well as local and international artists. Trans-scalar peacebuilding is therefore, as this example shows, not necessarily a process enshrined in formal elite-driven politics, but can also be facilitated by civil society, artists and local communities.

On the one hand, this case study allows for using the arts as a way of understanding political discourse, since they are situated in a political time and space (Negash, 2004: 188). The project was indeed specifically tied to the physical givens of Belfast’s cityscape, in terms of using the infrastructure of the walls and interfaces to develop its artistic content. On the other hand, alluding to the parallels to the Colombian conflict and related questions of conflict and loss, the project made a claim to the visibility of global politics and memory (Mookherjee, 2018: 208), breaking down the assumed distinction between local and global agency. Instead, what the project reflects is the interplay between local places and global discourses. Public art is one way of engaging with both local and global dimensions of conflict. Processes of place-making can thus be seen as an attempt to make global dynamics relevant to specific, local places by emplacing peace in the communities in which it is being negotiated. The arts as a tool for ‘intervention’ is a powerful way of doing so, and seem to stand somewhat in contrast to the types of military and diplomatic intervention that we are familiar with in more trusteeship-style peacebuilding scenarios.

5) A bridge that divides and walls that connect: The paradox of trans-scalar peace

We could plausibly argue that the two places outlined above, the Mitrovica Bridge and the Belfast peace walls, do three things. First, they show how a spatial analysis helps us study the materiality of peace and conflict, i.e. where places are inscribed with and manifest peace or conflict. These two places reveal how the respective material place constitutes and is constituted by everyday micro-political acts of peace and conflict. Second, they point to how

everyday acts of peace or conflict located in a particular place impact the local, national, regional and global politics of peace and conflict, and travel across scales from a local place to a global space. Therefore, emplaced micro-acts of peace are trans-scalar. A third aspect that we hope the two empirical illustrations might help evoke is to generate accounts of whether and how a given local place is constitutive of national as well as global peacebuilding efforts. The acts, agents, events and processes of peace or conflict emplaced at the Mitrovica bridge are trans-scalar in the sense that we can connect such emplaced acts, agents, events and processes to the Brussels normalization talks between Kosovo and Serbia and to the land-swap negotiations about redrawing borders to end the political deadlock which has persisted for more than ten years since Kosovo declared its independence. Similarly, the above-mentioned projects aiming to transform Belfast's peace walls cannot be seen in isolation from the wider national and international peacebuilding efforts, involving both formal political elites as well as civil society activists.

It is indeed the legitimate concern of students of peace and conflict to understand how the micro-politics of peace are influenced by abstract, global ideas about peace and international peacebuilding efforts to implement such ideas. But, likewise, it must be a legitimate concern to enquire if and how emplaced peace(s) and acts of peacebuilding transcend scale, i.e. are transformative and trans-scalar and generate changes or stagnation to global processes of peacebuilding. That means that peace is a trans-scalar able to travel not only from the global to the local, but also from the local to the global.

Peace and Conflict Studies is not the only discipline that confronts the theoretical explanation of causal or constitutive links that transcend scale, investigating the travelling of micro-politics situated in local places, in the everyday, to macro-politics, global spaces and processes of peacebuilding. So far, Peace and Conflict Studies, as a discipline, has primarily developed tools to study the trans-scalarity of peace in one direction to understand how global capitalism, neo-liberal peacebuilding or interstate peace agreements shape and shove everyday places. The research so far is, however, much less successful in grasping how peace politics in global spaces are constituted and generated by the everyday dynamics of emplaced peace politics. At the same time, it is arguably the case that the difference between a locally meaningful, but isolated everyday diorama and a globally significant event or act of peace may possibly be the linkage of the local specifics to abstract, ideational global spaces, processes and dynamics.

6) Conclusion

The ability to turn a place into a space denotes the process of making a physical place relevant and meaningful to global and local discourses. By emplacing certain spatial practices, narratives, ideas as well as material artefacts, places are equipped with a social meaning and become part of the social imaginary. The analysis of the bridge across the Ibar river in Mitrovica reveals how a particular place does not stay the same, but is continually emerging,

that is, a place is always becoming and the becoming involves a transformation of the physical places into symbolic, imagined spaces. Similarly, the arts project in Belfast casts light on the different types of peacebuilding agency that contested sites can activate. Spatial peacebuilding must therefore be considered a dynamic process, concerned with the transformation of places of violence into spaces of encounter. Where this fails, as the Mitrovica example shows, even supposedly unifying spaces such as bridges can become key markers of division, conflict and insecurity. It is in the interplay between a variety of peacebuilding actors, at local, national and global levels, that shapes the ways in which the materiality of (post-)conflict places impacts upon trans-scalar peace processes. Therefore, this jigsaw of agency can produce 'unlikely spatial outcomes', hinting at the quality of trans-scalar peacebuilding. The physical landscape of (post-)conflict places must therefore not be viewed as purely deterministic for the outcome of spatial peacebuilding. Instead, whilst acknowledging that a material infrastructure puts certain structural limitations on the possibilities of spatial transformation, it also opens up possibilities for new social configurations. Thus, space-making helps us reveal the tension between place (as a material phenomenon) and space (an immaterial, imaginary phenomenon) as well as that place and space are mutually conditional and intertwined.

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