Norwegian University of Life Sciences
Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragric

Master Thesis 2014
60 credits

A Cultural Based-Approach to Development? Norwegian Public and Foreign Policy and the Role of Cultural Development in Bids to Promote Socio-political Stability and Sustainable Development in Northern Uganda.

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Declaration

I, Elen-Marie Meggison Tandberg, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature……..

Date……

Acknowledgements

First I would like to thank the international staff (both present and former) at the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage for sharing with me invaluable insight into the exciting and challenging world of cultural heritage management. As a student of international development I have appreciated our engaging meetings which I always found instructive and highly beneficial to my research in such an interesting area. You are pioneers within your field, and the work you do touches thousands of lives around the globe. Thank you for making a difference in mine too.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Ingrid Nyborg, for her patience, animated discussions and feedback. I am also grateful to my family and my friends for their support and encouragement during the project. I am particularly grateful to my mother and my sister for their positivity and ongoing support throughout the project, and for keeping me relatively sane. Katya, thank you once again for checking the language and saving me from some of my favourite grammar and syntax mistakes.

And last, but not least, I dedicate this work to my dearest companion, friend and love – Claudio, thank you for sticking up with me, and for not murdering me during the most intense periods of the thesis-roller-coaster. I promise that my next endeavours will be… well, shorter!

Abstract

This thesis reviews how culture as a concept has evolved in international human rights law and development policy since WWII, and reviews key strengths and challenges in reframing development initiatives in terms of cultural considerations – so-called cultural-based approaches to development. Moreover, the study discusses the use of culture as a concept and framework in Norwegian public and foreign policy, in light of a project undertaken by the Norwegian Directorate of Cultural Heritage (NDCH) and the National Museum in Uganda (NMU) in northern Uganda in the period 2009-2013. The NDCH-NMU case illustrates challenges concerning the political dimension of a cultural-based approach, but also the opportunities relating to a deeper human rights dialogue at the local, national and international levels. I argue that although there is a greater need to understand inherent tensions relating to questions of power in 'culture', 'development' and 'human rights' in policy, a greater interlinking of culture, human rights and development translates to a greater consideration for the specific material and cultural preconditions in a society. This will shift the focus away from donor preferences, and create development interventions that are more relevant for recipient communities and less paternalistic in their planning and implementation. The thesis uses a combination of document analysis, semi-structured interviews and academic texts.

List of Abbreviations

AU	African Union
ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
ARLPI	Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative
HSM/F	Holy Spirit Movement/Forces
LCs	Local Councils
LDUs	Local Defence Councils
LRA/M	Lord Resistance Army/Movement
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway)
NALU	National Army for the Liberation of Uganda
NDCH	Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage
NMU	National Museum of Uganda
NRM/A	National Resistance Movements/Army (NRA changed name to UPDF)
PRA	People's Redemption Army
RCs	Resistance Councils (renamed LCs)
SPLA/M	Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement
UNLA	Uganda National Liberation Army
UNRF	Uganda National Rescue Front
UNRF II	Uganda National Rescue Front Part II
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force (see NRA)
UPDM/A	Uganda People's Democratic Movement/Army

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Introduction

Culture has featured more prominently in the development discourse in recent years. From being viewed as a negative obstacle, sometimes even as a direct opposite to development and modernisation, "the notion that cultural measures can facilitate peace and strengthen reconciliation processes, contribute to the democratisation process and ensure sustainable development" (Tandberg 2012a, p. 2) can be found in both national and international policy circles. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) platform has been instrumental in the normative work done on culture in relation to human rights and development policy. UNESCO's objective to "contribute to the building of peace, poverty eradication, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue" (Ekern et al. 2012, p. 219) has been at the centre of an impressive expansion of policy work done on culture, human rights and development. Considering UNESCO's role in pushing for greater cultural consideration in human rights and development, it is perhaps unsurprising that the cultural management field has also increasingly incorporated elements of human rights and development rationales into policy formulation and project designs, recognising the interconnectedness of the notions and the necessity to formulate a holistic approach to realising the various objectives. Although culture, development and human rights are intrinsically linked, it is not always obvious how they support a common aim. In short, the concepts are highly political, and riddled with inherent tensions, as they all touch upon core questions of value and societal organisation. Nevertheless, the theoretical consideration that has increasingly been given to the notion of culture as a human right, and the ways in which cultural heritage can contribute to development, open up alternative ways to address peoples' needs: an approach to development that is grounded in peoples' preconditions and lived experiences.

Yet, there is a shortage of studies in the development field that make an explicit link between culture and development. Cultural cooperation as a venue for development is also something which is of peripheral concern for development practitioners. This study examines to what extent cultural-based approaches to development can offer a viable alternative to conventional development narratives. By doing so, it offers a critique of dominant discourses on development that shape the practices and development programmes that are conventionally deployed by Global North actors in the Global South.

Chapter 1 presents the central aims and contextual framework for the study. As there is no single, encompassing theory that underlines the analysis, I will introduce and discuss some central concepts that together form a theoretical framework for the subsequent discussion, and some

limitations of the scope of study. I will also outline my methodological approach. Chapter 2 traces the advancement of the concept of culture in human rights and development narratives at the international policy level. The study specifically engages with Norwegian policy orientation with regard to its cultural co-operation and development interventions. The subsequent chapter, Chapter 3, looks at how the concepts of culture and development are used in Norwegian foreign-political strategy papers and national policy documents, and examines the strengths and challenges of adopting culture as a framework for interventions from a Norwegian perspective. In order to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of having a 'cultural-based' foreign policy I have chosen to examine a Norwegian-backed cultural development project undertaken by the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage (NDCH) and the National Museum of Uganda (NMU) in northern Uganda.

Before going into the NDCH-NMU project undertaken in northern Uganda, it is necessary to examine the wider socio-cultural and historical context of Uganda as a whole and its northern regions in particular. Chapter 4 provides a critical reading of the events and circumstances leading up to the current conflict in northern Uganda, and the wider socio-cultural factors that are relevant when discussing the Norwegian-backed project in relation to the overall objective of the thesis. Chapter 5 introduces the NDCH-NMU project aim and design, and discusses to what extent they match the policy recommendations that are set down internationally and in the Norwegian national policy and the Norwegian foreign policy paper on cultural cooperation. Moreover, as will become clear in the discussion in Chapter 6, due to the complexity of the project setting – the conflict and subsequent aftermath of the conflict in northern Uganda – the case offers valuable insight into the conceptual challenges and practical implications of a more integral approach to development interventions abroad. In conclusion, I will argue that the critical reading of Norwegian foreign policy with respect to the concepts discussed, together with the lessons learned from the project in northern Uganda, give good grounds for reviewing and commenting upon the global policy understanding of culture as a framework and as an instrument and capacity for promoting peace and sustainable human development.

PART 1

The chapters that make up Part 1 deal mainly with theory and policy. Chapter 1 introduces the overall context of the project, its analytical and methodological framework. Chapter 2 examines the conceptual discussion on culture and development as it has advanced in international human rights law, declarations and policy documents. The chapter also explores culture in development, and how culture is seen in relation to armed conflict situations and vice versa. Chapter 3 considers the influence the international debate has had for Norwegian foreign political narratives and policy production, and Norwegian narratives on nationhood and identity, before going into organisation of cultural development aid and the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage (NDCH) and its international programme areas. Together the chapters establish the main conceptual basis for the case in Part 2 and the discussion and conclusion in Part 3.

Chapter 1

The Analytical Framework

In this chapter I will set out the overall context of the study and provide a brief outline of some of the central concepts and definitions that underline the overall discussion. I will also explain the data collection process and briefly outline central concepts and the limitations of the study.

1.1 Objectives and Aims of the Study

This study is in line with the constructivist school of thought. The main objective of the study is to examine the ways in which a focus on cultural consideration can contribute to strengthening processes in development cooperation aimed at promoting sustainable development, endorsing respect for human rights and increasing socio-political stability in development countries. More specifically, I aspire to examine the conceptual use of 'culture', 'development' and 'human rights' in Norwegian foreign policy documents, and the implications these considerations have for Norwegian interventions abroad. The concepts of culture, development and human rights are not neutral concepts. Rather, their differing meanings are subject to, and embedded in specific social, political and historical contexts. Therefore, I also aim to unpack to what extent culture is compatible with the notions of human rights and development. The cultural development project in northern

Uganda facilitated by the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage (NDCH) and the National Museum of Uganda (NMU) provides a concrete example from which one can consider the main objective. Yin (1994, p. 13) argues that a case study is an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context". I find that it provides context-sensitive analysis and thick descriptions for a qualitative researcher, and this offers a more valid picture of the general argument. Therefore the aim of the case is to illustrate the ways in which cultural measures are framed in Norwegian foreign policy in bids to promote sustainable development, peace and democracy in general, and to review the practical implications of public interventions that are based on a cultural-approach to development rationales in general. The fact that the project is located in a region undergoing a transition from a state of prolonged armed conflict makes the themes of culture and development more relevant: as we shall see, armed conflict typically crystallises cultural issues, and therefore careful consideration of what role a cultural-based approach can play in ameliorating or aggravating violent conflict must be central for any development initiative.

The study does not engage directly with how the Norwegian-backed cultural intervention has been received by the local communities in northern Uganda. However, the study will provide a detailed analysis of the inherent tension that exists in cultural-based intervention, with particular attention to human rights and foreign policy considerations. The case study in Chapter 5 adds a contextual and deeper understanding of the theoretical discussion. There is also a wider concern relating to the question of indicators for evaluation and measurement of the final results. As will be discussed in the thesis, the interview data indicates that the NDCH programme advisors involved with the projects have found it challenging to measure the impact of the projects on the community, and the projects have not incorporated indicators for evaluation as such. Moreover, the discussion comments on the relation between programme design and desired outcomes, and in the final section of the conclusion I make a series of recommendations with respect to policy and project implementation in development and cultural policy in general.

1.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The initial idea for the project came after I attended a workshop hosted by the Norwegian Directorate of Cultural Heritage (NDCH), and the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU) in cooperation with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December 2012 that featured presentations by cultural heritage and human rights experts. In my study I draw on a series of primary and secondary data, including document analysis and semi-structured interviews

and academic texts on the subject. The range of sources used adds to the validity of the argument, through triangulation and cross-referencing.

Academic literature represents the main bulk of the background data on Uganda. My interest in the case was further strengthened by three important research projects. First, the work done by a Swedish anthropologist Sverker Finnström (2001; 2008; 2014) in connection with his PhD (and subsequent with the publication of a book based on the doctoral thesis), has been instrumental in my understanding of northern Uganda. This is the single most important primary research that I base my ideas and discussion on here. Second, the studies conducted by Quinn (2007; 2009; 2010) and Finnegan (2010) have also been invaluable in contributing to background on narratives in northern Uganda in general, and amongst the Acholi ethnic group in particular. The Acholi cultural groupings[1] have born the brunt of the destruction in northern Uganda. Both Finnström and Quinn's studies give in-depth information and analysis on the socio-cultural effects of the conflict, and how the Acholi communities have mobilised in response. Accordingly, whereas there are other ethnic groups in northern Uganda, the insight from the Acholi context is an integral part of my understanding of the conflict and the ways in which cultural frameworks interact with and influence institutions and processes around us.

My own data collection process involved document analysis and a series of semi-structured interviews with public officials from the cultural sector in Norway in the period between December 2012 and 2014. The interviews and discussions I have had with NDCH staff have given me invaluable insight into the intricacies and challenges of cultural-based interventions, and consequently this data is an integral part of the discussion on Norwegian foreign policy in Chapter 3, the case in Chapter 5 and the discussion in Chapter 6. The interviews were informal in style, and the topics ranged from the NDCH's mandate and organisation to the specific project management in Uganda. In addition to the interviews, the NDCH has provided initial project plans, annual reviews and the final report for the project in northern Uganda, which have helped me trace the development of the projects at the four sites. Research material also includes a film made in connection with the project by staff from the National Museum of Uganda, which documents testimonials from victims of war in the communities the projects were located. This documentation was cross-referenced and discussed in relation to similar studies on the uses of cultural heritage as a post-conflict strategy in northern Uganda. In particular, Hopwood's (2011) study on memorialisation in northern Uganda, and Giblin's (2012) review of the particular memorialisation projects in question gave additional

[1] For full overview of the various Acholi groupings in Uganda and southern Sudan see Finnström 2008, p. 33.

and invaluable information about the diverse views and discussions among the local population on cultural interventions.

Another large component of this study relates to the advancement of culture in human rights and development policy. The international and regional Conventions and Declarations, related texts and policy papers have been sampled mostly from a series of internet sources (e.g. OHCHR, UN, UNDP, UNESCO, World Bank, AU, etc.). The Norwegian papers, strategies and reports are also mostly available online. I also ordered hard copies from the Norwegian Government Security and Service Organisation to gain access to the government/policy documents which were not available online.

In addition to official policy documents and texts, I also made use of a number of human rights reports, most notably from Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch maintains that it "takes no position on the merits of conflict between states, but examines the conduct of all parties to a conflict, focusing on whether violations of international humanitarian law have been committed" (Human Rights Watch 1999). I find that the reports published by Human Rights Watch are consistent and possess high credibility; Human Rights Watch reports and news updates have provided detailed accounts on all the various groupings and factions in a conflict that is both complex and full of contradictions. I have also used a number of reports published by the Justice and Reconciliation Project on various massacre sites in northern Uganda. Like Human Rights Watch, this project uses a wide range of sources and witness testimonials when investigating past atrocities committed – both massacres that were widely publicised in the media and ones that have gone unreported.

My decision not to conduct field research in northern Uganda relates to the scope of the assignment on one hand, and the difficulty in measuring project impacts on the other. Firstly, the study primarily engages with the Norwegian perspective on foreign interventions: it examines the tension between rhetoric and action in Norwegian policy, and the projects are intended to display the inherent challenges with respect to the practical application of the NDCH's project in northern Uganda bearing the former in mind. Secondly, northern Uganda has seen frantic involvement of NGOs, CSOs, charities and activist groupings throughout most of the conflict. During the transitional stage this activity has only increased. I know from previous experiences in India and Tanzania, that in places where people have grown accustomed to the presence of this type of activity, and people are well 'trained' in what is expected in a given situation, it takes considerable time to build the kind of trust and relations that would provide this study with reliable insight. The Norwegian programme advisors involved with the project have repeatedly underlined that they

spent years (also in midst of conflict) in preparation before consulting the local communities on a project design. Despite their prolonged involvement with the local communities they aimed to serve, they find it hard to assess the impact of the project. This difficulty relates in part to the extent of material and social devastation suffered by the local communities during the prolonged conflict, which makes rebuilding a slow and challenging process. However, the difficulty in pinpointing specific indicators for impact assessment also relates to the intricacies of the subjects and themes involved in the project. As we shall see, the project deals with, and is situated in a cross-section of challenging and ambiguous concepts and processes. The next section gives a brief outline of central concepts that will appear throughout the study: culture, cultural heritage, conflict and gender.

1.3 A Brief Outline of Central Concepts

Before going into the discussion on the advancement and interconnectedness of culture, human rights and development in international policy, I first wish to briefly explore how the notions of culture, cultural heritage, gender and conflict, are conceptualised by different thinkers.

Throughout the thesis I discuss culture in relation to human rights and development. However, "the notion of culture is complex and often contested, and there does not exist a single definition of culture as such" (Tandberg 2012a, p. 3). In everyday life we use 'culture' for a range of things, but often when we refer to culture we talk about something we perceive as cultured (for instance, a music concert or art exhibition) or something which we find strange and alien (like 'other people's' culture). However, our current understanding of culture is that it is "a set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group […] that […] encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO 2001).

Culture is the main organisational principle of a society; it is what gives meaning to our existence. This does not mean that culture is something static and constant. Rather, as Merry emphasises, culture is "historically produced, globally inter-connected, internally contested, and marked with ambiguous boundaries" (Merry cited in Hernlund and Shell-Duncan 2007, p. 8). Culture is the fabric of our social reality, and relates to issues of both individual and communal identity formation and expression. Giddens (1991) holds that people and communities are continuously constructing identities as a result of reflections around experiences and encounters with people and systems. These processes can either be voluntary and characterised by voluntary exchanges, or more passive in that people are being engaged involuntarily (not necessarily in a negative sense) by their

surroundings. Kymlicka (cited in Hernlund and Shell-Duncan 2007, p.11) underlines that cultural frameworks are vital "for the development of self-respect and giving persons a context in which they can develop the capacity and choices about how to lead their lives". However, just as culture can be an enabling factor that promotes a sense of self and social cohesion in a community, it can also be a restraining factor.

Culture clearly touches upon questions of power. As such, apart from this perpetual mechanism of production and reproduction of cultural narratives within communities, the question remains to what extent certain individuals, groups or institutions have more power to define cultural truths than others. Cultural 'sub-categories' such as identity, ethnic belonging, gender, religious affinity and political association, serve as analytical tools that highlight differences in power; cultural production is seen in terms of Foucauldian notions of power in knowledge, where difference is the method which allows us to see the intricacies of power-relations. For instance, because processes of selection and rejection are integral to production of meaning in general, cultural narratives always beg the question: whose culture? In this thesis, gender and minority rights and ethnic belonging, in particular, are analytical tools that highlight this inherent tension.

Another issue of power relates to questions of diffusion and the interconnectedness of culture. Culture often changes as a result of external pressures. These pressures can be peaceful and 'voluntary', or they can be antagonistic and characterised by conflict, coercion and oppression. Moreover, precisely because culture relates to issues of identity, cohesion and resistance, it often becomes a direct target in conflict. However, when all this is said I want to stress that culture is not necessarily the totality of the human experience. On one hand, and bearing the previous discussion on culture in mind, human beings are often more alike than they are different. The human rights system rests on this principle of commonality. Furthermore, sometimes what is taken as cultural differences can be down to personality and individual orientation, and this is why one will always find diversity – even in communities that seem to be quite homogenous. Nonetheless, in every community and/or social group, there will be certain characteristics and traditions that are passed on to coming generations. This brings us to the definition of cultural heritage which, in light of projects reviewed, is also integral to the study.

Like culture, cultural heritage is defined in a number of ways, and cultural heritage field can at times be tremendously technical. For the purpose of this thesis, I draw on the definition of Farida Shaheed, the current Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights. Shaheed writes in her report to the UN Human Rights Council that, "[t]he concept of cultural heritage reflects the dynamic character of something that has been developed, built or created, interpreted and re-interpreted in

history, and transmitted from generation to generation" (Human Rights Council 2011, p. 4). In this sense, cultural heritage brings an additional dimension to the concept of culture. Crudely speaking, it can be anything – both material and immaterial – that for whatever reason has been deemed worth saving for future generations, and which forms the basis for cultural identification for individuals in a community and the community as a whole. By framing heritage in this way, Shaheed emphasises the 'objects' of cultural heritage as well as the social processes that surround them. Smith similarly underlines, "[t]he discursive construction of heritage is itself part of the cultural and social processes that are heritage" (Smith 2006, p. 13). It is important to recognise that cultural heritage is not unequivocally positive or necessarily a source of communal pride. As Shaheed notes, "in some instances, heritage recalls errors made in the past and actions reflecting the darker side of humanity, the memory of which also needs to be transmitted to future generations" (Human Rights Council 2011, p. 5).

In recent years greater attention has been given to trauma or pain heritage (see Meskell and Scheermeyer 2008; Rowlands 2008), and the projects in Uganda reviewed in this thesis touches upon questions of heritage in relation to a painful past. Like culture, cultural heritage questions of power: whose culture; what heritage should be protected; issues regarding participation in, and access to cultural heritage; and "how to resolve conflicts and competing interests over cultural heritage" (Human Rights Council 2011, p. 5) are some vital questions that policy makers are grappling with. As we shall see, cultural heritage is often the site of contestation – at the individual level, but also in a wider sense and cultural heritage is often used for achieving specific political ends. For instance, "cultural symbols of dominant communities may be glorified, and the content of education and information about cultural heritage may be distorted for political purposes" (ibid). Repressive cultural narratives are exclusionary and therefore damaging to the stability of any given society. In conflict and post-conflict situations, in particular, where cultural polarisation or politicisation are or have been central factors one needs to heed the uses of cultural heritage extra attention. To end with the cautionary words of the Independent Expert: "[p]eace-building processes should include the repair of cultural heritage with the participation of all concerned, and the promotion of intercultural dialogue regarding cultural heritage" (ibid, p. 6).

'Conflict' and 'post-conflict' are also two central concepts that feature throughout the thesis, and that need further explaining. Conflict can mean a variety of things, and the term is used differently in different contexts. At the more mundane level, conflict can mean the presence of difference of opinion, or a conflict of interest, which is then negotiated peacefully by one or more parties. Negotiations can be managed both through formal and informal mechanisms, and in this sense conflict constitutes a continuous process which produces and reproduces social relations (Nyborg

2002). This 'everyday-type' of conflict is an inevitable and necessary part of human social interaction. However, when that is said, negotiations over difference take place in a social context, and therefore often reflect asymmetrical power-relations that can exist among people and groupings in society; who has the power to enter into negotiations, and who has limited bargaining power in negotiations?

Skewed power-relations, which are often evident when considering gender issues or minority rights, affect people's access to and control over reproductive resources and, therefore, represent conflicts which are important in their own right. However, in this thesis, I generally mean conflict in a negative sense: conflict expressed with means of violence, repression and destruction. Violent conflict is defined and measured in a range of ways. There exists a wide array of literature classifying types of violent conflict, often in relation to a set number of combat deaths during a set period of time (Collier and Hoeffler 1998). There is also a plethora of academic works that attempt to explain the relation between types of grievances and violent conflict (Homer-Dixon 1991) and scholars that maintain that violent conflict is not necessarily a bad thing (Cramer 2003). The conflict in Uganda is typically defined as low-intensity in scale. However, the pervasive destruction wrought to the region and its people, means that the conflict is an example of prolonged integrated violence on multiple levels. The conflict in northern Uganda shows how, when violence escalates and spirals out of control it compromises both formal and informal mechanisms that contribute to maintaining social relations and mitigating disagreement and conflict. ‘Post-conflict’ is also a term that is used frequently, and one which can mean a range of things. Typically it refers to a state where hostilities have ended or where the violence is displaced. It also presupposes a move towards ‘peace’ and a level of recovery (Collier and Hoeffler 1998). In this study I use Hopwood’s (2011) term ‘atypical’ post-conflict transition-period when describing the current situation in northern Uganda. This is to signify that although the LRA-conflict is no longer located on Ugandan soil, a large number of people still live in a state of fear that was normalised during the conflict years. The rituals and societal structures that regulated life – social relations and every-day conflict – before the armed conflict in northern Uganda have yet to be restored or rebuilt.

When discussing culture and conflict, specifically in relation to human rights and development, gender is an intersecting theme – unavoidable, and a central aspect that I will comment on during the course of the study. Like culture, gender is a fundamental framework in human society. Zarkov describes gender as an ‘organisational principle’ of human life that “affects different levels of social reality, not only individual people” (Zarkov cited in Bouta et al. 2005, p. 3). This says something about the essential role gender plays in social interaction. Put crudely, gender refers to the social construction of biological sex, and the relation and interaction between them. In this way gender is

often used as a category of analysis to separate social aspects from biology. However, in practice, where human biology ends and social appropriation starts is impossible to ascertain. Though gender is grounded in biological sex and physical properties, gender is intensely social, political and cultural and located within a historical context of meaning and power. This power typically manifests itself in the production and policing of genders in culture, which conventionally supports a model of heterosexual normativity (Butler 1990). However, gender is not just learnt and appropriated, but negotiated, contested and subverted. As such, gender is not a stable category, but gendered identities exist on a spectrum which is continually changing and interacting in endless and complex ways with other identity markers such as sexuality, class, race and ethnicity. More than this, gender is produced and reproduced on multiple levels, 'the level of institutions and organizations producing specific masculinities and femininities, and at the same time being the product of gender' (Zarkov cited in Bouta et al. 2005, p. 3). This is why conflicts also have very specific gendered dimensions. The need to appreciate gendered dimensions conflict and warfare is recognised in UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which emphasises that gender considerations need to be an integral part of prevention of conflict, peace building, peace keeping and the post-conflict effort. The World Bank has also issued several communiqués on gender and conflict, where the aim of policy recommendations is to broaden conceptions of women in war (see Bouta et al. 2005; Buvinic et al. 2013).

These brief notes on culture, cultural heritage, conflict and gender form the basis for the subsequent discussion, and the concepts are elaborated on during the course of the thesis. Before moving on to the main chapters, I would first like to mention some key limitations on the scope of this study.

1.4 Limitations to the Scope

Though the thesis is an opportunity to engage in in-depth discussions, I have placed certain conceptual limitations on the discussion. The outline and discussion on Uganda is largely limited to the post-independent period. I do not explicitly deal with Uganda's colonial past. This means that there is a conceptual limitation with regards to the discussion on identity-construction in Uganda. I accept Finnström's argument (2008, p. 38) that while there is "no doubt that colonial practices were powerful instruments in the making of more rigid ethnic boundaries and divides in Uganda", the various identities continue to change in response to the world around.

In the main findings chapter, Chapter 6, I offer a rather brief limited discussion on the psychological aspects of healing and memorialisation. For instance, the literature and debate on

emotional reconciliation, and shame and guilt (concepts that are central to the former) is extensive. Though I recognise that this is of importance to the internal workings of the use of cultural narratives and interventions in post-conflict settings, I leave the debate to experts in that particular field. I agree with Lu's argument that reconciliation processes are often complicated by "experiences of shame and guilt that pervade the emotional landscapes of post-war politics" (Lu 2008, p. 368), and that pain and grievances can be used as motivators for both conflict and peace.

Chapter 2

Towards a Culture-Based Approach to Development?

Western governments frequently frame their foreign policy activity and interventions in the Global South in terms of development cooperation or assistance. But what is development? And, for the purpose of this thesis, how suitable is it as a platform for promoting socio-cultural stability in post-conflict settings? This chapter examines the advancement of culture in international development theory and policy. The chapter starts with a brief discussion on the notion of development, and by providing a short analysis of the concept introduces some major controversies and critiques. As development is increasingly framed in terms of a human rights frame, the subsequent section traces the influence of culture on human rights narratives. The third section examines some of the ways in which culture is increasingly being integrated into development narratives: it outlines the strengths and challenges of adopting culture as an integral part in development discourse and discusses key implications this has for policy implementation. This is followed by a brief discussion on culture in conflict in order to illustrate the intricacies and interdependency of the concepts in securing viable options that create better grounds for peoples' lives globally. The chapter ends with a summary of how alternative ways of conceptualising development and culture – the strengths of a more comprehensive culture-based approach to development, to why one cannot be seen without the other, and what implications this may pose for the legitimacy of development initiatives globally.

2.1 What is Development?

There exists a vast amount of development discourse. Yet, "there is no singular, coherent or universal understanding of what development is and how it should be achieved" (Tandberg 2012b, p. 1). Peet and Hartwick (2009, p. 1) argue that in its most basic form "development means making a better life for everyone" and, that at its best, development has come to mean the betterment of human existence in all spheres of human life – from the material and natural to the social, cultural, even spiritual aspects of individual and communal well-being. In this sense, they hold that, development is a truly egalitarian and altruistic ideal, and a powerful vehicle for change in the world. However, theoretical envisioning and subsequent and practical application of development has proven to be complicated business.

While the current theory and practice of development is commonly traced to the immediate World War II-period, the right to development was not formally recognised as a right in itself under the

UN human rights system until 1986. The UN Declaration on the Right to Development (Development Declaration) of 1986 holds that,

> The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, and contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.

The Development Declaration, which was pushed mainly by Third World countries, aims to reconfirm the importance of connecting civil and political human rights with economic, social and cultural human rights in development efforts across the globe. Moreover, the Declaration both confirms that "states have the duty to cooperate with each other in ensuring development and eliminating obstacles to development" (Art 3 (3)), while emphasising that "the right of peoples to self-determination, by virtue of which they have the right freely to determine their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development". In this sense, the 1986 Development Declaration upholds the right to sovereignty of recipient countries, while emphasising the obligation of richer states to fund development in poorer countries. The right to development has since been recognised in both the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (1981) and the Arab Charter of Human rights. Other African human rights instruments also link the respect for culture to sustainable development. Most notably, the African Union's Charter for African Cultural Renaissance (2006) poses that cultural frameworks are the basis for individual, community and societal development, and that "culture constitutes for our peoples the surest means to chart Africa's own course towards technological development, and the most efficient response to the challenges of globalisation". The theme of vision and self-determination is also present in human rights instruments such as the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Millennium Declaration, the 2002 Monterrey Consensus, the 2005 World Summit Outcome Declaration, and the 2007 Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples, that all affirm that the right to development is universal, but subject to local self-determination. The various declarations also state that the human rights perspective is an integral part of development thinking. Nevertheless, despite repeated commitments to the right to development, thirty years after it was first fixed as a human right, development practice remains controversial and contested across the globe.

Three major controversies concerning development relate to issues over division of resources and power; precedence of some human rights over others; and last but not least the extent of Western hegemony over development theory and practice. Firstly, as development is such a powerful agent for change it is used for various purposes, of which not all are good. Peet and Hartwick (2009, p. 1) underline that "the idea of development can be used to legitimate what in fact amounts to more money and power for a few". Indeed, conventional development has in many ways reinforced

"systemic inequalities between the North and South, as well as accentuating socio-economic asymmetries within countries" (Tandberg 2012b, p. 2). This type of inequitable development often leads to conflict and unstable societies. Secondly, different societies and groupings value different aspects of development and so development prompts questions of priority/precedence. This is perhaps even more evident in human rights issues where, although there is a common rights language, various societies and communities regularly argue for some rights over others, often curtailing rights or aspects of rights which they see as conflicting with their traditions, customs or beliefs. The difficulty in accommodating the various aspirations for a better life is a major reason why human rights and development are so highly contested and often fraught with contradictions. Uvin (2004) warns that emphasising a human-rights based approach to development might only increase resistance to development, as many consider human rights as a western phenomenon and a means by the West to name and shame, and exercise power over old colonies in the Third World. This concern is closely linked to the third point of contention, namely to what extent and the ways in which conventional development discourse is indisputably dominated by Western theories and practices. As Nyhamar (2008, p. 8) observes, "the terminology and language used when referring to [development] is like a snapshot of time and the evolution of our views in the West on the rest of the world". While development has been viewed as something technical and devoid of culture, it is the stark opposite: the concept, theory and subsequent development practices are all saturated with an understanding of development based on a very particular version of the Western historical trajectory[2]. This is evident in the way the current dominant growth-based economic rationale has modernisation and industrialisation as its key drivers. However, "rather than acknowledging the cultural-specificity of the development discourse, conventional development thinking conflates distinct value systems into a seemingly neutral narrative" which "creates the illusion that the discourse is universally applicable" (Tandberg 2012b, p. 5). The blueprint thinking that follows is blind to local preconditions, and has certainly not created the type of 'better-life-for all' development that is envisioned in the right to development. The major controversies concerning development theory and practice have led some critics to argue that the very concept of development should be abandoned (see Peet and Hartwick 2009). However, in this chapter, I argue that by emphasising culture and the right to self-determination in development and human rights we gain an opportunity to push beyond donor preferences and ground development in peoples' lived experiences. In order to understand how culture might contribute to making development more relevant, we first have to look at how it is conceptualised in human rights and policy work. The next

2 The origin of modern development thinking is conventionally traced back to Enlightenment thinkers (see Uvin 2004).

two sections will examine how the concept of culture has evolved within the human rights framework, and how it has increasingly been grounded in rights-based development narratives.

2.2 Tracing Culture in Human Rights Narratives

As a concept and as a human right culture is difficult to pin down, and the legal interpretation and application of culture in human rights narratives have been subject to a number of changes since the right to culture was first set down in Article 27 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, UN 1948). The first paragraph of this article states that "[e]veryone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits". The two major International Covenants following UDHR, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, UN 1966) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, UN 1966), both refer to cultural rights as key prerequisites for the realisation of "freedom from fear and want" in their preamble. Both Covenants also state in Article 1(1) that "[b]y virtue of […] [peoples' right to self-determination] they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development" (UN 1966a; UN 1966b). As is implied in their names, ISCESCR has a greater focus on cultural human rights than ICCPR. The ICCPR explicitly refers to the right to culture in Article 27:

> In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

In addition, Article 19 (2) of ICCPR refers to the "right to freedom of expression" which the Convention exemplifies could be "in the form of art". In contrast, ICESCR refers to the right to culture in four of its articles (Articles 1, 3, 6 and 15): ICESCR confirms the right to full and equal enjoyment of cultural rights (Article 3); the technical means that underpin the full realisation of cultural development (Article 6 (2)); it holds that all people have the right to participate in cultural life (Article 15 (1a)); and confirms that "to achieve the full realisation of this right shall include those necessary for the conservation, the development and the diffusion of […] culture" (Article 15 (2)). The same year as ICESCR and ICCPR were adopted, UNESCO put forward a Declaration on the Principles of International Cooperation (1966). The 1966 Declaration which links culture and human rights states that "each culture has a dignity and values which must be respected and preserved"; that "every people has the right and duty to develop its culture"; and finally that, "in their rich variety and diversity […] all cultures form part of the common heritage belonging to all mankind" (UNESCO 1966).

However, the conventions give limited indication of what culture entails and how it should be protected under the human rights regime, thus allowing critics of the conception of culture in the conventions to label them as problematic and rather vague. Silberman (2012, p. 247), for instance, argues that culture in UDHR and the two core Covenants is both "narrowly" and "imprecisely defined" and, moreover, that the ambiguity surrounding culture as a human right is intrinsically linked to the different ways culture has been conceptualised in UN policy. He traces three shifts of conceptualisation of culture in UN discourse, which have had – and continue to have – profound influence on how culture has been represented and promoted globally. He emphasises that the so-called first generation conception of culture was heavily imbued with Western elitist notions of culture: cultural appreciation was placed in the domain of experts and intellectuals, subject to strict aesthetic criteria (which were considered universal), and processes of validation and evaluations. Though the 1966 UNESCO Declaration seemingly offered a broader take on culture and cultural diversity, UNESCO's cultural heritage policy adhered to the same restrictive conceptualisation of culture. Moreover, the right to culture distinctly lacked and understanding of culture-as-framework perspective. This is evident in the way cultural experts monopolised the culture discussion and cultural heritage field at the time. Accordingly, under the first generation conception of culture, culture as a human right was an exclusive affair.

The second generation conception of culture emerged as part of the socio-political upheaval of the 1970s; the 1960s had seen a rapid wave of decolonisation, and the period that followed was characterised by "movements for civil, racial, ethnic and Indigenous rights" (Silberman 2012, p. 247). The second generation conception of culture was epitomised by a statement adopted during the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies. The statement effectively broadened the concept of culture to include the "whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society and social group" (UNESCO 1982). This shift also saw a deeper recognition for the political nature of cultural management. As such, whereas the first generation culture viewed cultural management as something technical and subject to the same universal aesthetic and historical criteria, the social critique added a somewhat 'anthropological' dimension to the conception of culture in that it emphasised culture as something relative and performative: "[c]ulture was now seen as a distinctive way of life, interpreted and performed with greatest authenticity by the bearers of each culture" (Silberman 2012, p. 248). This approach to culture paved the way for a greater recognition of the importance of intangible[3] cultural heritage. However, the emphasis on collective expression of identity soon proved problematic as cultural

[3] Tangible heritage relates to material culture such as "objects of art and daily use, architecture, [and] landscape form", while intangible heritage refers to "performance of dance, music, theatre, and rituals, as well as language and human memory" (Silverman and Ruggles 2007, p. 3).

rationales were used to legitimate homogenisation of cultural and national identity by nation-state and, conversely, "as a tool of resistance by sub-state minorities" (ibid). As such, whereas the second generation of culture offered greater scope for inclusion of cultural values and practices, the fact that cultural rationales were used to justify political and national fragmentation was seen as unfortunate in the international community.

This prompted a third shift, or generation of culture, which emphasised culture in terms of cultural diversity and tolerance (UNESCO 2003). This latest shift, the cultural diversity approach set down in the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression, emphasises that cultural diversity is a "defining characteristic of humanity" and that "cultural diversity, flourishing within a framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect between peoples and cultures, is indispensable for peace and security at the local, national and international levels" (UNESCO 2005). Culture is taken as the totality of human expression. The 2005 Convention obliges signatory states under Article 20 to incorporate the provisions of the convention to other treaties and international agreements, and also holds that cultural diversity is fundamental for the "full realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other universally recognised instruments" (ibid). In this way, the 2005 Convention aspires to balance different and diverging interests within a framework of commonality and tolerance, where the respect for cultural diversity is seen as key for ensuring stability and greater respect for other human rights. UNESCO has been the main driver for the concept of cultural diversity, and the third generation of culture follows work done under the UNESCO platform in relation to the UN Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997). As we shall see later in the chapter, the 2005 Convention therefore also refers specifically to the link between cultural diversity and sustainable development. UNESCO high normative influence means that this approach serves as the latest conceptualisation of culture under the UN umbrella. This does not mean that the first and second generation conceptions of culture are not 'operational' in policy and practice. Rather, I propose that they exist side by side, often overlapping and contradicting each other. Furthermore, simultaneously as the conception of culture has broadened to accommodate the plethora of human expression that exist across the globe, the three generations of culture formulated under the UN system have entailed a transition towards a greater consideration for human rights.

Whereas early conventions lacked a specific human rights approach, more recent conventions, declarations and policy strategies have placed greater emphasis on the link between cultural heritage, cultural identity and their interconnectedness with other human rights. For instance, whereas the 1966 UNESCO Declaration on the Principles of International Cooperation affirms the

right to culture, there is little indication as to how this is realised and the declaration makes no reference to sub-grouping's rights. The 2003 UNESCO Convention on Protection of Intangible Heritage, on the other hand, explicitly refers to the participation of sub-groupings, communities and individuals (Articles 11 and 15). General comment No. 21 of the International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights published in December 2009 deals specifically with the right of everyone to take part in cultural life, set down in ICESCR, Article 15 (1a). The General comment uses UNESCO's definition of culture and latest conventions to signal the broadness of culture as a concept, and underlines that the right to culture is imperative for the realisation of other rights such as the right to education (ICESCR, Articles 13 and 14) and the right to an adequate standard of living (ICESCR Article 11). In the General comment, the committee makes references to other UN human rights instruments, but also regional conventions and declarations, thereby stressing the interdependence of the human rights instruments and the rights they are designed to uphold. In specifically reviewing the broader implications of Article 15 in ICESCR, the committee also emphasises the states' negative obligation to refrain from restricting access to vulnerable groups and persons, and their positive obligation to facilitate participation for persons and communities requiring special protection. In General comment No. 21 CESCR, these are identified as women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, minorities, migrants, indigenous peoples and persons living in poverty. In this sense, the human rights-based approach to culture, while emphasising the right of sub-nations, communities and groups' right of self-determination, also balances cultural claims against the rights of individuals. This is an important point as central to discussions on culture is the question 'whose culture?', and it is imperative that individuals and sub-groupings are protected against oppressive cultural rationales by majority groupings or individuals in powerful positions. This means that when considering culture one has to analyse what is included and what is excluded in the narrative, and why. It is important that this analysis is carried out at all levels of a community, also at the individual level.

Gender is a prism that allows us to examine the intersection between individual and communal values and customs, and individual and collective human rights. In the infamous article, *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women*, Okin (1999, p. 13) argues that culture in general "reinforces gender inequality" and that, "most cultures have as one of their principle aims the control of women by men". Moreover, Okin holds that tradition is a powerful mechanism which ensures continued control of women, and sometimes "'culture' and 'tradition' are so closely linked with control over women that they are virtually equated" (ibid). Considering this, women will never be empowered by culture to fulfil their human rights, and Okin concludes that cultural claims linked with gender typically infringe on women's human rights. However, a number of articles have since criticised

Okin for oversimplifying the cultural gender mechanisms (see Honig 1999; Nussbaum 1999). It might be more helpful to transpose Kymlicka's approach to minority rights to the field of cultural rights. Kymlicka (cited in Shell-Duncan 2007, p. 11) envisages groups rights as separated into "those that restrict individual choice and those that protect a minority group from economic and political oppression by the larger society". Kymlicka advocates non-intervention with regard to the latter. The importance of a firm cultural framework to Kymlicka is that it forms the basis "for the development of self-respect and for giving persons a context in which they can develop the capacity to make choices about how to lead their lives" (ibid). However, both Okin and Kymlicka's accounts assume a high level of shared values and beliefs in groups, and encourages perceptions of culture-driven actions and behaviour. Phillips (2003) expresses concern that in this way gender equality is constructed in opposition to cultural diversity. It also diminishes the importance of individuals' agency and ability to negotiate and change own circumstances. Instead, processes aimed at unravelling cultural discourse should recognise the potential presence of oppressive cultural rationales with regard to gender and other themes such as race, age, sexual orientation, class, social status, etc. Cultural diversity should be viewed as a basis for critical dialogues as well as the rejection of cultural relativism (see Parekh 2007). In this sense, the discussion on gender and human rights are not reduced to mutually exclusive projects, but facilitates diversity by recognising the limitations of every culture. It is helpful to transpose this understanding to the general discussion on to what extent one should balance universal values against cultural self-determination.

While the human rights regime allows for a certain degree of weighting of cultural claims, it must be founded on assumptions of universal applicability of human rights. On the other hand, whereas cultural relativist arguments for non-intervention are misguided, they are important in that they influence spheres that are "framed by universalist assumptions" (Hernlund and Shell-Duncan 2007, p. 9). This is for instance evident when considering the European Court of Human Rights where cases have been brought both for the protection of minority rights and for the protection of women's rights. This flexibility is also important, because by recognising that cultural diversity is an underlining condition for both the conceptualisation, interpretation and implementation of the human rights system – the intricate relations between culture as a framework that shape our outlook, cultural rights and other human rights – we make the human rights doctrine more relevant to peoples' lives while maintaining the integrity of our common humanity. There has been a similar drive towards a greater consideration for culture in (rights-based approaches to) development. The next section examines the advancement of culture in development narratives.

2.3 Culture in Development Narratives

In addition to pushing a greater policy consideration for culture in human rights, UNESCO has also been a forerunner in linking culture to development. In particular, the UNESCO report, *Our Creative Diversity*, published in 1996, linked culture and development in a way that had never been done before at international policy level. The report was a result of a long process of deliberation around culture and development set in motion by UNESCO member states during the UN Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997), during which the Nordic member states put forward a request for a World Commission on Culture and Development to be set down that would address questions of culture and development. The Commission was asked to consider the following questions:

> What are the cultural and socio-cultural factors that affect development? What is the cultural impact of social and economic development? How are cultures and models of development related to one another? How can valuable elements of a traditional culture be combined with modernization? What are the cultural dimensions of individual and collective well-being? (UNESCO 1996, p. 8).

The Commission's considerations were put down into the World Report on Culture and Development, *Our Creative Diversity*, after two years of deliberation. The report concluded that development can only be sustainable when it is grounded in the socio-cultural reality of the people and the community it is designed to serve. As culture is the very framework for living, to disregard it is to be oblivious to the preconditions for both success and failure.

The President of the World Commission on Culture and Development, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, reiterated critical voices of conventional development in the report when he underlined that the call for the report was a reaction to the mono-narrative of neoliberalism. According to him, there was a serious need to "challenge the frame of reference in which the West's system of values alone generated rules assumed to be universal and demand the right to forge different versions of modernization" (UNESCO 1996, p. 7). However, he also underlined that "in the industrial world itself, disillusionment with material progress, high levels of consumption for the privileged amid widespread deprivation and persistently high rates of permanent unemployment were also pushing culture and cultural identity to the forefront of the public agenda" (ibid, p. 8). He concluded that, the growth-based economic dogmas that are at the core of both societal organisation in many countries in the Global North and conventional development deployed in the Global South have failed to promote human dignity and well-being. A broader and more holistic version of development and human betterment was imperative.

One of the key-points made by the report concerns the indiscriminate use of generic economic assumptions and models in development initiatives; *Our Creative Diversity* (UNESCO 1996) explicitly states that culture is not only an instrument for achieving economic growth, but that it

shapes our outlook on life and what we value. In short, it is culture that gives meaning to our existence. The duality of culture – its role as a means to an end, and being an end in itself – must therefore be applied to all aspects of human life: it affects the way we view and act towards our physical environment and to what extent we value our social and political institutions. This has serious implications for the exportation of governance models and institutions from one socio-cultural context to another. Rather, the point made by the report is that society is organic in the sense that societies develop institutions according to need and circumstances. The implication of moving culture to the centre stage of development policy and practice is that there would be as many ways of thinking about development as there are cultural variations. The World Commission on Culture and Development identifies some ten thousand distinct communities across two hundred nations. Considering this, the blueprint thinking so often deployed by conventional development thinking is not only grossly misconceived, but doomed to fail.

The undertaking of the Commission did not limit itself to describing and analysing culture and development in general, but also to set down an international policy agenda with specific mandates to follow. The ten agenda points outlined by the Commission gave specific recommendations aimed at, amongst others, providing the ground-work for new culturally sensitive development strategies, protecting cultural rights as human rights and to consolidate global ethics in global governance (UNESCO 1996). Following from *Our Creative Diversity*, UNESCO adopted an Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development in 1998. The 1998 Action Plan had as its first principle that, "Sustainable development and the flourishing of culture are interdependent". The second principle states that "One of the chief aims of human development is the social and cultural fulfilment of the individual". The Action Plan contains five objectives and recommendations to its member states: (1) "To make cultural policy one of the key components of development strategy; (2) "Promote creativity and participation in cultural life"; (3) "Reinforce policy and practice to safeguard and enhance the cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, moveable and immovable, and to promote cultural industries"; (4) "Promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information society"; and (5) "Make more human and financial resources available for cultural development". The UNESCO 1998 Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development was succeeded by the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2001. UNESCO maintains that the 2001 Declaration, which incorporates elements from both *Our Creative Diversity* and the 1998 Action Plan, presented the international community with a "wide-ranging standard-setting instrument to underpin its conviction that respect for cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue is one of the surest guarantees of peace and [sustainable] development" (UNESCO 2001). UNESCOs commitment to linking culture and development is reconfirmed in the 2005 Convention on the Protection and

Promotion of Expression of Cultural Diversity which states that cultural diversity "is a mainspring for sustainable development for communities, peoples and nations".

While UNESCO has been the main driver behind a greater consideration for culture in development, other influential agencies and institutions have also moved towards a fuller understanding of development – in the process absorbing the latest cultural rationale to different degrees. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a good example of such an institution. In 1990, the UNDP adopted the Human Development Index (HDI) which sought to shift the focus of policy makers from a growth-based economy, to a peoples-centred approach. The HDI, which covers 187 countries and territories, measures states' development relative to each other based on life expectancy, education and income levels (UNDP website accessed 1 February 2014), offers a broader perspective on development and poverty than the more conventional measurements of economic growth through GDPs and GNPs. The UNDP's concept of Human Development is the brain child of renowned economists Mahbub Ul Haq and Amartya Sen. Sen won the Nobel Prize winner in economics in 1998 for the capabilities-approach which lie at the core of the HDI and the UNDP's take on development. Sen sees development as a "process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy" (Sen 2001, p .3). His work explicitly links social and economic justice with human rights, arguing that human beings are active agents that through enhanced individual freedoms will create the conditions that will allow them to escape a state of deprivation. This 'freedom as development' perspective poses that the process of development is as important as the end-result. Moreover, that the complexity and interconnectedness of economic, social and political factors can either create 'freedoms' or 'unfreedoms' which again can either promote or restrain people's capabilities. In Sen's own words (2001, p. 5),

> What people can positively achieve is influenced by economic opportunities, political liberties social powers, and the enabling conditions of good health, basic education, and the encouragement and cultivation of initiatives.

Sen's work is in line with UNESCO's fundamental belief that people should be able to define their basic needs, and be enabled to live lives which they deem fulfilling. Critics of the capabilities-approach point out that it still rests on a Western modernist tradition, and that although Sen's framework offers a more complex understanding of human betterment his theory still ascribes to a Western historical trajectory and understanding of development. Therefore, the critics maintain, whereas it offers a broader perspective on development and poverty, it does not go far enough in challenging the status quo of conventional development thinking. However, Sen's reasoning around what constitutes a fulfilling life to an individual rests on assumptions of culture: although Sen does not explicitly mention culture, it still features as the framework for living a life which is seen as valuable. In this sense the capabilities-approach – and by extension UNDP's policy framework –

entails an approach to development that takes as its starting point, process and end-goal the wishes and aspirations of the society, group or community it is designed to serve.

The UNDP's latest venture revolves around the massively influential Millennium Development Goals; the MDG programme is the latest major global initiative against poverty. The MDGs, where the UNDP has been a key backer[4], represent a parallel initiative to UNESCO's drive towards a more cultural-based approach to development. Launched at the Millennium Summit in 2001, the eight MDGs with their 18 time-bound targets were not so much a new conceptual innovation as a re-commitment by the international community to the right of each person on the planet to health, education, shelter and security: commitments made by states during the 1990s. Initially the MDGs made no explicit reference to culture, however in 2004 UNDP published a Human Development Report on the importance of culture in facilitating stability and sustainable development. In its introduction the report states that (p. v),

> If the world is to reach the Millennium Development Goals and ultimately eradicate poverty, it must first successfully confront the challenge of how to build inclusive, culturally diverse societies. Not just because doing so successfully is a precondition for countries to focus properly on other priorities of economic growth, health and education for all citizens. But because allowing people full cultural expression is an important development end in itself.

The 2004 Report repeats Sen's argument that human development is enabling people to live the lives they deem valuable. The report aspires to "highlight the vast potential of building a more peaceful, prosperous world by bringing issues of culture to the mainstream of development thinking and practice" (vi). As such, while culture may not be one of the development goals, UNDP sees it as essential for realising the MDGs. However, the MDGs still rely on states to plan, execute and finance measures aimed at achieving the MDGs. The UNDP's role is largely advisory. Though the Human Development Report underlines the importance of considering culture in all stages of programme planning and implementation, the report offers little indication for how the international community should ensure that the development proposed is in line with the visions of that particular community. This significantly undermines the prospect of a more culture-sensitive approach to achieving the MDGs.

Other influential institutions have also published a number of reports and declarations discussing questions of culture to varying degrees. The World Bank is an example of how an institution can seemingly adopt (or co-opt) the cultural narrative, without changing its core activities. The World Bank, which is one of the key backers of the MDGs, is one of the most influential international financial institutions (IFIs), and one of the principal drivers of conventional economic models; since

4 Other initial backers included the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the G7 states (USA, UK, Canada, Japan, Germany, Italy and France).

the 1980s bank policy has increasingly centred on privatisation, decentralisation and pushing free trade across the globe. This is exactly the kind of mono-narrative of neoliberalism, or blue-print thinking, which Javier Pérez de Cuéllar criticised in *Our Creative Diversity* (UNESCO 1996). Yet, in the early 2000s the World Bank initiated a research project aimed at linking culture and poverty. The research programme, which was funded by the Dutch government, included World Bank staff and external research groups and networks, and also used Amartya Sen as an external advisor. It is therefore not surprising that a central 'finding' was that culture shapes what people value. The project furthermore stated that "culture influences how individuals, communities, informal and formal institutions respond to developmental changes, so knowledge of culture(s) is a means to effective poverty reduction" (World Bank website). However, when reviewing the research guidelines and subsequent learning outcomes the focus seems to have been more on how to integrate cultural concerns into current bank activity and policy, instead of tailoring bank activity and policy according to particular community needs and preconditions. The World Bank has also examined (and promoted) ways in which communities can capitalise on traditional knowledge and cultural heritage. In this sense, the Bank views culture as a commodity which gives communities and people access to mainstream economic activity, and does not engage with cultural frames that might render the Bank's vision of economic growth irrelevant. The World Bank has recently renewed its interest in the link between culture, politics and development (see Wolcock 2014), and the 2015 World Development Report will focus on culture in relation to mental models and human behaviour (World Bank website). It is unclear to what extent the report will focus on culture as the framework for its activities, or whether the report will see culture and behaviour as something which needs to be corrected for the bank's activities to work. Nevertheless, the Bank's move towards a cultural narrative in its policy, though superficial, shows how culture is of increasing interest and unavoidable as a topic, also for one of the most influential international financial institutions; it reflects the wider recognition of culture as being intrinsic to processes of societal organisation on the international policy agenda. However, by extension, culture is also the framework for processes of negotiation and conflict in society. The next section examines the role culture plays in both fuelling and ameliorating violent conflict, and the implications a greater consideration for culture has with respect to post-conflict rebuilding.

2.4 Culture in Conflict: Politicisation of Cultural Narratives and Identities

In the brief discussion on culture in the conceptual framework in Chapter 1 it was stated that culture can be enabling as well as restraining. As we have seen, this is for instance evident when

considering discussions on gender issues, where community customs and traditions can be seen as a framework for developing cultural identities, meaningful social relations and lives (see Kymlicka in Shell-Duncan 2007) or as cultural alibis to trump women's human rights (see Okin 1999). It is worth nothing, though, that the same mechanisms that trump women's human rights are often found in disputes over indigenous and/or minority rights, and more generally in armed civil conflicts across the world. In a general sense, on one hand, a shared cultural identity can be a powerful agent for conflict when subject to manipulation. On the other hand, respect for cultural diversity and the commitment to cultural plurality are imperative to the peaceful coexistence *between* as well as *within* countries. Conventional development has, conversely, in many instances strained ethnic and social relations (Peet and Hartwick 2009). When this strain is linked to cultural identification one often sees the politicisation and polarisation of cultural identity:

> As populations shift and their status changes, people turn to cultural distinctions embodied in their traditions to resist what is perceived as a threat to the integrity, prosperity or survival of their community, to the continuity of its culture or the transmission of its values (UNESCO 1996, p.55).

Because cultural identification is such a powerful rallying point for politics, it is often deeply embedded in conflicts over access to, and control over resources and power. This goes a long way in explaining why the majority of wars fought today are fought within countries. As the 1994 Human Development Report states, "[a]bout 40% of the world's states have more than five sizeable ethnic populations, one or more of which faces discrimination" (UNDP 1994, p. 32). The report goes on stating that competition between ethnic groupings over opportunities and resources leading to real or perceived exclusion accounts for increasing ethnic tension and was why, at the time of writing, "half of the world's states [had] recently experienced some interethnic strife" (ibid).The report also concludes that interethnic conflicts were exacerbated if they carried remnants of grievances from the Cold War. Similarly, the World Commission on Culture and Development highlights that, "many development failures and disasters (the civil wars in Nigeria, Rwanda and Burundi, the break-up of Pakistan) stem from an inadequate recognition of culture and ethnic complexities" (UNESCO 1996, p. 55).

Anderson makes similar observations when discussing causes of war and civil conflict: why conflict or war start and why they persist. She points out that, "[w]ars today are rarely started by poor and marginalized people united in battle as an expression of their deep-seated striving for a just society" (Anderson 1999, p. 9). Rather, escalation of conflict often comes after periods of intense political manipulation of cultural narratives and identities. Referring to testimonials collected as part of the *Local Capacities for Peace Project* in Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Anderson notes how (1999, p. 9), when "people describe the processes through which they have been led to fight wars" they are describing processes of politicisation.

These conflicts deepen injustice and poverty and, moreover, “deeply [undermined] the sociopolitical structures” (ibid) that generally mediate and/or regulate conflict in society. When cultural politicisation has spread to large segments of society, culture typically represents a significant deadlock in resolving the antagonistic characteristics that are lacing and often fuelling these types of conflicts.

Anderson refers to these processes of antagonism as dividers in conflict. Moreover, during prolonged conflict, apparatuses of government can either be used systematically to commit atrocities against certain groupings, or the total loss of governance and public order means that people become more vulnerable to ethnic violence and the general lawlessness that follow the breakdown of society. Anderson also observes how (1999, p. 15), “wars can be waged for years, deeply fragmenting social systems and causing many to suffer” and that, “[l]awlessness and thuggery lead to loss of social cohesion within the broader community”. In present day, the violent conflicts in Central African Republic, Mali, South-Sudan and northern Nigeria are examples of groupings pitted against each other in a frantic scramble for power and control of productive resources, and where cultural narratives are used to incite and justify the use of extreme violence. Violent conflict also often has material and social implications for cultural heritage; when culture politicises and cultural identities are in direct conflict, cultural heritage often becomes the direct target of grievances. In particular, as Logan notes (2012, p. 240), in areas that are unstable due to conflict over extended periods, “the destruction of cultural heritage is often both deliberate and devastating”. By destroying the cultural heritage of a community and/or people, one destroys the framework which underpins a sense of common identity, social cohesion and social capital. Silverman and Ruggles underline that, “it is precisely because cultural heritage is a significant aspect of identity that it is the arena where conflict occurs” (Silverman and Ruggles 2007, p. 5-6). History holds countless examples where the deliberate destruction of culture goes hand in hand with the demise of a society. Indeed, transmission and displacement of culture is in instances typically characterised by different degrees of conflict and violence: war, genocide and prolonged occupation represents extremes in this contexts. However, although the power of culture is evident when examining the ways in which cultural narratives and symbols are used to mobilise popular support for armed resistance and war, cultural narratives are also used to counter violent conflict.

Anderson underlines that just as there are dividers in conflict there are connectors that underline capacities for peace. Anderson's testimonial-based report shows that (1999, p. 24):

> Common history, culture, language and experience; shared institutions and values; economic and political interdependence; and habits of thinking and acting exist in all societies, including those embroiled in civil war.

When commonalities are used as connectors, they have the potential to act as capacities for peace. In addition, Anderson highlights the enabling capacity of traditional healing and peace and reconciliation mechanisms and processes and, moreover, that "all [conflicts] have individuals who assert the values of peace when prevalent warfare makes such positions unpopular and dangerous" (ibid). Anderson (p. 31) also specifically discusses the ways in which culture can act as an enabler for peace and solidarity if used correctly, underlining some ways in which "art, music, and literature and historic anniversaries, monuments, and ceremonies all provide connections in societies torn apart by civil war". She refers to three examples of how communities have mobilised cultural connectors to strengthen non-violent responses in times of war.

The first example is the educational magazine SAWA, which was published by UNICEF during the Lebanon conflict. The magazine which featured drawings made by children caught up in the fighting was subsequently distributed to other children also affected by the war, in bids to strengthen the connection between families living with children in war. The second example is from Bosnia and Herzegovina where music ensembles, choirs, and youth clubs put together with members from the different and adverse groupings, helped transcend the divides that had been solidified by the war. The third example is from Burundi, where the International Committee of the Red Cross invited a group of Burundians from different parts of society to "consider where in their own culture they could identify the aphorism and cultural values that conveyed humanitarian principles" (Anderson 1999, p. 30). Instead of using the words set down in the International Humanitarian Principles, principles that Burundi was already party to, the "group collected and organized sayings and myths shared across Burundi society" (ibid). The material was subsequently worked into plays and performed across the country. These examples, which focus on music, literature and performances, might seem superficial. However, every example takes a common cultural frame which is important to that particular society, and aims to build a cultural identity which stretches across conflict and destruction. In this sense, the examples featured illustrate that just as culture can politicise and antagonise, it also encompasses and builds shared experiences, interests and values from which anti-conflict initiatives can grow. As such, whereas these capacities for peace might not be enough to prevent armed conflict or war from erupting, Anderson stresses (1999, p. 24),

> Peace capacities are important because they provide the base of which future peace can and must be built. They are the existing – and potential – building blocks of systems of political and economic interaction that can ensure stable, peaceful, and just futures for societies once in conflict.

In a sense, culture is a double-edged sword: it can be a decisive point of contention in a conflict, or it can offer a non-violent shared means of resistance that can reconnect individuals and groupings divided by conflict. Moreover, as *Our Creative Diversity* underlines (UNESCO 1996, p. 57),

whereas “recent massive breaches of human rights have often been motivated by cultural considerations”, avoiding questions of culture has an even more profound effect on development outcomes and the viability of a society. Instead, as the third generation approach to culture in the UN system asserts, “ethnic identification is a normal and healthy response to the pressures of globalization” (ibid, p. 15), and it can strengthen communal identities leading to greater tolerance for cultural diversity. Moreover, considering the multi-ethnic state of most countries, building a state with a strong civil profile based on socio-cultural inclusion is vital for a stable and thriving society. Therefore, just as development needs to heed culture greater consideration, as Logan notes (2012, p. 240), cultural heritage policies in post-conflict setting “must be incorporated within broader objectives of redevelopment and recovery, including the accommodation of cultural diversity and rights”. As such, while conflict might add an additional layer of complexity of cultural consideration to development cooperation, it provides a powerful argument for why successfully incorporating cultural narratives that connect people is imperative when the aim is to promote processes that yield sustainable development, stability and peace. The last section highlights the implication of a more comprehensive culture-based approach to development in light of the discussion above.

2.5 Development is Dead, Long Live Development!

Development narratives strike a chord in the hearts and minds of people. However, there is clearly a need to reconceptualise and ground development in people's lived experiences. Though culture and human rights rationales are increasingly integrated into development policy, the question remains to what extent this is largely cosmetic. I believe this to be the case with the MDGs. The MDGs have generated a great deal of attention and apparent programme activity since they were launched in 2001. Yet, critics like Peet and Hartwick (2009) hold that the MDGs represent business as usual; though the Millennium Declaration and the 2004 Human Development Report have stated that culture is the underlying precondition for the work and that cultural human rights are an integral part of creating sustainable development and alleviate poverty, they underline that the MDG programme is still founded on a neoliberal framework and deploys conventional neoliberal instruments to achieve the same old goals. In short, then, the main targets and instruments are a rhetorical repackaging of the Washington Consensus and its neoliberal dogma. The MDGs consequently fail to address questions of social inequality, exclusion from political representation and other non-economic factors that not only mediate access to and control over productive resources, but issues that are important in their own right. A cultural-based approach to

development, on the other hand, draws on local capacities against global blueprint thinking and implementation, and opens up for alternative approaches to development.

There are conceptual differences and policy implications of the various approaches to culture and development. However, central to the more salient theoretical approaches is the recognition of the need to take culture as the starting point for interventions. The implication of a model that takes the preconditions of a specific setting as the starting point for subsequent development initiatives is that the course taken by development would be more in line with the material and cultural vision of the beneficiary/recipient community. In other words, the integration of a human rights perspective to discussions on culture and development, and *vice versa*, is a way of ensuring that donor countries respect these considerations to a greater degree. A greater interlocking of the concepts would also help to advance cultural questions in instances where it is politically problematic in the beneficiary country. For instance, on its own, the human rights system, though fulfilling an important normative function, does lack the capacity to enforce the implementation of the rights and goals set down in the various human rights instruments. This is because the international treaty system by and large rests on signatory states' willingness to uphold the rights of its citizens. This means that although current declarations and conventions involving culture bring it in line with greater human rights considerations, and UNESCO is pushing to "engage states in binding legal instruments representing a commitment to cultural diversity" (Logan 2012, p. 235), these moves are considered contentious and frequently resisted by a number of member states[5]. Cases relating to indigenous and minority rights, where cultural identities or development visions are typically in opposition to majority culture or national state, are often particularly problematic.

Development initiatives that frame their rationales in terms of culture and human rights offer new venues for approaches to human betterment. Though Uvin (2004, p. 16) warns that "adding human rights to the development agenda" might add weight to claims that "development ideology is Eurocentric", I would argue that it is precisely by framing global discussions on culture and human rights in local socio-cultural reality that one balances claims of universality against local considerations. Also with respect to conflict and post-conflict situations, an integral approach with an equal emphasis on culture and development is highly beneficial. While conflict is a natural part of everyday life, violent conflicts typically involve destruction of both material and socio-cultural infrastructure. This is particularly relevant when intense fighting use culture for political purposes and where cultural elements of the perceived enemy have been targeted. A decisive part of the post-

5 The fact that UNESCO is an inter-governmental organisation and therefore based on principles of consensus building also has implications for the way human rights are conceptualised. This underlines the importance of seeing human rights concepts in light of changing social, political and economic contexts.

conflict rebuilding is going back to finding non-violent ways of mediating conflicts of interest and various expectations. Only then can development cooperation begin to build societies that are stable and development that is sustainable. Development initiatives that ignore the wider socio-cultural factors risk overseeing narratives and mechanisms that can either trigger or mediate conflict. As such, a cultural-based development also offers a more comprehensive approach to preventing and/or ameliorating conflict and to rebuilding communities in post-conflict settings. Norway is one of the countries that have seemingly brought the broadening concept of culture and cultural human rights into its greater foreign political consideration and subsequent public policy. The next chapter examines the extent to which Norway incorporates the central themes and human rights considerations into its co-operation and development interventions abroad, particularly its commitment in light of its wider foreign political considerations.

Chapter 3

Culture in Focus: Norwegian Foreign Policy, Public Diplomacy and Interventions

Norway adopted a human-rights based approach to development in 2001. This significant shift came shortly after the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the introduction of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, where Norway also adopted the stance that the principal aim of its international development policy was to contribute to meeting the UN goals. Norway has also been an active participant in UNESCO's work on culture, which was discussed in the previous chapter. In line with current conceptual and normative thought, a number of reports stipulating the importance of linking culture, development and human rights in Norwegian foreign interventions and co-operation have been published since the turn of the millennium. Expressing that cultural heritage has the potential to create grounds for increased knowledge and contact across political and religious divides, the government has also positioned cultural heritage as an integral part of Norway's cultural co-operation with developing countries.

This chapter discusses the basis for Norwegian interventions abroad with regard to development and culture, in particular, Norway's commitment to international organisation, law and policy, and its cultural-political priorities and foreign policy. The chapter will unpack how Norwegian policy envisions cultural development and culture *in* development, and how this affects practical considerations abroad. The first section briefly outlines Norway's international cultural heritage commitments, and how these have shaped Norwegian perceptions on its international role and at home and overseas. The second section critically surveys key government papers to mark shifts in approaches to conceptualising interventions abroad with respect to culture, while the third section explores and problematises the political aspects of Norwegian cultural-based interventions abroad. The fourth section presents the international programme activity of the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage (NDCH), and central findings from interviews conducted with international programme staff at the directorate in the period 2012-2014. The final section concludes that Norwegian policy on foreign cultural cooperation needs to problematise culture in relation to political aspects of power and conflicts, and examine the wider implication this has for public interventions abroad.

3.1 Norway's International Cultural Heritage Commitment

In addition to the core UN human rights instruments that safeguard the right to culture and the UNESCO declarations and treaties reviewed in Chapter 2, Norway has ratified a number of international conventions on the protection of cultural heritage. These international and regional conventions form a comprehensive network of legal texts aimed at securing and promoting cultural heritage in times of peace and conflict. However, more than this, international cultural heritage policy has been instrumental in the way Norway conceptualises its foreign development commitment. In order to understand the shift towards a greater emphasis on culture in Norwegian foreign policy and public policy papers, this section examines the Norway's international cultural heritage policy commitments.

Norway is signatory to four UNESCO conventions on cultural heritage that are of particular relevance here. These Conventions oblige Norway to work against the destruction of cultural heritage in times of conflict[6]; to prevent the illicit import, export and transfer of cultural property[7]; to participate in and uphold international cooperation and assistance relating to UNESCO world heritage sites – that is, cultural and natural heritage with exceptional and universal value seen from a historic, artistic, scientific or aesthetic perspective[8]; and recognise the importance of intangible, immaterial cultural heritage on equal terms as tangible, material cultural heritage[9]. UNESCO's Cultural heritage texts emulate the policy trends discussed in Chapter 2 and, as such, the 2003 UNESCO Convention also explicitly links cultural cooperation to overall human rights considerations, the right of sub-groupings and communities and sustainable development.

In addition to the conventions pertaining directly to cultural heritage, Norway ratified the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression in

6 The 1954 UNESCO Treaty on the Protection of Cultural Property in Armed Conflict (the Hague Convention) was ratified by Norway in 1961. The Treaty represented a reaction to the immense material destruction that took place during World War II, while aiming to promote respect for cultural property and to put in place measures during peace time that counter the effects of armed conflict. The original text of the Hague Convention focuses on protecting tangible cultural heritage. An additional protocol of 1999 sought to counter destructions on cultural heritage during internal armed conflicts, and introduced instruments and sanctions when the convention is broken by member states. Norway has of today not ratified the 1999 protocol.

7 The 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property was ratified by Norway in 2007. Norway is also signatory to the 1995 International Institute for the Unification of Private Law's (Unidroit) Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, which stresses the "fundamental importance of the protection of cultural heritage and of cultural exchange for promoting understanding between peoples, and the dissemination of culture for the well-being of humanity and the progress of civilisation" in its preamble. The Unidroit Convention overlaps with the work done in relation to the 1970 UNESCO Convention. Though the Unidroit Convention is an important legal instrument for cooperation between the 36 contracting states, the convention does not match the same normative function of the UNESCO cultural heritage conventions. Norway ratified the Unidroit Convention in 2001.

8 The UNESCO World Heritage Convention was adopted by Norway was the 1977. The Convention which came into force in 1975, has been ratified by 175 countries and is the most widely ratified convention on cultural heritage, iincluded both cultural and environmental aspects.

9 The 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage was ratified by Norway in 2007.

2007. This convention refers to cultural heritage only once, and only to broaden the protection of cultural diversity past the conventional conception of cultural heritage:

> Cultural diversity is made manifest not only through the varied ways in which the cultural heritage of humanity is expressed, augmented and transmitted through the variety of cultural expressions, but also through diverse modes of artistic creation, production, dissemination, distribution and enjoyment, whatever the means and technologies used (UNESCO 2005).

The UNESCO conventions reflect the transition towards deeper recognition of the importance of the multiplicity of cultural expression, but they also signify a significant shift towards culture as a framework perspective – with the final UNESCO convention extending past conventional concepts of cultural heritage altogether. In this sense the later UNESCO conventions represent important normative standard setters not only for inclusion of wider cultural considerations in cultural heritage cooperation, but also for development cooperation in general.

Norway has furthermore signed a number of conventions and articles relating to the cultural heritage of indigenous and first nations people. These include the UN Convention on biodiversity of 1992, the ILO Convention no 169/1989 on indigenous and tribal peoples, and The Council of Europe's Convention on the protection of national minorities. These conventions highlight the importance of preserving natural habitats and biodiversity in order to preserve cultural diversity, particularly in relation to first nations, indigenous and tribal peoples: due to "the close and traditional dependence of many indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles on biological resources" (UN 1992). The emphasis on biological resources highlights the need to see land as more than a natural landscape to preserve, but also as a natural resource which makes up an intrinsic part of people's livelihoods. The aforementioned conventions must also be seen in relation to the conventions and declarations on development; the argument for an integral cultural rights-based approach to development is particularly relevant with regard to these communities as the direction development would take is subject to the respective communities' cultural and natural preconditions. These last legal provisions are relevant for Norway's internal policies, and in relation to political and public interventions, co-operation and business ventures abroad.

Norway is also party to a number of regional conventions concerning the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. The Council of Europe has five conventions relating to the protection of cultural heritage that Norway is party to[10]. All the conventions encourage signatory states to develop a comprehensive and diverse national cultural heritage as part of a common European cultural heritage. The later conventions also emphasise the value and role of cultural heritage as "a

10 The 1954 European Cultural Convention; the 1985 Convention on the Protection of Architectural Heritage (Grenada Convention); 1992 Revised Convention on the Protection of Architectural Heritage (Valetta Convention); the 2000 European Landscape Convention; and the 2005 Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention).

resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society" (The Council of Europe 2005). The Council of Europe's (2011), *The Role of Culture and Cultural Heritage in Conflict Prevention, Transformation, Resolution and Post-Conflict Action*, while recognising the uses of cultural heritage in conflict, reinforces cultural heritage's role in promoting cultural diversity, as a means for people to "[fulfil their] potential as European citizens" (p. 2), and as a source of economic development. The conventions have helped drive cooperation and exchanges in the cultural heritage field in Europe, and have been particularly important for the development of Norway's role as a cultural aid donor in Europe. As we shall see, Regional European cultural heritage cooperation has shaped how cultural-based interventions are conceptualised and implemented in general. European cultural heritage cooperation is also in line with Norwegian perceptions of its role in international cooperation.

Norway has in the past taken an active role in pushing international policy development with regard to a more comprehensive human rights approach. This commitment to international law and normative standards has been important for both the domestic self-image and external projection of Norway as an international player. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2005, p. 13) has on numerous occasions explicitly stated that "[Norway's] role as a driving force in humanitarian efforts is a key element in our international reputation". The Ministry subsequently identified cultural cooperation as an ideal venue for showcasing Norway's commitment to humanitarian standards:

> Active cultural contact across national borders is an excellent opportunity for a state to promote its international image by showing what it stands for and what it is able to contribute to the international community (ibid).

Indeed, Norway takes great pride in its cultural cooperation with countries in the South. The next section examines the extent to which this commitment is matched by Norwegian foreign and public policy.

3.2 Norwegian Cultural Cooperation: From Foreign Policy Considerations to International Cultural Heritage Interventions

The relation between Norwegian foreign policy and public policy is key to understanding efforts to transpose international obligations to national level. This section examines the discursive shift that has taken place in Norway since the early 2000s with respect to cultural, human rights and development interventions abroad (and the subsequent conceptual aim of foreign interventions).

Norway has generally harmonised its domestic policy and legislation in accordance with international human rights law. In addition to the international legal instruments, there are a number

of domestic white papers, ministerial working papers and strategies that set out the priorities and aims of Norway's cultural cooperation, and shape programme initiatives and project funding. The main bulk of domestic policy publications on the right to culture and the government's aims with regard to work on culture abroad, originate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of the Environment[11]. The various publications provided by the two Ministries, make up an overlapping and complementary body of policy documents. One of the first reports published by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs following the adoption of a human-rights based approach to development in 2001, *Fighting Poverty Together* (MFA 2004), affirmed that cultural rights are a fundamental part of human rights, and should be promoted as such. The report, which is generally referred to as the 2004 Development strategy, also stated that the promotion of culture through development cooperation should emphasise human rights in general and freedom of expression more specifically. The 2004 Development strategy identified cultural cooperation as a key component in the fight against global poverty and as an instrument in achieving the MDGs.

In 2005 the Ministry published a follow-up document on international cultural cooperation, titled *Norway's Culture and Sports Co-operation with Countries in the South* (MFA 2005), aimed at providing a comprehensive approach to cultural management and cooperation. The 2005 Co-operation strategy – which remains a key policy document to this day – outlined an approach to cultural cooperation that was intrinsically two-fold. Firstly, Norwegian cultural co-operation should aspire to strengthen Norwegian cultural life internationally and Norwegian interests abroad in general; secondly, echoing the 2004 Development strategy, Norwegian cultural co-operation with countries in the South should aim to strengthen the cultural sector in development countries as a step towards promoting human rights, strengthening civil society and fighting poverty. As an additional note, the 2005 Co-operation strategy held that contact with other cultures is important in order to foster a sense of cultural diversity inside Norway too, and that "cultural input from distant parts of the world stimulates new ideas, provides alternatives to the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture industry" (MFA 2005, p. 15). The report also expressed hope that a greater emphasis on cultural cooperation will increase public understanding and support for Norwegian foreign development involvement in Norway.

The 2005 Co-operation Strategy conceptualised 'culture as identity' and 'culture as expression'. The strategy maintained that 'culture as identity' perspective is important as it sheds light on culture as vital for the development of the individual self, and acts as a communal frame which promotes and maintains social cohesion and values. The 'culture as identity' frame also underlined that specific

11 The Ministry of the Environment was restructured and renamed The Ministry of Climate and Environment in 2014, in connection with change of government.

culture and value systems "have an impact on the way society is organised, how resources are distributed and what and how decisions are made" (MFA 2005, p. 9). Accordingly, the 2005 Co-operation Strategy further emphasised that "a thorough knowledge of local socio-cultural features is essential to the success of activities in most of the priority areas in Norway's development policy" (ibid). The second conception of culture in the strategy, 'culture as expression', refers to "the creative expression and skills, traditional knowledge and cultural resources that form part of the life of an individual and society" (MFA 2005, p. 11). Though the two approaches to development are not mutually exclusive, it is 'culture as expression' which is presently emphasised in foreign policy consideration – that is the importance of both tangible and intangible cultural factors in creating spaces for social and political dialogue and interaction, free access to information and a strong civil society, and as grounds for commercial activity. The 2005 Co-operation strategy also underlined that one of the principal aims of Norway's foreign policy involvement abroad was to protect and secure international cultural heritage and cultural landscapes against abuse and destruction, and to help transform them to national resources which facilitate sustainable development, peace and democracy: the government wanted to emphasise co-operation with countries in the South with regard to using their cultural heritage and landscapes as positive additions in the development process.12 This link between cultural heritage and commerce is particularly prominent in policy documents from the World Bank (see above; also see Wolcock 2014) and early publications from UNESCO. This approach has also been instrumental in preserving cultural heritage sites in Norway.

The Norwegian Ministry of the Environment is responsible for cultural heritage policy. It has published a number of papers on cultural rights in line with the foreign policy agenda formulated as part of the 2005 Co-operation strategy. The main guiding principles for the international programme activity have been largely based on the current objectives of the domestic cultural heritage policy, outlined in the working paper, *Fortid former framtid*, which translates to 'the past shapes the future'[13] (Ministry of the Environment 2002). This paper's main vision was that cultural heritage and cultural environments and landscapes are the frameworks from which we make sense of the world and, hence, are sources for experiences, value production and sustainable development. The 2002 Working paper was followed up with the white paper, *Leve med kulturminner*, which translates to 'living with cultural heritage' (Ministry of the Environment 2004), which pans out the Norwegian government's cultural heritage strategy towards 2020 in an attempt to demonstrate the ways in which it is an invaluable cultural, social and economic resource. The white paper also stipulated that cultural heritage and cultural life are vital elements in societies' collective memory,

12 This last point on the practical uses of cultural heritage is adopted from policy papers published by the Ministry of the Environment.

13 Translated from Norwegian.

and therefore vital for creating stable and thriving societies. In this sense, the policy maintains that knowledge, narratives and experiences that have great significance for groups' and individuals' sense of belonging, self-understanding, development and well-being all draw on cultural heritage.

In this way, cultural heritage is seen as the basis for creating communal identity and for sustaining the link between the past and the present. Cultural heritage is also seen in light of its economic development potential: drawing on the 2004 Development strategy, *Living with Cultural Heritage*, the Ministry of the Environment maintained that cultural heritage contributes to sustainable development in that it takes as its starting point the socio-political, historical, cultural and natural preconditions of a place and its people. In other words, active use of one's cultural heritage contributes to development which is grounded in one's lived and shared knowledge and available natural resources. This bottom-up type of development can support the ability to self-govern, and contains important democratic elements. As such, the papers maintain, the cultural heritage field can be the foundation for sustainable social, economic and cultural development. This makes the management of cultural heritage to an important tool for the long-term and permanent solution to poverty and financial dependency, and is why the Norwegian government emphasises it as part of its foreign policy strategy. Finally, in addition to outlining the domestic action plan for cultural heritage management, this white paper finally incorporates Norway's commitment to the preservation of cultural heritage internationally. However, of the 93-page report, only seven relate to actual international programme activity, and most of the text referred to international conventions and declarations that Norway is party to.

The 2005 Co-operation strategy and the white papers published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment aim to ensure that international programme activity is in line with and part of a comprehensive foreign policy approach to development and cultural management. However, critics argue that the 2005 Co-operation strategy is elusive and that the government has failed to back up the strategy with policy recommendations and concrete instruments (NORAD 2009). Also the white papers and strategies published by the Ministry of the Environment reiterate cultural management policy documents without offering further insight into how these goals should be achieved. Both the Foreign Ministry's most recent white paper on the government's international cultural efforts, Regjeringens internasjonale kulturinnsats (2012a), which translates to 'the government's international cultural efforts', and the Ministry of the Environment's latest report, *Fremtid med fotfeste* (2012), or 'future with a foothold', reconfirm the cultural-political priorities, aims and policy recommendations from previous reports, without providing more concrete measures and instruments to achieve the goals.

Another point of contention relates to budget allocations. The 2005 Co-operation strategy stated that the government wanted a more coherent cultural-cooperation that would "help to make the field of culture more visible in Norwegian development policy" (MFA 2005, p. 23). However, in 2013, whereas the total Norwegian budget for aid and development was 32.8 billion NOK, more than 1% of the country's GDP, a 'mere' 10014 million NOK was allocated to programmes with a cultural profile (Norad website). The main emphasis for allocations is projects focused on expressive culture. While the strategies recognises the need for a comprehensive approach to culture as a framework, the 'culture as identity' frame, to date there have been no provisions aimed at following up development projects with respect to evaluating culture in development in general. The limited budget allocations betray a somewhat inevitable inability and the lack of apparent resolve to provide a more significant engagement with deeper cultural considerations in Norway's approach to development cooperation. Furthermore, the policy papers fail to adequately engage with the political aspects of culture – aspects that might complicate foreign interventions; minority rights, gender rights, and sexual rights are some of the rights that need to be considered in a wider human right approach to development, but that might be contentious or unwelcome in recipient, exchange or partner community/country. As such, whereas culture is formulated as key to upholding human rights and ensuring the success of development goals in the Norwegian foreign policy, and wider development and human rights goals are highlighted in Norwegian cultural heritage policy, the documents fail to adequately problematise the political aspects of culture, cultural heritage and cultural identity. The next section examines some of the conceptual and practical challenges that arise when policy fails to adequately deal with political aspects of an integral approach to culture, human rights and development.

3.3 The Politics of Cultural Development

Norway's international commitments and domestic law and policy means that Norwegian-based interventions are obliged to adopt an integrated approach to culture, human rights and development in its ventures abroad. As we have seen in Chapter 2, 'culture' - and by extension cultural rights, 'human rights' and 'development' are intensely political concepts, which might be viewed as problematic in host/recipient countries. This section explores the political underpinnings of

14 Included in this figure were activities related to community-development, human rights, peace and reconciliation and the environment. The main bulk of the culture allocation budget was earmarked for institutional development. Support for exchanges and multilateral organisations also represented a substantial bulk of the total allocation. Allocations to media-related development are under a separate post and amounted to about 50 million NOK.

Norwegian cultural interventions abroad in relation to stakeholders and power, national identity, and Scham's (2003) concepts of public and political diplomacy.

Although one of the main objectives for Norway's cultural policy is to support the emergence of a "well-functioning cultural infrastructure" in developing countries, and to "create programmes that promote a dynamic cultural life that stimulates artistic, intellectual and cultural heritage activities" (MFA 2005, p. 19) very little is said about the political aspects of cultural aid and using cultural heritage in development initiatives. Moreover, whereas the 2005 Co-operation strategy and the subsequent white papers emphasise culture as expression in their international programme activity, all the domestic and international action plans are at the same time grounded in the belief that culture identity and cultural heritage are intrinsically linked to processes of community and nation building. Cultural heritage is seen as representing a powerful agent for the creation of communal values in the past and present day communities, and for future generations. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, culture as a programme area is also fraught with contention and controversy as both culture and cultural heritage invoke questions of power. The 2005 Co-operation strategy underlined that Norway's cultural co-operation aims to be "inclusive and strengthen common frames of reference and to avoid exclusion and differentiation" (MFA 2005, p. 15). As part of this Norway's cultural co-operation should seek direct contact with civil society actors with the aim of "[identifying] potentially influential agents of change in civil society, [and] to enter into a dialogue with them in the form of competence- and capacity-building" (ibid, p. 13). The rationale is that a strong civil society would drive a development that would be more desirable and democratic. This is achieved, amongst others, by involving a diverse range of stakeholders. The strategy also made explicit reference to opposition groups in authoritarian regimes, and "marginalised groups that are unable for various reasons to make their voices heard through more official channels for dialogue and cooperation" (ibid, p. 10). However, all the white papers and strategies repeatedly state that in order to ensure national ownership of the cultural co-operation in beneficiary countries, it is imperative that the developing countries themselves "define priorities and decide which sectors should receive assistance" (ibid, p. 13). This is a contradiction in the sense that national ownership might not be possible in instances where projects aim to strengthen the institutional capacity of groupings that are deemed unwanted by national governments in the receiving country. Moreover, the same forces that discriminate against and exclude individuals and groups from public governance processes also restrict access to productive resources and economic activities. This is even more true in instances where economic development is directly based on cultural heritage activities, but not something which the strategy papers discuss.

One possible reason for why the cultural heritage policy fails to problematise discord and conflict between groupings and communities could be that it replicates the domestic papers, which are underlined by a particular idea and model of culture of national identity-building in Norway. The idea of a common Norwegian identity rose to prominence during the second half of Nineteenth Century, during the romantic period in northern Europe. Norway had been the lesser part of unions with Denmark and Sweden for some 700 years. The result was a strong local and regional belonging, and an underdeveloped sense of national identity. However, following the creation of a Norwegian Constitution in 1814, and particularly during the period between 1850s and early1900s, focus on building a common Norwegian language, collecting popular folklore, music and artisan crafts, and romantic art glorifying the countryside saw the formation of a national narrative that still dominates today. This narrative was to a large degree manufactured by a select group of middle-class men in the capital and the South-eastern regions of Norway. One result of this is that despite the coastline being instrumental in the country's wealth-creation, narratives from Norwegian coast-life are almost completely lacking. Also Norwegian indigenous communities lamented the formation of the constitution which saw them loose self-determination, the right to land and the right to vote. Though steps have been taken to build a more nuanced understanding of the processes of nationhood in Norway in recent years, most Norwegians seemingly have an unproblematic relation to the processes of exclusion that took place during the creation of the 'national' narrative. Moreover, critiques voiced in connection with the 200-year anniversary of the Norwegian Constitution spring 2014 were by many seen as very negative, which is indicative of the hegemonic character of the national narrative. The animosity over diverging Norwegian cultural heritage and identity narratives show that these issues remain highly political – even though these discursive processes were initiated in the 1800s, and alternative narratives pose no immediate threat to the stability of the nation. It is unclear to what extent the dominant historical understanding of nation-building in Norway is implicit in the Norwegian foreign policy papers. However, it is vital that policy-makers and programme officers engage with the political nature of identity in other countries, the struggle of competing narratives, and processes of building dominant narratives at the expense of alternate narratives. For instance, as was the case with coastal communities in the northern Norway, and as we will see with the narratives on conflict in northern Uganda, sometimes a 'non-presence' of narrative is evidence of the asymmetrical power-relations that exist within a community and/or country. This is also often the case with gender, and drawing on Okin's argument that cultural narratives typically perpetuate injustices committed against women, cultural co-operation that fails to problematise repressive gender rationales reinforce these processes. The same goes for discrimination of minorities, indigenous people, and other disaffected groupings. Therefore, what this discussion reveals is that there is often inherent tension between the protection

and promotion of cultural diversity and the promotion of communal or national cohesion and identity.

Norway is obliged through its international and domestic commitments to promote human rights in all its activities, also where it is unpopular. However, as a consequence, cultural co-operation is at times likely to be experienced as politically problematic in host/recipient countries. This in turn might conflict with the primary political priority of Norwegian foreign policy, namely to strengthen Norwegian interests abroad. This issue reveals a central challenge to Norwegian foreign policy aim that results from the different levels of governance and project implementation, what Scham refers to as the dissonance between political and public diplomacy. Most public agencies in Norway are involved in some sort of co-operation within its field. However, Scham (2003, p. 167) underlines that whereas "[g]overnment agencies dealing with foreign policy" have been sensitised to dealing with precarious issues without offending, other public agencies might not have the same awareness. Scham discusses the relation between American foreign policy and public diplomacy with regard to the Israel-Palestine conflict, but her observations are highly relevant to understanding constraints on cultural exchange programmes in general. Scham (2003, p. 168) furthermore argues that there is often a gap between political and public diplomacy and it is naïve to assume the latter supports the former. The reason for this is that whereas,

> foreign policy refers to the means by which government leaders communicate with each other at the highest level, […] public diplomacy focuses on citizens and their beliefs and values with respect to the relationships between other countries and their own.

Cultural heritage in particular "[rests] upon a firm grounding of respect for traditions – in other words, the past" (ibid). As such, in particular cultural co-operation that aims to promote cultural heritage in post-conflict settings will have to engage with and balance converging interests.

It seems an increasingly comprehensive approach to human rights, culture and development requires a greater range of competences from policy makers and programme staff. The next section reviews the NDCH's international programme activity with respect to development interventions and discusses some institutional and organisational challenges that arise as a result of the increasing demands placed on cultural management professionals.

3.4 The Norwegian Directorate Cultural Heritage: International Programme Activity

Norway's culture cooperation is mainly based on projects which aim to strengthening institutions in host/recipient countries. One of the preconditions for cooperation is "long-term capacity-building in the developing country in question" (MFA 2005, p. 19). The government assigns programme

activity to relevant institutions and organisations. One such institution is the NDCH. The NDCH reports directly to the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment, and its mandate is to contribute to and strengthen international instruments to secure human cultural rights, with a particular focus on preserving and stimulating cultural diversity (NDCH website, accessed 25 sept 2012). Part of its responsibility is to follow up the obligations set down in relevant conventions, contribute to other countries doing the same, and to work actively to carry through the global strategies of the World Commission on Culture and Development and the World Heritage Committee. The Directorate also works to strengthen cultural heritage in Norway's environmental and development cooperation abroad, which is relevant to this study. International and national policy are key resources for NDCH's programme activity.

Though cultural heritage is political in nature, the NDCH defines its role and functions as mainly technical and technocratic. It does not have the mandate to initiate projects abroad, but will mobilise the technical expertise and financial resources at its disposal to follow up its programme responsibilities domestically and abroad. The head of the international section explained, that the NDCH receive its project assignments from three channels: (1) from the Norwegian Royal Embassies that have mandates to initiate cultural cooperation in their respective countries, (2) at request from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and (3) from programme activity located under UNESCO's Extra Budgetary Funds mechanisms (Interview with NDCH, 28 March 2014). In instances where the NDCH is asked to take the overarching responsibility for project management, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs typically allocate additional funds to the project, which is either channelled directly to the relevant institution/project in the country in question or to the NDCH which then transfer money to partners (generally in instalments). The NDCH has had international commitments in various parts of the world. Chapter 5 will specifically discuss one of the projects undertaken by NDCH and local partners in northern Uganda in 2009-2013. However, presently, the NDCH's major international programme activity is linked with the EEA Financial Mechanism. This programme activity gives insight into how Norwegian foreign cultural co-operation and development is executed.

The EEA Financial Mechanism, which consists of the so-called EEA Grants and Norway Grants, aims to "[reduce] [the] economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area" (EEA Grants website 8 April 2014). Norway funds 95.8 of the total pot of 1 billion euro[15] of the EEA Grants and an additional 804 million euro through the Norway Grants. Of this, 201.4 million euros are allocated to programmes designed to promote and protect Cultural heritage and diversity in the

15 The donor countries consist of Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland, and the countries that joined the EU in 2007 and 2010 make up the receiving countries.

16 beneficiary countries.[16] The funding is not counted towards the cultural allocation on the development budget. When EEA funding was first opened up to cultural heritage support in 2004, the response from interested nations and institutions was overwhelming and the Norwegian Ministry of Affairs subsequently requested the NDCH to act as a permanent advisor to the programme area. The EEA grants are negotiated for a period of five years, and the programme activity is organised through bilateral partnership programmes. Whereas the beneficiary countries are responsible for the application process, and choose their own socio-cultural priorities, the NDCH is available in an advisory capacity throughout the application and implementation process[17].

Both programme design and subsequent evaluations are measured against the aims of the EEA Financial Mechanism and wider European Union goals. This means that the cultural heritage programmes in addition to being designed with the aim of contributing to decreasing economic and social disparities in the EEA[18], also have to take into consideration the overarching goals set down in both the European and International human rights law. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also involved in ensuring that the programmes fulfil the human rights requirements, and it has for instance set a 10% fund requirement with respect to inclusion of indigenous and minority groupings' considerations in the Romanian programmes. This specification from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in line with the programme responsibility awarded cultural management programmes in both the international body of human rights texts and the domestic policy papers. However, from the point of view of the NDCH it somewhat extends its programme responsibility beyond the competence of its programme staff (Interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014).

Various programme advisors at the NDCH have expressed that although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment use the NDCH's international programme results actively to display the ways in which cultural management can directly contribute to processes of sustainable development, peace building and democratisation processes, the programme advisors maintain that its responsibility and function is first and foremost related to their technical expertise. As such, gains made with respect to human rights, development and democracy are in their view an indirect result of the ways these programmes are designed. One example voiced relate to the working-model implemented in the working groups (Interview with NDCH, 11 November 2013):

16 The current beneficiary countries are the 16 less prosperous EU countries in Central and Southern Europe.

17 As with its other international programme activity, the NDCH cannot initiate projects on behalf of beneficiary countries or chose its programme partners. However, in some instances, as with the bilateral agreement between Romania and Norway under the EEA Grant for period 2009-2014, Romania has explicitly written the NDCH in as a donor programme partner.

18 All the projects are designed with tourism in mind, and the projects have typically facilitated training of both skilled and unskilled labourers to maintain the sites for future use (Interview with NDCH 28 March 2014).

by extending the conventional flat-hierarchy work model in its bilateral co-operation, the way projects are run are more democratic and egalitarian. Advisors at the NDCH maintain that this in turn means that the local programme staff has displayed a greater willingness to include and ensure accessibility to local communities.

Another reason for the scepticism expressed by programme advisors on the conceptual and practical broadening of culture to related areas, is the fact that it puts greater pressure on the knowledge and competence of programme advisors in assessing the scope of projects. All the programme advisors at NDCH that were interviewed for the thesis underlined that cultural heritage is intrinsically political as it touches upon crosscutting issues of identity, history and representation. However, as cultural heritage is broadened to include more intangible aspects of culture, and wider foreign political considerations are integrated into NDCH programme areas, the advisors are expected to operate in a field which at times goes beyond their technical and technocratic competences. In the case of the EEA and Norway Grants, cultural heritage experts are increasingly expected to ensure that the projects adequately address wider political and human rights considerations (Interview NDCH, 28 March 2014). Although all projects that have been selected for the Grants have gone through a process of selection, previously these selection processes were based more on technical criteria and the projected success and impact of the project (e.g. to what extent preservation of a type of building is possible given the time and resources available). Programme staff expressed that when selection processes are extended past the technical scope it becomes infinitely more political. However, in the long run, the legitimacy of cultural heritage management is dependent on its capacity to maintain cultural diversity, which again preconditions the right to freedom of expression, the right to access to and participate in cultural life by all the various groupings that make up a society. This necessitates a wider analysis of the community that a cultural heritage intervention is intended to serve. As such, whereas, as the head of international section at NDCH underlined, one can never presume to be an expert on another country's or community's culture, the underlying power structures that either include or exclude cultural narratives must be examined in light of human rights (Interview with NDCH, 28 March 2014). The last section in this chapter summarises the Norwegian policy efforts, and the conceptual and institutional challenges and opportunities that emerge as a result of a more ‘holistic’ approach to cultural heritage interventions abroad.

3.5 Norwegian Foreign Interventions: Cultural, Human Rights *and* Development Experts?

Norwegian policy-makers have taken important steps to harmonise domestic legislation and foreign policy recommendations in line with Norway's international obligations; there has been a distinct discursive move towards a greater interlocking of culture, human rights and development in both Norwegian foreign and public policy. However, though Ministry of Foreign Affairs' and the Ministry of the Environment's documents and officials have repeatedly proclaimed the intent of integrating culture as a prerequisite to development initiatives, wider earmarked budget allocations have yet to appear and there are no formal mechanisms to ensure that Norwegian development is in line with its cultural goals. Rather, Norwegian cultural cooperation is first and foremost channelled through to pre-existing institutions and partners in the cultural field. After discussing with NDCH staff, and reviewing some of their international programme activity, there are few indications that the institution and its international programme staff have been sensitised with respect to the increasing focus on human rights and development in international and national policy and the implications this has for their international programme activity. The NDCH programme staff displayed an impressive awareness of the intricacies of concepts and challenges that can arise in relation to their work. However, Norwegian policy and strategy-papers do not adequately engage with potential practical challenges encountered by cultural-based development interventions, or interventions where culture is an integral part of subsequent development and peace rationales.

When development and human rights concerns are integrated into cultural interventions, project concerns on the ground must be balanced against political agendas at all levels. Also, when wider political considerations are bound more tightly to programme design this will in some instances lead to a more apparent politicisation of cultural heritage. This is evident when examining the EEA programme in relation to cultural heritage and human rights considerations: while EEA beneficiary countries might prefer to avoid minority rights and other 'problematic' questions in their cultural heritage programmes – for instance, the inclusion of protection of Roma or Jewish heritage, or questions freedom of expression or access to their cultural heritage (which are considered controversial) – these debates are already taking place at the European level, making it more straightforward for donor countries to insist on their importance. However, in instances where issues over cultural minorities or indigenous people are particularly inflamed, wider political concerns can hinder or complicate concerns over the protection of cultural heritage management. As we shall see in Parts 2 and 3, this is even more imperative when projects are implemented in conflict and/or post-conflict settings; cultural heritage touches upon issues of identity, memory and representations, and in conflict and post-conflict settings these aspects will be even more aggressively contested (Giblin 2012, p. 18).

A related challenge to cultural-based interventions is the inherent tensions that exist between public and political diplomacy: while public interventions typically focus on capacity-building in specific programme areas foreign political concerns that have as prerequisite to promote Norwegian interests abroad. However, at the same time, "by linking culture to democracy and sustainable development through a human rights based approach one creates grounds for insistence of its importance" (Tandberg 2012a, p. 13). As such, a greater human rights focus means that both political and public dialogue and programme activity cannot ignore controversial issues if they are in breach of wider human rights considerations. What is more, "when cultural diversity is integrated into human rights as a prerequisite for sustainable development, cultural heritage management [offers] new venues for examining communal trauma and healing in post-conflict situations" (ibid). As such, Norwegian policy should engage more comprehensively with relation between cultural heritage, rights and identity and their significance socio-political stability and sustainable development. The conflict in northern Uganda and the recent project undertaken by NDCH and the National Museum of Uganda (NMU) is the perfect lens from which one can explore the complementary aspects and inherent tensions that exist between the concepts of culture, development and human rights. Part 2 examines narratives in relation to the conflict in northern Uganda, before going into the NDCH's cultural heritage projects in northern Uganda.

PART 2

The two chapters in Part 2 critically examine the narratives that emerged and shaped the conflict and post-conflict setting in northern Uganda, and the Norwegian-funded intervention in northern Uganda aimed at providing post-conflict healing to communities that will contribute to more sustainable development and democratic processes Following from the discussion in Chapter 2, interventions failing to take into consideration the intricacies of cultural contexts will struggle to deliver sustainable development to communities. This is even more pertinent in a conflict or post-conflict settings, where any attempts to design and implement relevant and meaningful interventions are difficult without the detailed understanding of the contextualised narrative of war and ensuing grievances. In light of the argument that the dominant accounts of the conflict in northern Uganda are misleading, Chapter 4 offers a re-reading of the events and circumstances leading up to the conflict in northern Uganda, and events taking place during the conflict years. The chapter is a critique of conventional understandings of the conflict in northern Uganda: the causes for it, why it persisted for so long and reasons for why the LRA conflict continues albeit not on Ugandan territory. Chapter 5 presents the memorialisation project undertaken by the NDCH and NMU at four locations in northern Uganda and the final exhibition held in Kampala. The chapters aim to lay the groundwork from which an understanding of how cultural heritage interventions might contribute to restoring social relations damaged by conflict, and how an emphasis on cultural diversity is integral to a comprehensive development effort in post-conflict settings in general. The main discussion that follows in Part 3 links the case and its context to the larger theoretical discussions in Part 1.

Chapter 4

Northern Uganda in Context: Conflict, Devastation and New Beginnings?

Uganda has been ridden with violent conflict and bloodshed since it gained independence in 1962. The period 1962-1986 saw no less than five regimes "all characterised by human rights abuses, rampant violence, killings and torture" (Tandberg 2012a, p.6).[19] The current regime (1986-present day), led by President Yoweri Museveni, who is also the Army's Commander of Chief, has also

19 Conservative estimates put the number of killed under Idi Amin's reign (1971-1979) and Milton Obote's second term (1980-1985), to one million alone (Quinn 2007).

been characterised by armed resistance in different parts of the country, violence and rampant human rights violations. Yet, in recent years Uganda has repeatedly been praised by the international community as a success story of "economic liberalization, development, progress, and increasing political stability" (Finnström 2008, p. 63; IMF 2010). Although there have been a number of positive developments in Uganda, the hub of peace and prosperity is largely limited to the capital: the further one travels from the 'bustling' streets of Kampala the more devastation one encounters (Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 68; see also UNFPA 2009). Though conflict has been commonplace in many parts of Uganda, the longest and most destructive conflict has been the conflict in northern Uganda. Finnström (2008, p. 63) notes that the consequence of the protracted conflict in northern Uganda is that "the Acholi people – which is the major ethnic grouping in northern Uganda has largely been excluded from the Ugandan success story"[20]. This trend continues to present day. Finnström underlines further that the dominant narrative in Uganda (and internationally) is that the war in the North was a "peripheral exception to the country's claimed success" (ibid, p.64). Moreover, that the crisis is typically not seen as political, but as a humanitarian crisis at best and as a "tragically suicidal popular uprising" at worst (Karlström cited in Finnström 2008, p.64). These accounts obscure the causes for the conflict and perpetuate injustices faced by people in the northern region.

This chapter unpacks the national narratives that have shaped, and continue to shape, the strategies pursued by the central Ugandan government and military in northern Uganda. It also examines the cultural and social ramifications of the conflict on the local population in Acholiland, in light of both local and national discourses. The chapter starts with a brief discussion on how politics under the various regimes in Uganda following independence have perpetuated and further consolidated ethnic opposition in the country. This section also briefly examines insurgency under the current regime, and argues that the plethora of armed conflict around the country is indicative of a deeper political crisis in Uganda. The subsequent section surveys the emergence of armed conflict in northern Uganda, the rise of the LRA/M in context of local cosmology and spirituality, and the popular perceptions on the rebel movement in the media, academic literature and Ugandan politics. Section three explores motives for support and resistance of the LRA/M in northern Uganda: the initial support to the rebel uprising and how this support dwindled during the 1990s as the fighting intensified and the LRA/M increasingly directed its violence towards non-combatants. The fourth section looks at the role of the government's internal displacement camps, and in light of Galtung's concept (1969) of structural violence argues that the camps significantly undermined Acholi

[20] Also other groupings such as the Lango i Langoland are disadvantaged by the turbulent political landscape of post-independent Uganda. As we shall see, this is for instance evident in the negative characterisation of the Lango following the massacre in Barlonhyo.

livelihoods and socio-cultural cohesion. The fifth section explores the geo-politics of the Great Lakes Region, and shows how the wider regional political landscape has been instrumental in fuelling and sustaining the LRA/M's activity since the early 1990s. The sixth section critically examines some key attempts to end the conflict, while the last sections summarises the section and offers a brief outline of the current situation in northern Uganda.

4.1 Uganda in Conflict: Post-Colonial Legacy of Contention

There are a number of well-developed ethnic characterisations and antipathies in Uganda. These narratives, that were pre-colonial origin but that were developed during colonial times, were inherited at independence, and ethnic divisions and tensions have been at the heart of post-independence politics (Finnström 2008). "While blaming ethnicity for being the root cause of the conflict" that has followed since independence "is both reductionist and too simplistic, the fighting has crystallised [along] the regional divides" (Tandberg 2012a, p. 7). This is largely due to the violence of the various regimes targeting specific regional areas and ethnic groupings. Moreover, as Uganda has had a tradition of violent succession, this again has contributed to the polarisation of regional and ethnic divides.

When Milton Obote was elected president in 1962 following independence he inherited the national army which predominately consisted of northerners, and in particular Acholi and Lango[21] soldiers (Human Rights Watch 1997). Obote being a Lango meant that this reinforced historical ties of "exchange and cooperation across ethnic boundaries" (Finnström 2008, p.65) between the Lango and Acholi. Whereas Obote's cabinet (commonly referred to as Obote I) included ministers from various ethnic groups, "[u]nder Milton Obote's first presidency, Acholi soldiers were implicated in many of the government's questionable activities" (Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 9). Quinn also notes that Obote I was characterised by riots and armed resistance and as "[m]any of the violent protests were carried out by the Baganda [from the south of the country] in protest against Obote's consolidation of power" (Quinn 2007, p. 390), the northern-dominated army's violations further pitted 'southerners' against 'northerners' – in the process politicising the categories.

In 1971, a senior army commander from Obote's army, Idi Amin, carried out a successful *coup d'état*. After Amin had toppled Obote, he feared, amongst other things, the dominant position held by the Acholi and Lango in the military. Instead, Amin, a Kakwa from the West Nile, recruited police and army personnel from his native region, and more preferably still from his own ethnic

21 Lango group also referred to Langi. Throughout this thesis I use Lango.

group. He then subsequently ordered mass-killings of Acholi and Lango soldiers[22]. Amin also targeted Acholi intellectuals and politicians[23]. Omara-Otunnu (1987) argues that targeted killing of people from the Acholi and Lango ethnic groups again "had the effect of dividing the country" (Omara-Otunnu 1987, p. 104). Amin was eventually ousted from power by "a coalition of forces that included Tanzanian government troops, supporters of former president Obote, and the follower of Yoweri Museveni, at that time a guerrilla leader" (Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 72)[24]. Though the coalition put forward several candidates, Milton Obote was reinstated for a second term in May 1980 after controversial and highly disputed elections (see Human Rights Watch 1997; Quinn 2007).

The reign of terror continued under Obote II. For many Ugandans one repressive regime was thus replaced with another, and armed resistance and conflict were rampant. After Obote was reinstated, "soldiers in the new army, including Acholi individuals, took revenge on people living in the West Nile region" (Finnström 2008, p. 65). The army was also used to quell armed resistance in other parts of the country. Yoweri Museveni and the National Resistance Movement/Army[25] (NRM/A) again took up arms in 1981, but this time against Obote II. The guerrilla movement was, according to its own emissions, founded on the belief that the whole political system – a continuation from colonial times and one that had brought Obote back in power – needed a complete overhaul. An intense period of insurgency and armed conflict, mainly in the southern Luwero triangle[26], ensued. However, in the end it was Brigadier Bazilio Olara Okello and General Tito Okello Lutwa, two Acholi seniors from Obote's own army that ousted him from power in 1985. Finnström argues that the move was motivated by "ethnic tension and growing mistrust in the Ugandan army regarding the violent developments under Obote's leadership" (Finnström 2008, p. 68). Despite its calls for a broad coalition government, the new government headed by Tito Okello was short-lived as Museveni and the NRM/A seized Kampala in the beginning of 1986[27]. One of the first things Museveni did in power was to dismantle the political multi-party system, and instead introduced the one-party movement making the NRM the only legal political party in Uganda. With Museveni's

22 Messages were broadcasted in the media that soldiers from Obote's army should hand in their guns. Instead, the ex-soldiers were detained and mass-slaughtered (see Human Rights Watch 1997)

23 Something which has left a big void with regards to Acholi spokesperson/people with power (Finnström 2008).

24 Idi Amin's regime – weakening following attempt to annex the Kagera province in Tanzania in 1978, which lead to the Uganda-Tanzania war where Tanzania subsequently invaded Uganda. After his fall from power, Idi Amin fled to Libya (a prominent backer of his campaign) and later to Saudia Arabia where he remained until his death in 2003.

25 The National Resistance Army was renamed the National Resistance Movement once Museveni seized power in 1986. The Movement is to signify a political wing.

26 Luwero killings.

27 The Okello government and NRM/A signed a peace agreement, which was never implemented as the two clashed two weeks later and before the agreement could come into effect (see Human Rights Watch 1997, Finnström 2008).

ascension to power, the prominent position of northerners in Ugandan politics and military came to an end.

The general view by scholars seems to be that Museveni's guerrilla campaign was highly successful and that the war was effectively over when Kampala was taken in 1986 (see Ngoga 1998; and Hansen and Twaddle 1994). However, since Museveni and NRM/A seized power in 1986 his regime has faced a plethora of armed insurgencies: "[w]ithin two years of Museveni's takeover [of Kampala], some twenty-seven different rebel groups were reported to be resisting the new government (Finnström 2008, p. 69). These battles have been fought mainly in the periphery, but all over the country[28]. Though these conflicts have gone largely unreported by the international media, they are evidence of the existence of a more complex image of conflict and power in Uganda. The armed conflicts have fuelled the general instability in the country, which is exacerbated by a great deal of mobility between armed groups: it is not uncommon for soldiers from defeated or splinter rebel groupings to join other armed groupings and continue fighting.

Many of the armed groupings operate in similar ways, which says something about the logic that permeate bush-wars[29] in the whole region. To what extent the various groupings have been influenced by each other is beyond the scope of this study[30]. However, what the diverse armed insurgencies reveal, is that main-line narratives that hold that the conflict in the north is a-typical and without political context do not take armed resistance in the country as a whole into consideration. Though this thesis does not explicitly deal with the various fighting factions and armed insurgency in other parts of the country, it is important to keep in mind that they represent grievances held against the current regime. In this sense, the LRA conflict cannot wholly be seen

28 The Ugandan People's Army (UPA) were active in eastern Uganda from 1987 to 1992 when it was defeated, and a number of soldiers from the losing side fled north to join rebel ranks there. In southwestern Uganda, the Interhamwe from Rwanda wreaked havoc from bases in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Finnström notes how, "[in] response, the Ugandan army has sometimes deployed deep into the Congo, adding to the complexity of armed conflict in the Great Lakes region" (Finnström 2008, p. 70). The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which emerged on the scene in 1996, also ravaged western/southwestern Uganda from its bases in the Rwenzori Mountains. Made up of an alliance of three rebel groups, "the remnants of the secessionist Rwenzururu Movement, the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda, and the extremist element from the Tabliq Muslim Community (Human Rights Watch 1999), the ADF subjected the local population to horrible acts of violence, raids and abductions of minors "for the purpose of forced recruitment into their rebel movement" (ibid). The ADF also operates out of bases in DRC, and have allegedly sacked villages in and around Beni in North Kivu province in eastern DRC for the past six months (Aljazeera 2014). In northwestern Uganda, in the West Nile region, the Ugandan National Rescue Front (UNRF), which was formed after Idi Amin's fall, formally joined the NRM/A ranks in 1985 after Obote's fall from power. However, factions of the original UNRF, such as the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) and Ugandan National Rescue Front II (UNRF II), which broke away from WNBF in 1996, continued the armed resistance against Museveni. Moreover, when an amnesty was put in effect, many soldiers from the rebel grouping instead chose to join with rebel groups in the North. These groupings represent a small fraction of groupings that have operated, and continue to operate, from both inside and outside Uganda against Museveni and the NRM.

29 Quinn (2009, p.5) comments on the use of 'the bush' as being "a local colloquialism that refers to the theatre of war".

30 For instance several groupings use abductions strategically to boost rebel ranks and to provide fighters with 'wives'. Whether these strategies – sprung up in isolation or a direct result of - linked – trading rebel fighters

apart from the wider considerations of politics, power and conflict in Uganda (and regional and international factors for that matter). At the same time, while conflicts are embedded in and have dimensions extending past the local reality, conflict is lived and interpreted through local perspectives (Finnström 2008). As such, every conflict will have physical and socio-cultural particularities and moral truths that are specific to that particular conflict. The next section traces the current conflict in northern Uganda; the emergence of rebel movements in northern Uganda, and the subsequent use of imagery and descriptions in mainstream media and academic works with respect to the rebel uprising in the North.

4.2 Warring in Northern Uganda: Blood and Spirituality

The current conflict in northern Uganda is generally traced to the fall of the Okello government and the ascension of Museveni and the NRM/A to power (Finnström 2008; Human Rights Watch 1997; Quinn 2007). Following the fall of Okello, defunct soldiers from the national army fled northwards, "to the Acholi home districts of Gulu and Kitgum" (Human Rights Watch 1997). Many of these soldiers ended up with the Uganda People's Democratic Army/ Movement (UPDA/M)[31], a rebel movement that had set up bases in southern Sudan. They were joined by 'surplus' rebels from other groupings from across the country (see above). The NRM/A pursuing the fleeing soldiers into 'foreign' territory, quickly deteriorated into a frenzy of misconduct and violence directed at the local population: "killings, rape, and other forms of physical abuse aimed at the noncombatants became the order of the day soon after the soldiers established themselves in Acholiland" (Finnström 2008, p. 71; see also Amnesty International 1992, p. 29-30). In response to this the UPDM/A crossed over from its bases in southern Sudan in August 1986 and engaged the central army in battle. As the rebel attacks were centred on military targets and NRM/A strongholds the rebel movement built up "substantial support among the Acholi" (Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 74).

The Holy Spirit Force/Movement (HSF/M) was another rebel faction in the north engaging in armed resistance against Museveni's NRM/A[32]. The HSF/M, which started as a non-violent movement, took up arms after fatal clashes with the Ugandan army during peaceful demonstrations (Finnström 2008, p. 75). The leader of the movement was Alice Abongowat Auma, who is better known as Alice Lakwena – or Alice the messenger[33]. There are a number of accounts on Lakwena

31 Not to be confused with the national army, the Ugandan People's Defence Forces (UPDF) which is the name assumed by the National Resistance Army in 1995. The UPDM/A was an alliance between Okello's ex-soldiers, Obote supporters and even some Amin soldiers (see Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 74)

32 Human Rights Watch report that the HSF/M was armed by the UPDM/A, and also refer to the HSF/M as a splinter group of UPDM/A (Human Rights Watch 2003a).

33 Finnström (2008, p. 75-78) offers an interesting reading of Alice Lakwena and the HSF/M.

and the HSF/M. Finnström argues that Lakwena secured the role as leader in HSF/M by claiming that she was a spirit medium and a prophet. Her message evolved around gender equality, love and connectedness across ethnic boundaries, and Lakwena's HSF/M had a considerable following among young people also outside Acholiland. However, Lakwena is often depicted as a crazed, voodoo priestess and a prostitute, and as a prime example of the seemingly illogical and spiritual uprising and violence in the North. However, these accounts do not adequately engage with local moral beliefs, where spirits are actively "evoked [to describe healing and harming powers] in the everyday interpretation and diagnosis of misfortune, illness, and the like" (ibid, p. 202).

Whereas both the UPDM/A and HSF/M arose as a result of incursions by NRM/A into northern Uganda, they were not always aligned and the HSF/M clashed with both NRM/A and UPDM/A rebels. Finnström notes how,

> As war evolved, inhabitants in Acholiland came to differentiate between two parallel and intertwined aspects of violent insurgency – the initial and politically motivated UPDM/A and the spiritually motivated violence that emerged slightly later, with Alice Lakwena's and Joseph Kony's Holy Spirit Forces (Finnström 2008, p. 76).

Joseph Kony[34], also an Acholi by birth, was also part of the initial insurgency against Museveni and the NRM/A in the north as a former commander in UPDM/A (Human Rights Watch 1997). However, when Lakwena's forces were defeated east of Jinja[35] in 1987, and she fled to Kenya, remnants of HSF/M were absorbed into what was to become Kony's LRA/M. Kony's ranks were also boosted by rebels from Severino Lukoya, Alice Lakwena's father, who had also fought against Museveni[36], and by rebel fighters from UPDM/A who refused to lay down arms against the NRM/A after the UPDM/A leadership signed a ceasefire agreement in 1988[37] (see Human Rights Watch 2003a, p. 10). The LRA/M was initially named the Holy Spirit Movement II when it emerged in 1988. The group later resurfaced as the Lord's Salvation Army, was renamed the United Christian Democratic Army, before assuming its current name in 1992 (see Angom 2011).

Much has been written about Kony and his motivation for fighting. Angom (2011, p. 75) argues that, like Lakwena, Kony saw himself as "a messenger of God and liberator of the Acholi". Annan et al. (2011, p. 883) state that "[t]he LRA supreme commander Kony set codes of conduct and military orders through religious proclamations" and refer to Kony as a "spirit medium". The image

34 Kony is often described as Alice Lakwena's cousin.
35 About 100 km east of Kampala.
36 Severino Lukoya, had launched his own Holy Spirit Movement after Lakwena's defeat. However, according to Finnström, unlike Lakwena's movement which successfully gained support from different ethnic groups, Lukoya's movement "emphasized a rather exclusive and localized spirituality" (Finnström 2008, p. 77) which failed to attract popular support. Instead, Lukoya fought under Kony for some time.
37 Leading up to the cease-fire agreement the UPDA/M had suffered great losses. In accordance with the agreement many rebel soldiers were incorporated into the national Ugandan army, and fought against its former allies (Human Rights Watch 2003a).

of Kony as being utterly motivated by his religious convictions has been, and continues to be, reproduced across the board. For instance, dominant representations of the LRA in academic literature and human rights reports are of a "spiritual rebel group with no clear political agenda" (Vinck and Pham 2009, p. 59), which also is the "archetypal irrational, barbaric, apolitical rebel force" (Bernd and Blattman 2010, p. 12). The media has also propagated this image, with *The Guardian* calling Kony a 'Christian fanatic" (*The Guardian* in Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 70), and *The New York Times* referring to the LRA as "blood-thirsty […] self-styled revolutionaries and Christian fundamentalist rebels" (*The New York Times* in Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 70). The government for its part has repeatedly attributed the LRA's violent conduct to Acholi characteristics[38]. However, Finnström (2008) argues that the dominant representations of Kony, the LRA and their struggle both essentialise and obscure the complexity of the conflict. He emphasises that while "commentators in powerful positions legitimate and contribute to oppression in ethnic terms" (p. 107), the conflict in northern Uganda can neither be reduced to a result of local cosmology, ethnic characteristics nor to religious fundamentalism. As such, whereas there are religious dimensions to the conflict, denying the political dimensions of the conflict deprives it of its context. Without the right context the LRA's political claims and the conflict in general become "inaccessible for the outside world" (ibid, p. 118). This in turn undercuts incentives that aim to find political solutions to the conflict. In other words, "[t]he effect of such reductionist accounts, or 'Heart of Darkness' imagery of barbarous and 'backwards' Africans, is that they prevent comprehensive dialogue aimed at finding political solutions to the conflict" (Tandberg 2012a, p. 8).

This does not mean that the conflict is not riddled with complexities and contradictions. Whereas the LRA has repeatedly stated that it fights for the liberation of Acholiland from Museveni's oppression[39], the violence here has typically implicated the local population. Indeed, Acholis were often the direct target of LRA violence, and the LRA/M practice of using child soldiers forcefully recruited under heinously violent circumstances has had devastating effects on the Acholi community as a whole. The Ugandan government has for the most part "sought a military solution" to the LRA conflict, thereby "deepening the destruction of Acholi society" (Human Rights Watch 2002). Finnström (2008, p. 100) proposes that, "[o]ver the years the armed struggle of the LRA/M has taken on a most violent logic of its own". As both the LRA/M and the government rely on military aggression the "vicious circles of violence perpetuate further use of violence" (Tandberg 2012a, p. 8), and it is difficult to disagree with Finnström's argument that the war has become an

38 Rhetoric of Museveni and other senior political figures attributed specific "violent" characteristics Acholi group.

39 Various rebel manifestos have circulated in Acholiland at various times. Government officials dismiss the manifestos as "diaspora creations disconnected from Ugandan realities" (Finnström 2001, p. 248). However, LRA/M rebels have also been known to give similar political speeches to noncombatants at road blocks.

end in itself. Furthermore, while thirty years of conflict and destruction means that there are a plethora of diverging narratives on the causes of the conflict, and Hopwood (2011, p. 13) suggests that "there is no widely held political or moral understanding of the conflict": there is a pervasive confusion concerning the LRA/M and its actions, and a deep mistrust of the government and its army in Acholiland. As Human Rights Watch report (1997, p. 69),

> Bewilderment about the conflict is understandable: during our investigation we heard many tentative theories about why the conflict continues, but few people were willing to hazard a definitive explanation and the rebels themselves are a black box. We heard stories and counter-stories, some more persuasive than others, but none ultimately satisfying. This, however, does not mean that there is no reason for the violence; it instead suggests that the reasons are many and deep, and fully disentangling them may not be possible in the end.

While understanding LRA/M and NRM/A motivation might never be fully satisfied, it is important to map the conflict's various effects on the population. The next section examines shifts in local support for the LRA/M throughout the conflict years, and argues that whereas local support underlined rebel activity in the early years of conflict it dropped drastically as a result of LRA/M violence targeting local communities during the 1990s. In consequence, the section also explores the shifting strategies of the warring factions, and the subsequent repercussions on the local population.

4.3 Mapping the LRA Conflict: Support, Contestation and Survival

When war came to northern Uganda at the end of the 1980s, two significant factors contributed to the rebel uprising against Museveni's NRM/A: the presence of 'surplus' ex-soldiers and rebels, and the misconduct of the intruding government troops. Firstly, as mentioned, many Acholi soldiers from both Obote's and Okello's armed forces had retreated back to their homelands in Acholiland following the fall of the respective governments. Far from properly integrated, the presence of these armed ex-soldiers, and rebels from other warring factions around the country meant that there was a surplus of 'idle' able-bodied combatants in the northern regions of Uganda. Finnström draws on Behrend's study (1998) when discussing the failed reintegration of ex-soldiers in Acholiland: the soldiers had trouble to adapting to rural life, and Behrend argues that this was largely due to the elders' – the spiritual and moral leaders in Acholi society – failure to reach the youths. As Finnström further notes (2008, p. 71), "[r]ituals to demilitarize and reintegrate the soldiers were often not used, or did not seem to reverse the violent development when they were". One possible explanation for this is that many of the soldiers had spent time away from Acholiland and were therefore not 'attuned' to the Acholi cosmology and moral reality. However, another contributing factor to why the ex-soldiers and rebels refrained from laying down arms were that many were

anxious of possible retaliations from the NRM/A[40]. The undisciplined actions of NRM/A soldiers in northern Uganda only worked to reconfirm these anxieties (see Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 73-74). This meant that when war erupted in the North, many ex-soldiers chose to join the rebel fight in the bush.

Secondly, the rebel uprising must be seen in light of Acholi reactions and possible means of resistance to the intruding troops. The UPDM/A and HSM/F fought against NRM/A for two and one year respectively. Both the UPDM/A and HSM/F's claims and strategies were largely legitimate in the eyes of the local populations, and the HSM/F were in addition to many seen as a popular uprising. While the UPDM/A leadership eventually signed a peace deal with the NRM/A, the defeat of Lakwena's HSM/F represented a devastating loss to the local communities. When Kony's rebel forces continued the fight, Annan et al. argue that "[t]he decision to keep fighting was unpopular, and that the LRA commanded little Acholi support" (Annan et al. 2011, p. 882). They hold that as a result of this the LRA/M subjected the local population to raids, abductions and often fatal violence as a direct result of the lack of volunteers and support from the local population. However, Finnström offers a slightly different perspective on the dynamics between non-combatants, combatants and the LRA/M. His starting point is that, initially, the LRA/M rebel "upraising found broad support among the inhabitants of Acholiland, who found their homes and belongings destroyed and cattle herds looted by soldiers of Museveni's army" (Finnström 2008, p. 71). Interviews conducted by Human Rights Watch confirm this view. The 1997 Human Rights Watch report, *The Scars of Death* (1997, p. 86), notes that "[h]uge crowds would gather to hear him [Kony] speak". Kony's appeal was strengthened by the NRM/A's aggression towards the local population. One particular interview conducted by Human Rights Watch in Gulu in May 1997, with Paulinus Nyeko of Human Rights Focus, illustrates the difficulties experienced by the local population in Acholiland, at the hands of the NRM/A:

> National Resistance Army soldiers would do all they could to make things difficult here [in Gulu and Kitgum]. They would defecate in water supplies, and in the mouths of slaughtered animals. They would tie people's hands behind their backs so tightly that people would be left paralyzed. They went into villages and took guns by force. They looted Acholi cattle, and did nothing to prevent [cattle raiders from the Karamajong district] from stealing the rest. Over three million head of cattle were soon lost, and it made the people embittered (Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 74)

The issue of cattle looting by UPDF was specifically read by the local population as a direct attack on the Acholi identity; Finnström (2008, p. 72) notes that whereas all the warring factions looted cattle from the community, the seizure of cattle by the UPDF was seen by his informers as a conscious strategy to "keep the Acholi people down"[41]. Cattle have a central role in Acholi

40 Which was the case after Idi Amin seized power in 1971 (see Human Rights Watch).

41 One listing in 1983 set the number of cattle head in Gulu and Amuru districts to 123,375. In 2001, estimates on how

cosmology, and are seen as the true measure of wealth and prosperity and a source of status. This is why, as Finnström's concludes (2008, p. 73), "[t]he mass looting of cattle remains a very painful experience of the war, especially in the eyes of middle-aged and elderly Acholi". However, more than the cattle, Finnström underlines that "[t]he destruction that followed Museveni's takeover affected all sectors of Acholi society to a degree never experienced before" (ibid). This meant for instance that whereas Idi Amin had directly targeted Acholi soldiers, politicians and intellectuals during his reign of terror, Museveni's army penetrated deep into the bush, indiscriminately harassing, maiming and killing people as it went. Human Rights Watch (1997; 2003a) also reports mass raping of both women and men by government forces. Finnström (2008, p. 74) argues that the "unprecedented misconduct of the intruding troops" raised the general populations sympathy for the rebel cause and that "eventually elders and other influential members of Acholi society were instrumental in the increased recruitment of young people to rebel ranks (ibid, p. 73). Moreover, he also notes that, also people "who did not explicitly support the uprising […] saw no alternative means of surviving than to join the insurgency groups in one way or the other" (Finnström 2008, p. 74). This pattern of violence and recruitment was by no means limited to the northern regions, and rebel groupings across Uganda have at various stages invoked the rhetoric of 'join or die' with considerable success where the local populations have found themselves at the receiving end of NRM/A's violence (Finnström 2008).

However, during the 1990s, rebel actions such as rampant looting, abductions of children, maiming and killing increasingly alienated the local population from the rebel cause: there was great inconsistency between what the rebels said and what they did. As such, whereas rebel manifestos circulated in Acholiland might have been experienced as meaningful because the message itself went to the heart of people's grievances and fears of marginalisation (see Finnström 2001; Finnström 2008), LRA practices such as forcefully recruiting Acholi children into rebel ranks to fight the Ugandan central army estranged the population from the rebels cause. However, the rebel's atrocities did not necessarily push the local population towards the central army. As Finnström notes (2008, p. 90), "[m]any Acholi also lack confidence in the Ugandan army, given its passivity as supposed protectors and the frequent misconduct that prevails". Additionally, perceived LRA sympathy triggered further mistreatment of the local population at the hands of the central army and its security forces. The rebels' increasingly hostile tactics coupled with the central army's own

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many cattle remain range between 3000 and 11000 in the same two districts (Weeks in Finnström 2008, p. 73). While the number of cattle lost may be difficult to estimate, it remains an issue of great concern to the Acholi community and Pham and Vinck (2010) report that 73% of respondents listed that reparation should be offered to victims in the form of cattle.

misconduct and seeming inability to protect the local population from rebel aggression meant that the local population were progressively implicated in the fighting.

Finnström argues that a number of issues further blurred the line between combatant and non-combatant population in northern Uganda. For instance, in the early 1990s the government introduced Local Councils (LCs) or Resistance Councils (RCs)[42] which again deployed Local Defence Units (LDUs) (see Finnström 2008, p. 90/91). The LCs/RCs conscripted local people to the LDUs. More than this, the LDUs were poorly equipped and typically supplemented with returned child soldiers as young as ten[43]. The government's local representatives also ordered "men to carry *pongas* [a large knife], spears, or bows and arrows, while every woman was obliged to carry at least a knife" (Finnström 2008, p. 91). Failing to follow these orders meant a restriction of movement, as people were not allowed to pass road blocks without these provisional weapons. Another strategy by the LCs/RCs was to close markets and force people to demonstrate against the LRA/M. Unwillingness to comply with local government orders were construed as support for the rebel cause. All these strategies turned the non-combatant population into legitimate targets in the eyes of the LRA/M. As such, while the LRA/M publicly blamed the government for implicating the local population, the rebels did not hesitate to kill people they encountered that fit into the 'pro-government' label. In fact, as Finnström notes (ibid), "some of the most spectacular violence has been committed against individuals which the rebels associate with the government".

The non-combatant population has also been involuntarily involved with rebel forces in other ways. Rebel looting of people's property and food was not uncommon, and often rebels forced adults (and in some instances youngsters) to carry the loot back to their bases before releasing them[44]. In accounts of rebel ambushes on villages and rural homesteads, interviewees at times express that this is what they expected from the rebels (Human Rights Watch 1997; Justice and Reconciliation Project 2011). The extensive abduction of children into rebel ranks also intrinsically linked the Acholi community to the LRA: during the mass-abductions in the 1990s nearly every family in Acholiland was affected by the LRA abductions. This meant that whereas most people in Acholiland would see the LRA leadership held accountable for their actions, most were also preoccupied with the well-being of the abducted children. As a mother whose daughter was

42 These RCs or LCs absorbed local governance structures – source of oppression of political pluralism

43 While it is illegal to conscript minors to the central Ugandan army, these children fought alongside the UPDF on the front-line against rebel fighters (also often minors) (see Human Rights Watch 1997; Human Rights Watch 2003). Human Rights Watch has also reported that as the conflict progressed minors were also recruited directly to the UPDF forces UPDF often recruited rescued rebels directly from the army transition centres. For information on the use of minors in the UPDF and LDUs see Human Rights Watch 2003a pp. 56-60.

44 Chances of being released and surviving diminished drastically as rebels were forced out of northern Uganda, and porters were forced to cross over to southern Sudan (Human Rights Watch 2003a).

abducted from Aboke by the LRA in 1997 explained in an interview by Human Rights Watch (1997, p. 94):

> If the rebels abduct your child, how can you think of the rebels with anything but horror? Kony is an evil madman, and you don't want the rebels to go on committing these atrocities, killing and taking children from mothers, forcing our children themselves to kill for their survival. But now: your own child is living as a rebel. So if the rebels come through and demand food or information, it is not only your fear for yourself, you think also of your child, and hope that your own child is not hungry. So perhaps you help the rebels.

These involuntary interactions complicated peoples' positions further by incriminating them in the eyes of the NRM/A: the non-combatant populations' seeming 'willingness' to aide rebels, also after mass-abductions and mass-killings and maiming, only reinforced government perception that the LRA conflict was "Acholi slaughtering Acholi, for no discernible reason" (Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 69). As the NRM/A increasingly deployed local militias and defence units at the frontline during the conflict, this became a reality. As Norbert Mao, the MP for Gulu observed, the LRA commanders typically sent children to the front, which meant that the fighters the LDUs typically engaged in battle were abducted Acholi children (Human Rights Watch 1997, p. 94). The government's mistrust of the local population was partly responsible for its next move, which was removing people from rural areas into internal displacement camps. The military strategy, which was universally implemented in northern Uganda as the conflict progressed, allowed the NRM/A to cut of food supply and other vital things such as medicines and information to rebels. However, the camps have also been controversial, and raise important questions of power and control in northern Uganda. The next section reviews the internal displacement camps set up in northern Uganda, and their adverse effects on the local population.

4.4 Disconnected Realities: Internal Displacement Camps and Acholi Downfall

The LRA conflict has mainly affected the northern districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader in Uganda, which are commonly referred to as Acholiland. These districts have borne the brunt of the fighting and destruction. Although the conflict itself is often characterised as low-intensity in scale, it caused mass displacement of the local population. The Acholi make up "90 percent of the local population forced to move by the conflict" (Angom 2011, p. 75). The conflict has also affected the northeastern region of Teso, consisting of Amuria, Kaberamaido, Katakwi and Soroti district; the northwestern region of West Nile consisting of Adjumani, Arua, Moyo, Nebbi and Pakwach districts; and southwestern region of Lango, with its Amolator, Apac, Dokolo, Lira and Oyam districts. This section reviews some of the adverse effects the displacement has had on Acholi livelihoods and social cohesion.

During the early 1990s, as rebel activity intensified, the army set up the camps for internally displaced people in northern Uganda. The camps, or so-called "protected villages", were set up close to military strongholds, and the central government justified the internal displacement camps as being a security measure for the local population[45]. Many people did seek out the camps in search of protection from the rebels and the fighting. However, the army also forcefully displaced whole communities from rural areas, looting and burning down houses and granaries in the process, as part of their anti-insurgency campaign against the LRA/M in the districts[46]. Women and children represented 75 percent of the internally displaced in the camps. The camps were overcrowded, the hygiene and sanitary conditions were notoriously atrocious, and the camps typically lacked access to clean water and enough food. In addition, there was limited farming potential in/by the camps which meant that the inhabitants [were] largely dependent on external assistance" (Quinn 2007, p. 391). The World Food Programme provided up to 100% of sustenance for the population in the camps at several points. Despite this, the camp inhabitants (and in particular children) suffered from hunger and malnutrition[47]. At times, due to the intensity of the conflict, especially when rebel attacks targeted relief workers directly, food supplies to the camps stopped altogether. The desperate state of the camps was compounded by non-existent medical care, and Human Rights Watch (1997, p. 100) notes how the deprived conditions of the camps "led to thousands of deaths from malnutrition and epidemic disease". Moreover, the camps were no guarantee against LRA attacks[48], and people were also repeatedly "subjected to arbitrary arrests, torture including rape, and other abuses by Ugandan army soldiers" (Human Rights Watch 2002, website archive). As LRA activity increased during the early 2000s, the government continued to forcefully displace people from the countryside to the camps, despite the deteriorating conditions inside the camps and increased attacks on the camps by the LRA. Anyone caught in 'evacuated' areas were treated as rebel collaborators. Ironically, at this point, the LRA treated noncombatants in rural areas as government collaborators, illustrating the hopeless situation of the noncombatant civil population.

Apart from the material destruction of Acholiland, the government's displacement policy and camps also represent the disempowerment and social fragmentation of Acholi community. Drawing on

45 The camp policy was announced by Museveni on 27 September 1996. Finnström (2008, p. 141) notes that the army forcefully moved people from rural areas into displacement camps before it was publicly announced by Museveni, and that the information put out by army in this regard was crude and that the army sometimes shelled villages whose inhabitants refused to move .

46 While the camps were referred to by the government officials as "protected villages", the military strongholds were often located at the centre of the camps, and soldiers have in instances sought refuge inside their fortifications during rebel attacks launching grenades into the camp area. In this sense, the noncombatants are used as human shields for the government soldiers.

47 For more on WFP humanitarian assistance to IDP camps in northern Uganda see UNDP 2005.

48 Statements left by the LRA to camp inhabitants after attacks during 2002/2003 reveal that the LRA see any individual in the camp as a government collaborator. For more on this see Human Rights Watch 2003a, p 36.

Galtung's (1969) concept of structural violence, Finnström (2008, p. 144) notes how the camps to many Acholi embody "enforced domination and an effort to control the population". It has already been noted how the army frequently abused the local non-combatant population in the camps. However, the structural violence is also evident in the very way the camps were organised. People experienced daily being told by the army where they could go, and at what times. The strict curfews that were imposed left people with only a few hours a day to make it to their fields and back. This restrained people's means of accessing local resources, thereby limiting their survival means. In consequence, the conflict saw the mass-mobilisation of humanitarian aid. Gizelis and Kosek (2005, p. 366) underline that due to "[t]ime and resource constraints" the international relief community focuses on "short-term strategies that breed dependency among the local population". This is often compounded by the fact that relief workers "usually have little time to acquaint themselves with local culture and habits" (ibid, p. 367). This was also the case in northern Uganda, where during the course of the conflict there was repeated tension between the aid community and camp residents (see Finnström, p. 149-152). Moreover, as time passed, many Acholis came to intimately associate the humanitarian community with the government and it strategy of control and structural violence. For instance, in accordance with government directives humanitarian assistance was only distributed to official camps, and in this way making the international humanitarian community implicit in regulating people's movements. The international humanitarian community has also been criticised for perpetuating the displacement: without international disaster relief, the government would not have been able to uphold the forced displacement in northern Uganda for as long as it did. As a final point, humanitarian aid also found its way into rebel hands, as both camps and aid convoys increasingly came under attack from the LRA. In this way, camp residents and the rebels were competing for the same resources, and international aid not only exposed camp residents to rebel violence but relief also sustained the LRA rebels.

The camps also undermined the Acholi traditional ways of organising life in other ways. For instance, as Finnström notes (2008, p. 146), in the camps he visited "[y]oung men and women complained that there [was] no guidance from more senior people, while older men and women saw few possibilities to guard and guide youths". Camp life also restrained the performance of social rituals like the *wang oo*, or story telling around the fire, which is a vital part of transferring Acholi stories from one generation to the next: lighting fires in the camps were forbidden. Camp life also represented a pervasive unbalance to the cultural relation between the living and the dead. The Acholi cultural context is not fixed to a specific place. However, whereas Acholi notions of place and belonging are flexible because ancestral shrines, which are at the centre point of Acholi cosmology, can be moved, "in situations of great social unrest and violent conflict, it is not easily

achieved" (ibid). This is because, firstly, the cost involved in performing the moving-rituals are substantial[49] and, secondly, the displacement of kinship groups to different sites complicates communication and consensus building processes and presence at rituals (either as a result of the failure to reach consensus, or because of involuntary absence due to travel restrictions). In this sense, the integrated violence of the conflict and the camps have largely incapacitated and overwhelmed the social institutions and arenas that mediate social relations and regulate conflict in Acholiland. When the bonds between the older and younger generations are broken, following Kymlicka's argument from Chapter 2, people are disconnected from their cultural framework and cultural values, traditional knowledge and the social institutions of everyday life are threatened. As we will see in the discussion in Chapter 6, this negates peoples and communities' ability to recover after conflict and to build lives that are perceived as meaningful.

The conflict also affected life outside the camps in the affected regions. Angom (2011, p. 76) underlines that while life in the camps was harsh, "[o]utside the camps, people coped with the lack of health and education facilities, a collapsed socio-cultural system, and the threat of violence". As the conflict intensified in the beginning of the 2000s, LRA/M's mobility increased in districts outside the northern region, which meant that villages further south were being subjected to regular LRA/M attacks. As we shall see, the LRA/M's actions outside of Acholi territories have also been a source for great grievances for the communities in Acholiland, which are governed by a strong sense of kin group responsibility. In short, the compounded effects of the conflict – the violence suffered by the Acholi at the hands of both the central army and the LRA/M, the adverse effect of camp life, and negative perceptions of the Acholi outside Acholiland – explain why local support for the LRA diminished drastically during the 1990s and why, by the 2000s, the dominant narrative was for the conflict to end. Yet, no political solution was ever reached in the LRA conflict. To understand the reasons for why the conflict persisted it is necessary to look outside Uganda. The next section examines the wider politics of the Great Lakes region and the foreign aspects that have underlined the conflict, and its impact on the LRA conflict.

4.5 The Geo-politics of the Great Lakes Region

The conflict in northern Uganda is situated in a web of regional conflict, where the various conflicts are drawing on and feeding back into the wider instability of the Great Lakes Region. As such, the conflict in Acholiland must also be viewed in light of the greater geo-political considerations in the

49 Finnström explains (2008, p. 146) that "to move an ancestral shrine (*kac* or *abila*) [...] goats and chickens ought to be sacrificed to make the ancestors satisfied and thus to willing to move along.

Great Lakes region, in relation to what Finnström (2008) calls the 'regional war complex'. All the countries in the Great Lakes Region are tied up in the regional war complex and, moreover, the regional politics influence the shifting pace and intensity of conflict locally. In this section I will review the complex international relations between Uganda, the two Sudans, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR) in relation to the LRA conflict in northern Uganda, with special attention to the role of support/involvement and the precarious security void in neighbouring countries.

Uganda is an active stakeholder in the regional war-complex, and Museveni's army has both fought war by proxy and intervened directly in neighbouring countries[50]. Under Museveni, Uganda has provided military support to various anti-Khartoum rebel groups in southern Sudan. This connection has been significant for the protracted conflict in northern Uganda, as Sudan's involvement with rebel groups in northern Uganda is understood to be in retaliation for Ugandan support for southern rebel groups such as the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) which was fighting the government in Khartoum and its army[51]; it is widely accepted that the government in Khartoum, Sudan, provided material assistance, logistical support and military training to the LRA/M from the early 1990s an onwards, as well as allowing the rebel group to set up base camps in the south of Sudan[52]. Finnström (2008, p. 86) observes how the LRA/M camps in southern Sudan strategically separated the central Sudanese army from the south-Sudanese rebels, and how the "LRA/M [also] fought alongside the Sudanese army and its allied groups against south Sudanese rebels". The Sudanese support led to an upscale in the conflict in northern Uganda. The period between 1993 and 1995 was particularly intense in terms of activity of LRA/M and the level of fighting/violence. The LRA/M had forcefully recruited children to fight in its ranks previously, but child abductions were upscaled in this period as combatants were needed for clashes in both northern Uganda and southern Sudan. Annan et al. report that, "[a]bductions from 1995-2004 was large-scale and widespread, with 60,000 to 80,000 youth taken into LRA ranks [for at least one day]"[53] (Annan et al. 2009, p. 4; see also Beber and Blattmann 2009).

50 Uganda's role in DRC is, for instance, evidence of the regime's willingness to breach other countries' sovereignty both directly and indirectly. In 1997, Kabila seized power from Mobutu after, amongst others, direct intervention from Ugandan military forces in DRC. Following a fall-out with Kabila the Ugandan government continues to support rebel groupings in eastern DRC (Human Rights Watch 1999; see also Finnström 2008, p. 87). Moreover, in 2005 the International Court of Justice ruled that high ranking army officers from the Ugandan army was responsible for international acts of aggression and looting in DRC (see Finnström 2008, pp. 176-177).

51 The rebel groups in south Sudan, opposing the government in Khartoum, have repeatedly penetrated into northern Uganda territory when fighting the Sudanese army, again exposing the local population to armed conflict, raids and child abductions.

52 For details on LRA/M camps in Sudan see Human Rights Watch 2003a, p. 11.

53 Human Rights Watch (2003a and 2003b) operate with 20,000 children abducted in the period between 1987-2006. Quinn (2007) argues that the number of abducted rebels figure in the range of 30,000 to 45,000. One reason for the

International pressure on Sudan and Uganda has also influenced the pace of the LRA conflict in northern Uganda. In 1999 the U.S.-based Carter Center brokered a deal which saw the restoration of diplomatic ties between Uganda and Sudan. Although the governments in Khartoum and Kampala eventually signed a reciprocal deal to end the funding of the LRA/M and SPLA/M respectively, the LRA/M camps in Sudan were operational until 2002. A decisive factor for Khartoum withdrawing its support for the LRA/M, at least in public, was that LRA was listed as a "terrorist organisation" by the U.S. State Department in late 2001. As part of the global war on terror, instead of political dialogue, the central Ugandan government and army were free to pursue a military solution to the LRA conflict, with weapons and tactical support from the United States. In seeming anticipation of the subsequent military move, the LRA/M had withdrawn from its bases near Juba to the more remote Imatong Mountains, in the process sacking villages in southern Sudan. When the Ugandan army launched Operation Iron Fist in March 2002 into southern Sudan, with the consent of the government in Khartoum, factions of the LRA/M crossed back into northern Uganda. The period that followed was characterised by a series of violent clashes on both sides of the boarder. In addition, the number of causalities escalated significantly as communities in both northern Uganda and southern Sudan became the "primary focuses of LRA attacks" (Human Rights Watch 2002). The LRA/M also attacked the Ugandan and Sudanese armies, which resulted in Khartoum and Kampala establishing a joint military operation aimed at de-arming the LRA/M once and for all[54]. However, again the LRA/M forces managed to escape, regrouped and continued its attacks on civilians with increasing ferocity. Some Human Rights Watch informants maintain that the LRA enjoyed intelligence from Khartoum on the whereabouts of the Ugandan central army, and that this was why it so successfully circumvented the military operation (Human Rights Watch 2003a, p. 12). The continued alliance between Khartoum and the LRA could also account for the attacks on south Sudanese refugee settlements in northern Uganda, "which the Sudanese government believed were harbouring SPLA members and future rebel recruits" (ibid). Ultimately, in September and October 2002, The LRA/M and the Sudanese government revealed their military relations:

> sources, including representatives of the government militias that fought alongside the LRA and Sudanese government in the retaking of Torit [from SPLM/A], confirmed that the LRA was active in that Sudanese government offensive (Human Rights Watch 2003a, p.13)

Meanwhile, the LRA/M factions that had crossed back into northern Uganda in connection with Operation Iron Fist, continued to subject the local population here to violent attacks. Towards the

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great variation in estimates, relate to insufficient monitoring and population registers: population registers are generally lacking, and this is compounded by accurate information concerning abductions and killings in conflict.

54 The joint military operation was not unproblematic. For instance, during the operation the Sudanese government incidentally bombed a battalion of the Ugandan army while the latter was in SPLM/A territory. Why the Ugandan soldiers were so close to the SPLM/A stronghold is unclear, and it raised questions to what extent the Ugandan army had broken its ties with the SPLM/A.

end of 2002 and the beginning of 2003, the LRA/M moved east to Lira and Soroti Sub-regions, demonstrating the LRA/M's willingness to extend the conflict beyond the northern districts. The pressed rebel groups now engaged in ferocious and indiscriminate killings which resulted in some of the worst massacres of civilians during the conflict. The Barlonyo and Atiak Massacres both took place in 2004, and – as we shall see in Chapter 5 – the LRA/M leadership used the rhetoric of retribution to justify the killings.

In 2005, a peace-deal was signed between Sudan and the break-away territories that was to become South Sudan. However, whereas the international efforts resulted in a peace deal between Khartoum and the south Sudanese rebels, it also represented a souring of diplomatic relations between Uganda and Sudan as the former publicly supported South Sudan. The blatant mistrust between the governments in Kampala and Khartoum was evident in Khartoum's continued support of the LRA/M despite the 1999 and 2005 deals, and Finnström (2008, p. 85) holds that Khartoum support for the LRA/M continued after the 2005 peace agreement "though handled more secretly now than before". Nevertheless, at the time, the peace-deal effectively pushed the LRA/M out of Sudanese territory, and no abductions or attacks at the hands of the LRA have been reported on Ugandan soil since 2005. However, the LRA conflict continues "albeit not on Ugandan territory" (Hopwood 2011, p. 6). A major contributing factor to the LRA's continued roaming is the wanting security situation in neighbouring countries. This brings us to the role DRC plays in the regional war complex.

Finnström observes that DRC is significantly tied up with the regional war complex, and localised conflicts on Congolese soil are intrinsically linked to events outside the country and *vice versa*. The country is plagued by the presence of various rebel groups, both 'foreign' and 'national' in origin. For instance, the ADF-Nalu from western Uganda is still resisting Museveni's government (*The Telegraph,* 2014) from bases in DRC, and there are various rebel groupings associated with Rwanda wreaking havoc on the local population and refugee settlements in DRC. In addition there are various armed Congolese groupings resisting or assisting the government in DRC, and all of DRC's neighbouring countries support armed resistance/military interventions in Congo in one way or another[55] (see Human Rights Watch 2001; Human Rights Watch 2014a). The LRA has been operational in DRC since it was pushed from its camps in South Sudan: LRA/M's second in command Vincent Otti[56] set up base in the Garamba National Park in DRC in September 2005, and later also Joseph Kony moved his forces to DRC in 2008. In December 2008, a month after the last

55 Burundi denies all involvement in Congo (Human Rights Watch).
56 Vincent Otti was allegedly executed on order by Joseph Kony in 2007. However, the ICC case against Otti still remain active.

peace-talks collapsed in Juba in southern Sudan, and in retaliation for a joint military operation involving Ugandan government, Sudan, DRC and UN forces, the LRA/M massacred more than 800 people in DRC (see Bernd & Blattman 2009; Human Rights Watch 2009; Hopwood 2011). In early 2010, a U.S. backed attempt to capture the LRA leadership again resulted in the LRA/M upscaling its activities, and subjecting the local non-combatant population for abductions and attacks in Congolese territory. However, the military presence in DRC aimed at bringing down the LRA/M is still ongoing (see Chandrasekaran 2013; Burridge 2014).

Factions of the LRA/M have also roamed CAR since 2008 (see Mwakugu, N. 2008; Human Rights Watch 2012 and 2014b), and is responsible for crimes against the local and refugee populations there. CAR is presently gripped by a brutal civil war, one which is increasingly being compared to the genocide in Rwanda in 1994[57]. Time will tell whether, and to what extent any neighbouring countries are involved in the debilitating conflict in CAR. However, the presence of armed groups contributes to the difficult security situation in CAR; Human Rights Watch underlines that in addition to the LRA/M, the presence of "[o]ther armed groups, armed cattle herders and bandits [that] also operate in this region of CAR, [adds] to the insecurity in the area" (ibid). The disintegration of order and security which has taken place since the coup in 2013 has only increased the security vacuum in which these armed groupings operate, exacerbating the security situation for local communities further. Recent newspaper articles place Kony among the factions of the LRA/M roaming in CAR territory. In October 2013 the British newspaper *The Independent* reported that U.S. troops were partaking in military operations on the ground alongside Ugandan, Sudanese and Congolese armed forces (*The Independent*, Accessed 19 April 2014), and in March 2014 the BBC reported that the U.S. were deploying military helicopters in the operation (*BBC*, Accessed 23 March 2014). As such, whereas the LRA/M conflict has moved from Ugandan territory, the violence continues to this day, with the LRA/M being a threat to anyone in its path. However, the LRA/M's continued activities abroad also constitute a source of insecurity and despair for people in northern Uganda, as many worry that Kony's LRA/M will return again, while perhaps also secretly hoping for the return of their loved ones. A political solution to the LRA/M conflict is an unlikely scenario at this point. Despite renewed military efforts to bring down Kony and the LRA/M, Kony has successfully evaded capture for some three decades. Considering the complexity and general instability of the region and the supposed continued funding and proxy-involvement by foreign

57 One year after the muslim Seleka coalition took power in the country which is predominately Christian, CAR is caught up in an escalating and nation-wide conflict that has seen the massacring of tens of thousands. When Seleka took power in March 2013, rebel factions committed mass-atrocities against the Christian population (see Human Rights Watch 2014). In retaliation, Christian militias, the so-called anti-Balaka, are targeting and massacring CAR's Muslim populations. The international peace-keeping forces that are deployed in the country, are unable to stop the killings and are instead fighting to evacuate the remaining muslim population to neighbouring countries.

governments mean that there is a real chance that Kony and his rebel fighters can continue to roam the Great Lakes Region, maiming and killing with impunity[58]. The next section of this chapter examines key attempts made to end the LRA conflict in northern Uganda.

4.6 Peace Talks and Missed Opportunities

There have been a plethora of attempts to broker peace between Museveni and the rebel movements in northern Uganda. However, despite various attempts to get the Ugandan government and the rebels to engage in peace talks the parties have been locked in armed conflict for three decades. This last section explores some key initiatives and underlying narratives that supported and/or challenged opportunities for peace in northern Uganda, and sums up the *status quo* in northern Uganda.

Atkinson (2009) argues that a massive impasse on the road to peace in northern Uganda has been that the Ugandan government has deployed a dual approach to ending the conflict, where peace initiatives have typically been followed by military operations and periods of heavy fighting. For instance, after two years of fighting the UPDA/M leadership signed a peace-agreement with the NRM/A in 1988. However, rebel forces continued fighting and so the peace agreement that was supposed to be a reprieve, instead represented a shift in government's counter-insurgency campaign: the fighting became fiercer, and implicated the civilian and noncombatant population to a greater degree. Lamwaka (cited in Finnström 2008, p. 84) notes that, "in the months following the peace agreement, the war's impact on civilians became more severe and widespread". Lamwaka therefore holds that this period acted to 'cement' the war in the North.

The LRA/M has also, at times, used peace-talks as a strategy to set the pace of conflict during challenging times: the LRA/M leadership have been willing to participate in talks during periods of heavy losses, only to withdraw once it had regrouped and regained its strength. This is evident in Betty Bigombe's attempt to bring the LRA leadership to the negotiating table[59]. However, the initiative stalled and Museveni responded by giving the rebels a week ultimatum to lay down arms. This caused the majority of rebels to head for the bush, where, to make matters worse, key rebels made contact with Khartoum which resulted in closer military alliance between the LRA/M and the Sudanese military. The peace talks subsequently collapsed and the period that followed in

58 A military coalition led by the Ugandan army is still hunting Kony's LRA/M in the extensive jungle area that covers DRC, CAR and South Sudan (Burridge 2014).

59 Betty Bigombe, the State Minister of northern Uganda at the time, held secret talks with Joseph Kony and the LRA/M commander Komakech Omona during 1994. She was able to secure a cease-fire and an amnesty of safe conduct for LRA/M leadership (see Pham et al. 2005, p. 16).

Acholiland was one of the most intense, with abductions, mutilations and killings increasing drastically. There were no further serious bids to end the conflict through talks for the rest of the decade[60]. The next round of talks between the authorities and the LRA leadership took place in the early 2000, mediated by local Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiatives (ARLPI). These peace talks, which followed a time of relative peace in northern Uganda, had broad support in the local population. However, these peace talks were marred by army attacks on places where talks were being held, and repeated detention of "acknowledged peace emissaries" (Finnström 2008, p. 90). This only served to heighten already heightened mistrust from the rebel leadership, who responded by demanding the release of alleged rebel collaborators. This claim was also repeated during the Juba process in 2006, the latest round of peace-talks between the Government of Uganda and the LRA/M leadership.

Though hailed as the most promising peace process during the 20-year long conflict, the processes stalled several times during 2006 and 2007 before collapsing in April 2008. Despite a number of pledges made by both sides, mediation efforts by the autonomous territories of South Sudan[61], and international pressure[62], Kony never signed the last accord. What the complex and muddled Juba process revealed was the political complexity of the conflict, where multiple stakeholders involved represented a dispersed effort to end the conflict. For the LRA/M this amongst other meant an apparent break between the political and military forces in the group (see Quinn 2009), ending with the reshuffling of the top-leadership following the alleged execution of Vincent Otti in October 2007 (Kony's second in command, who had been one of the main LRA/M spokesperson during the Juba process). The Ugandan government has also expressed varying sentiments during the Juba process. In the time leading up to the first round of peace-talks Museveni issued the LRA/M with a "two-month ultimatum 'to peacefully end terrorism' or [else they would] face a combined force of Ugandan and southern Sudanese troops" (Museveni quoted in Quinn 2009, p. 60). This fits with the hardliner stance often adopted by Museveni with regard to the LRA/M. Conversely, following the resumption of peace talks in June 2007 he expressed the possibility of revoking warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague for the top LRA/M leadership. The ICC investigation has been a major point of contention since it was publicly announced in 2004. While some believe that the ICC warrants were instrumental in bringing the LRA/M to the negotiation table, others maintain that the warrant represent an impasse to potential peace in the region.

60 There have been a number of private initiatives to broker peace. For instance, in 2002 The Acholi Religious Peace Initiative facilitated dialogue between the LRA/M and government negotiators (see Finnström 2008, p. 74).

61 Vice-president Riek Machar was the lead mediator. South Sudan had much to gain during the peace talks, as it was eager to rid itself of LRA/M presence on southern Sudanese land and end LRA/M attacks on its refugee population in both southern Sudan and northern Uganda.

62 Before the Juba talk's final collapse, the number of international observes was increased to eight (see Matsiko 2008).

However, in the end, repeated disputes over the ICC warrants, questions of accountability, justice and reconciliation, culminated in Kony refusing to sign the final peace accord and instead rearmed his rebel forces. In response, the Ugandan Government immediately started to prepare for another military operation.

In addition to the peace talks there have also been a number of amnesties in effect in Uganda in bids to end rebel fighting. However, again one can question the central government's efforts in making the amnesties effective. For instance, the 1999 Amnesty Act came into force in 2000[63], at the same time as peace talks were held in Gulu between Ugandan government officials and the LRA/M. The blanket amnesty, which was generally welcomed by the local communities in northern Uganda, was directly undermined by Museveni (cited in The New Vision), who was at the time reported as saying, "We should [instead] apply the law of Moses; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, to bring discipline to society". As head of both the state and the army, Museveni's words and actions carry considerable weight. It took Museveni more than one month to sign the amnesty and then a whole year before the first amnesty office was set up in northern Uganda, effectively making it impossible for former rebels and combatants to make use of the amnesty during the first 13 months. In spite of its troubled start-up, by May 2012, "26,288 rebels from 29 different rebel groups had received amnesty. Of these 12.971 [were] former combatants from the LRA" (Agger 2012, p. 2). Despite its success, the second provision of the amnesty act was repealed in 2012. This means that it is no longer possible for rebels to obtain amnesty certificates, and if they lay down arms they have no guarantee against prosecution which decreases the incentive to stop fighting[64].

Demonstrative attitudes towards ending the conflict have also been reflected in utterances made by other Ugandan officials. Some Ugandan government officials have expressed that the presence of rebel forces in northern Uganda would not be possible if "civilians did not want them there", while others have sometimes referred to the conflict as "Acholi killing themselves" (Human Rights Watch 2002 website). Doubts have also been repeatedly cast on Acholi cultural leaders and their role in facilitating the peace talks between the LRA/M leadership and the NRM/A: Finnström (2008, p. 114) notes how Major Kakooza Mutale, "another military man, who is the president's advisor on political affairs, labelled some Acholi leaders as [having a] 'diabolic and treacherous role'". Actions and utterances such as these reinforce local perceptions in northern Uganda that the government and its army have no interest in either ending the conflict or protecting the local population against

63 The amnesty included rebels who "renounces and abandons involvement in the war or armed rebellion" and to individuals that are "collaborating with the perpetrators of the war or armed rebellion" or "assisting or aiding the conduct or prosecution of the war or armed rebellion" (Finnström 2008, p. 92)

64 Although doubt has been cast on the legal validity of amnesty certificates by the Lead Public Prosecutor (Agger 2012).

abuse from the LRA. To add to injury, the repeated failures to broker peace between the LRA and the government have also brought about a crisis in confidence in traditional community leaders inside the communities. This negates the communities' ability to govern themselves and rebuild after the war.

4.7 Towards Peace in the Northern Regions?

Uganda has been characterised by debilitating conflict and human rights abuses since it gained independence in 1962. The motivation and logic behind the bloody conflicts that ensued have been intrinsically linked to the politics of power and succession in Uganda. Despite international appraisal of current President Museveni's success in stabilising the country it remains deeply fragmented along regional and ethnic divides. This is reflected in national discourses of the various regions and the people living in politically problematic regions, and polarised discourses underline the government's policy strategies in Uganda. Though the LRA/M has pushed the population in the northern and northeastern regions to the brink of survival, the dominant discourses on the LRA conflict not only fixes the northerners as perpetrators but have justified brutal military operations that have implicated the noncombatant population. The narrative of violent Acholi also underlines the displacement strategy deployed by the central army in the northern territories, a move that has thoroughly undermined and weakened Acholi socio-cultural institutions and livelihoods.

The compounded effect of 30 years of material and social destruction in northern Uganda has been immense. There are few indications that the government has changed its attitude towards the northern region: Hopwood (2011, p. 6) notes that the government has failed to fulfil the promises from the Juba peace process: "to address human rights abuses, reconciliation needs, and northern underdevelopment, poverty and neglect". Additionally, the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for the northern region was suspended in 2009 and has yet to be resumed. Other national strategies have conflict resolution on the agenda, but focus remains on issues such as security and defence. In monetary terms this means that the government keeps on prioritising costly military operations, and a minimum has been allocated to the material and social remobilisation of the devastated communities. Continued economic and political marginalisation make narratives that oppose the central government and army more meaningful, and will over time increase the likelihood of more conflict in the northern regions. The conflict has also deeply affected the social and moral fabric of society in northern Uganda. Considering, as Murithi emphasises that "social cohesion is fragmented and the persistence of violence and abductions has thoroughly undermined the levels of social trust" (Murithi 2006, p. 23), interventions that aim to restore socio-cultural

erosion in communities are significant. The next chapter examines the Norwegian backed project in northern Uganda with the aim of exploring strengths and challenges with a project that, in line with policy at international and national level, aims to take a culturally integrated approach to promoting socio-political stability and sustainable development.

Chapter 5

Cultural Heritage and Memorialisation in Northern Uganda

Since the end of direct confrontation between the LRA/M and government forces in 2005, and the subsequent collapse of the latest peace talk in Juba in 2008, the northern districts in Uganda remain in a seemingly atypical transition stage. While "the immediate threat of a violent death, torture, mutilation, or abduction at the hands of the LRA" (Hopwood 2011: 6) is gone, the threat of a new conflict is never far away as the LRA/M continues to roam central Africa (see Human Rights Watch 2014b). In addition, many Acholi continue to mistrust the central government and see the army's inability to protect them from the LRA/M during the 20-year long insurgency, and the government's unwillingness to compensate victims and develop the northern region, as proof that Museveni and the NRM want to destroy the Acholi and Acholiland. Therefore, whereas the long reprieve in fighting has allowed people to gradually return home, a number of concerns continue to plague the local population in northern Uganda and many people have not yet fully emerged from the strangling grip of the conflict: "[t]he level of devastation in Acholiland is immense, both in terms of material impoverishment and the social trauma inflicted on individuals and the community as a whole" (Tandberg 2012a, p. 9). During the conflict years, the international aid and development community focused on immediate disaster relief, such as distribution of food, medicine and other basic amenities to the camps. Following the end of direct confrontation between government forces and the LRA/M, there has been a transition towards long-term and structural development funding. A number of national development agencies and organisations are involved in development cooperation in the war-ravaged regions, and most development strategies highlight the additional needs of the northern and northeastern districts in Uganda (see ADA 2010; NORAD 2008; UNFPA 2009). However, the strategies predominately focus on conventional development measures such as economic growth, and the MDGs are typically referred to without reference to culture.

In light of the argument that development initiatives can only be sustainable when they are grounded in the socio-cultural reality of the people and the community they are designed to serve, this chapter explores the cultural development projects facilitated by the NDCH and the NMU in the northern districts of Amaru and Gulu in Acholiland and the northeastern districts of Apac and Lira in Langoland. The first section outlines the general aspects of the cooperation that was established between the NDCH and the NMU, while the subsequent four sections present the specific communities and the interventions that were designed and implemented at the four sites. The sixth section of this chapter introduces the final exhibition and workshop, and offers a summary of some of the gains made at the four project sites, while the last section summarises the

overall results from the projects undertaken and the final exhibition with regard to the project aims. The main discussion of the wider implications of the projects follows in Chapter 6.

5.1 Preserving and Presenting Memorial Landscapes to Promote and Sustain Peace in Northern Uganda

In 2009 the NDCH and NMU teamed up to undertake a cultural development project in northern Uganda. The aim of the pilot project, which was named *Preserving and Presenting Memorial Landscapes to Promote and Sustain Peace in Northern Uganda*, was "to document, preserve and present memorial landscapes to promote reconciliation and sustain peace in Northern Uganda" (NDCH 2010 p. 1). The joint project emanated from contact established through the Africa 2009 network, a twelve-year project that focused on "improving the management and conservation of immovable cultural heritage in Sub-Saharan Africa" (UNESCO 2004). In particular, an international course on wood conservation hosted by NDCH in Oslo in 2008 as part of the Africa 2009 programme, where staff from the NMU participated, was instrumental for the future cooperation between NDCH and NMU (Interview with NDCH, 11 November 2013). During the course a dialogue was started about a possible project that would address questions of cultural heritage and reconciliation in northern Uganda. The ideas discussed in Oslo were taken by the NMU to the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala, which expressed interest in the topic. Subsequently, in October 2009, the NMU and NDCH carried out a fact-finding mission in Gulu, Pader, Kitgum, Amuru, Lira and Apac Districts in northern and northeastern Uganda. The project proposal that NMU and NDCH subsequently filed underlined that "the stories told by the people [they] met clearly underlined the urgent need for positive interventions" (NDCH 2010, p. 1). Unable to oversee the project, the Norwegian Embassy requested that the NDCH take the lead role as the Norwegian institutional partner. In April 2010, the project was approved by MFA with a budget of NOK 1.5 million for a three-year period[65].

The project (NDCH 2010, p. 3) was modelled on the working principles of Africa 2009:

> To involve local communities in planning for and protecting heritage resources within their territory; to give priority to local knowledge systems, human resources, skills and material; to give priority to simple solutions that can be implemented within an existing framework; to ensure tangible benefits to local communities; [and] to create awareness and respect for international conservation norms.

Another central aim of the NDCH-NMU project was to equip NMU with the institutional "capacity and competence to run similar projects" (NDCH 2010, p. 3), and the NMU have continued to

65 Initial proposal was 2.5 million NOK. The NDCH's final project report (2013) states that total project funds were $270 000, which approximates to 1.8 million NOK.

oversee the existing project sites developed during the project period and will also extend its commitment to new sites. The conceptual basis for the project was founded on the declaration made in connection with the Juba process, namely that,

> [s]ustainable peace can only be achieved once the underlying historical causes of the conflict [in northern Uganda] are recognised and addressed, facilitating the emergence of a common national narrative emphasizing peace and reconciliation (NDCH 2013).

As such, the project aimed to use cultural and customary values and traditions in order to revive communities that were suffering from the traumas inflicted by the violent conflict, in the wider context of national reconciliation. The Director of NMU also expressed that the project aimed to, provide,

> foci for resident mourning and emotional healing, solemn spaces where the community can debate and solve conflicts, centres for the provision of social services and rights education, and resident community economic development through tourist donations (Giblin 2012, p. 10).

In this sense, the NMU Director linked the projects to cultural and social development *and* economic gains. In order to achieve balance between the tangible and intangible elements, the project plan was divided into two stages. The first stage involved the documentation, construction/re-construction and presentation stage of the four sites. The second stage, which was not made out in detail in the project proposal, referred to long-term goals and activities that should follow from the first stage of the project: "survey results will be used in social, cultural and educational programs, and contribute to the reconstruction of traditional life in rural communities in the area" (NDCH 2010, p.3). There was also a hope that "[t]he findings [would] be used to promote a sense of identity, belonging and continuity for the IDP returnees" (ibid). It is worth noting that the working principles and conceptual basis for the project is reflected in the Ugandan National Cultural Policy published by the Ugandan Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in 2006. Like the Norwegian policy papers linking culture to development, the Ugandan cultural policy refers to its international human rights' commitments[66] and states that there is "a general lack of appreciation of the significance and value of Uganda's cultural heritage towards the realisation of Uganda's development goals" (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 2006, p. 2). As such, the NDCH-NMU project-focus on mutual institutional and local capacity building, promotion of cultural heritage from community level as part of a communal healing process, and use of the heritage sites as grounds for cultural tourism and economic development is also consistent with the aims and principles of the Uganda national cultural policy.

[66] Uganda has ratified the UDHR, ICCPR and ICESCR. In addition the national cultural policy refers to Uganda's ratification of the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

The four sites ultimately identified as project sites were Pabbo IDP Camp, Lokude[67] IDP Camp, Barlonyo IDP Camp, and St. Mary's College for Girls in Aboke[68]. The predominant focus on IDP camps were specifically to "document memorial landscapes of IDP-camps" (NDCH 2013, p. 4) and preserve them for the future. However, as we shall see, the three IDP-camp project sites represent three very different starting points and subsequently offer three very different projects. This is in keeping with the final project proposal, which underlines that "[f]or heritage to contribute in the democratization processes and ensure sustainable development, a careful consideration of local perspectives and cultural needs is required" (NDCH 2010, p.1). In order to obtain local perspectives and establish local ownership, local stakeholders were consulted both during the survey process and in connection with documentation and management plans at the four project sites. The survey process included interviews with official political leaders such as the Chief Administration Officers, President Representatives and local governors, as well as with local traditional custodians and elders. After the selection process, additional meetings were held at the four sites during October/November 2010. These meetings focused more on the needs of survivors, but also continued to rely on political and traditional leaders (Interview with NDCH, 11 November 2013). During the subsequent stages of consultation and meetings at the selected sites, programme staff and advisors from NMU and NDCH aimed to identify activities and interventions that the community perceived as important and relevant. However, no special provisions were made during consultations with respect to gender and/or different socio-economic status. Yet, the annual report for 2010 underlined that during the consultations it became clear that, "people wanted to have memorial sites where massacres had happened, they spoke about challenges of integrating former child soldiers, and how to heal a dehumanised society" (NDCH 2010, p.1).

From October throughout December 2010, the NMU project team worked full time at the four sites: drawing up survey plans for the construction of memorials and supporting infrastructure, management plans for when the memorial sites were completed, and a number of memorandums of understanding and land titles were secured during the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011[69] (Interview with NDCH, 11 November 2013). Corresponding to the proposal's emphasis on drawing on local resources and capacities, the "[t]echnical designs and specifications on preservation of the selected sites for Aboke and Barlonyo [were] done in collaboration with Nkozi University Department of Architecture" (NDCH 2010, p. 4). Materials and labour for the projects were also

67 Also referred to as Lokudi. The NDCH uses Lokudi, while NMU uses Lokude. In this thesis I have chosen to use Lokude.

68 The 2009 survey also include Mwichini massacre site in Kitgum and Awere Hill in Gulu. Material collected during the survey is archived at the National Museum of Uganda in Kampala.

69 The memorandums affirm that local stakeholders retain the right of the land (Interview with NDCH 11 November 2013).

sourced locally. The NMU and NDCH presented the management plans to the local communities in January 2011, and plans were subsequently approved for implementation. As part of the documentation of the four sites project staff from NMU also filmed several hours of survivor accounts of events that took place during the conflict (Interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014), and produced a film, *Northern Uganda: Featuring Efforts of Peace and Reconciliation*, with footage from the four sites. Representatives from the four sites were also invited to attend a study-trip with NDCH and NMU staff to memorial sites in Rwanda in 2011. The NDCH maintains that the effect of this trip was to build network between the sites and that "[w]hen the site representatives came back to their communities, they had clear ideas about the work to be done, and how they wanted their stories to be presented" (NDCH 2013, p. 5). The next four sections introduces the respective sites selected to partake in the memorialisation project in northern Uganda, in conflict and post-conflict context, and the specific intervention planned and implemented

5.2 Preserving Pabbo IDP Camp

Pabbo IDP Camp was chosen to be part of the NDCH-NMU cultural development project because it was the first and biggest camp for displaced people in northern Uganda. The camp is located in Amuru District, between Gulu[70] and the boarder of South Sudan. It was the first IDP camp officially established by the NRM/A in northern Uganda[71] (in 1996) and at its biggest Pabbo counted 75,000 inhabitants and covered 2 km². The camp inhabitants were not only from Pabbo, people displaced from surrounding rural areas, and survivors from the Atiak[72] massacre. Camp inhabitants were crammed into closely packed "grass and thatched huts and semi permanent houses built of unburnt bricks" (NMU 2011a, p. 5). The conditions in the camp were notoriously bad: camp residents did not have access to adequate food, clean water or health services and there were frequent outbreaks of disease. Due to congestion there were also frequent outbreaks of fires in the camp (IRIN 2004a). Additionally, Pabbo IDP Camp was sporadically attacked by rebels. This meant that abuse, killings and abductions from the camp were not uncommon. Several incidents of violence also occurred in instances where people ventured outside camp parameters, for instance to attend to their gardens/fields, went in search of water, food or in order to collect firewood (IRIN 2004b). Following the end of direct confrontations between the LRA and government forces, some people moved back to their villages. However, many residents remain, and currently there are plans

70 Pabbo is located 50 km northwest of Gulu town, on the road to Nimulu (also known as the Gulu-Nimulu road).

71 As noted above in Chapter 4, Finnström (2008, p. 141) reports that the NRM/A displaced people to camps prior to the camp-strategy was publically declared by Museveni in September 1996.

72 For more information about the Atiak Massacre see Justice and Reconciliation Project 2007.

to transform the former IDP camp into a town centre. Pabbo was historically a trading centre and its strategic location of Pabbo along the Gulu-Nimulu Road means that the centre continue to attract commercial activity, something which the local government wants to develop further. Satellite villages that have appeared since the end of the fighting are additional reasons for developing the centre of Pabbo.

During the NDCH-NMU survey and consultation phase of the project in Pabbo, local community leaders and members that attended the meetings, expressed a desire to preserve a section of the camp for the future as a testimony of people's lives during the war: the cramped and make-shift shelters constructed not only show how closely people were packed together, but also give visitors a sense of the suffering it brought to people (Interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014; see also NMU 2011a). The importance of protecting the site for conservation is expressed in the subsequent management plan that was drafted: "[t]he testimonies and stories told at the site are living memories of insecurity, displacement, brutal killings, abductions, rape of women, loss of dignity and abuse of human rights" (NMU 2011a, p. 8). The demarcated site for conservation measures 80 meters times 110 meters. Most of the huts chosen for preservation were in a state of disrepair. This was mainly due to the circumstances in which people found themselves when the huts were erected: a rushed situation to get shelter and a lack of adequate materials. Due to frequent fires, some hut inhabitants replaced the thatched roofs with plastic or corrugated roofs. A number of huts were abandoned, and without inhabitants the huts were quickly falling into disrepair. In addition to collapsed huts on the demarcated site, the thatching posed a technical challenge as it ruins when exposed to heavy rains and represents a fire hazard during the dry season. In huts where the thatching had been replaced by plastic, there was a problem of moisture being retained inside the structure.

The material part of the NDCH-NMU project in Pabbo enjoyed great community support: both local materials and labour were used for the reconstruction and preservation of the memorial huts, and are central in the continued maintenance of the site. However, the project also mobilised the community in other ways: the project included the training of guides that can show visitors around, and local schools and youth groups use the memorial huts as part of their study. Additionally, as a result of the focus on cultural expression as a means of healing and reconciliation, a number of social, dance and drama groups have sprung up in the camp following the memorialisation project (Interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014; Interview with former advisor at NDCH, 16 September 2014). In this sense, the initial project aim and subsequent management[73] plan that was drafted to

73 The Department of Museum and Monuments through the National Museum of Uganda, Amuru District and Pabbo Sub-county

"guide the preservation and presentation of the memories of the war in order to promote peace and reconciliation" (NMU 2011a, p. 5), has seemingly succeeded in gathering the community.

5.3 Lokude IDP Camp and Massacre Memorial

The second site chosen for the NDCH-NMU cultural development project was Lokude IDP Camp. Lokude IDP Camp is situated 20 km outside Gulu Town. The IDP camp was established in 2003 in an attempt to decongest Coope IDP Camp. The camp is most known for a massacre that occurred here on 19th May 2004, which killed over sixty people and further displaced scores of people. And the memorial site is focus of the NDCH-NMU cultural development project.

Lokude district, a peaceful place where people cultivated cash crops, was affected by the conflict in the North right from the start. The ex-soldiers from Obote and Okello's armies fleeing north passed through Lokude on their way to their homesteads or to join rebel fighters further north. While the ex-soldiers brought great tension to the area, the NRM/A following in their steps wreaked havoc on the local population. During the fighting that subsequently erupted between NRM/A and rebel fighters, both forces 'recruited' youngsters from Lokude to fight. The noncombatant population was also caught up in the fighting: "houses were burnt, property was looted, people were abducted and both men and women were subjected to indiscriminate mutilations, rape and killings by both warring parties (Justice and Reconciliation Project 2011, p. 8). As time progressed the people of Lokude also became the direct target of LRA retaliation for perceived government collaboration. As one female interviewed by the Justice and Reconciliation Project (ibid, p. 9) describes how, "[t]here came a time when they [the LRA] started planting landmines on footpaths and other places that people frequented, like wells". To add to peoples' misery the central army forcefully emptied the rural areas of Lokude. The forced displacement of people from the rural districts of Lokude to Lokude Village "changed the structure of the village into a camp" (ibid, p. 8).

In early 2004, an army detach was set up at the centre of Lokude IDP Camp[74]. The army detach was supposed to counter the relentless LRA attacks which placed the "village at the mercy of the rebels" (ibid, p. 9). However, the fighters stationed at Lokude were hopelessly undermanned and poorly trained: of the forty soldiers stationed at Lokude, the majority of the soldiers were in fact from LDUs and included minors recruited by the central Ugandan army. Additionally, the commanding officer did neither know local conditions nor speak the local language. This meant that the "group lacked sufficient capacity, knowledge and skills to regain army control over the area" (ibid).

74 The Justice and Reconciliation Project report holds that "the security set up at Lokude acted as a catalyst of the subsequent attack" (Justice and Reconciliation Project 2011, p.9).

The Justice and Reconciliation Project report (2011) on the Lokude massacre also offers insight into LRA activity in Lokude at the time. A former LRA fighter, and current resident of Lokude, interviewed in connection with the report explains how the LRA command was increasingly upset with the people of Lokude: he recounts how his commander complained that information about rebels was passed on to the army detachment, how failed abductions had led to direct confrontations between the LRA and government forces leading to the killing of dedicated LRA fighters and the loss of guns. The LRA command subsequently branded the whole community as government collaborators, and the scene for the massacre was set[75].

The attack devastated the camp. The army detach at the centre of the IDP camp offered little resistance to the onslaught, and most army personnel and guards fled the camp as the attack started. Within a couple of hours, the rebels had killed more than sixty people, maimed and abducted scores more, and looted all the food-stuff and property they could find. Terrified survivors, many who had witnessed the brutal killing of loved ones fled into the bush where they spent the night in terror. Due to the fear of renewed LRA attacks, the few burials that were undertaken were rushed and not according to required customs. Many though, too scared to return to bury their dead, fled to Gulu Town. Within a couple of days the survivors from Lokude IDP Camp were resettled to Coope IDP Camp, where most would spend the next three to four years.

Gradual resettling of people from Coope back to Lokude started in 2007. A new IDP camp was established in Lokude next to the army detach of 60 soldiers that were deployed to protect the returnees. However, the massacre marked the near total disintegration of the community. The Justice and Reconciliation Project report published in 2011 notes how (p. 19), although six years had passed "the massacre's devastating impact still lives to haunt the community". Moreover, that a "vast section of the Lokude community is still nursing the trauma caused by the massacre", and that, "as a result most of them live in denial, bitterness and hopelessness" (ibid). The repeated displacements, which were compounded by the massacre, have turned traditional community structures up-side down: alcoholism is widespread, particularly among the men, and child-headed families are not uncommon. There still exists great insecurity and confusion among people as to why the massacre happened, and who should be held accountable. As such, Lokude is characterised by suspicion and fear: returnees are treated with great apprehension and there is a general distrust of families "whose relatives have not yet returned from captivity" (ibid). Despite repeated pledges

75 Leading up to the attack, the LRA had undertaken careful preparation and intelligence gathering. Families of high ranking commanders were not in the village during the attacks. In addition, the Catholic charity Caritas had delivered food aid to the IDP camp, so the village was well stocked when the LRA attacked (ibid).

from the government, there have been no reparations for the victims of conflict and most live in abject poverty.

At the time of the NDCH-NMU survey there was already a memorial erected in memory of the massacre victims. The memorial was donated by the international NGO Child Voice International (that also built a primary school in Lokude), in accordance with wishes from relatives of displaced persons from a nearby village that had been buried in the camp (ibid, p. 21). However, the relatives, who had commissioned and also helped build the memorial, had seemingly lost interest in the memorial. When the NDCH and NMU staff surveyed Lokude the memorial site had been abandoned by the local community still living in Lokude: it was overgrown with greens and shrubbery, and the site was littered. The NDCH-NMU project restored the memorial site, and planted a peace-forest around the monument. The project also constructed a community centre where the community can gather, and where the Lokude drama group meets to practice and perform. Giblin (2012, p. 13) interviewed local residents at the Lokude memorial site in the period between July-October 2012 and he warns that residents' expectations see the restoration of the memorial with further reparations: "residents were overwhelmingly in favor of memorialization, because they believed it would foster community development". However, Lokude has not received the same international and national attention that Pabbo and Barlonyo IDP Camps have, which remains a point of great contention in the local communities that suffered and lost relatives in Lokude IDP Camp.

5.4 Barlonyo IDP Camp and Massacre Site

Barlonyo Village is located in Ogur sub-county of Lira District in Langoland, 26 km from Lira Town. Barlonyo, meaning the land of plenty in Lango, is one of the most known massacres during the LRA conflict: on the evening of 21st February 2004, the LRA attacked butchering more than 300[76] people in the IDP camp. The massacre that took place at the Barlonyo IDP Camp must be seen in connection with the government's military attempt to quell the LRA. In 2003/2004 Operation Iron Fist II had forced large groups of LRA fighters southeast and into Teso District. The heavy clashes between government forces and rebel fighters "embittered fighters on both sides" (Justice and Reconciliation Project 2009, p. 3). In Lira District, the nearby fighting and frequent "rebel sightings and looting raids terrified civilians" (ibid). Like in other parts of northern Uganda, a combination of people seeking protection from rebels and being forcefully displaced from rural

[76] The number of people killed during the massacre remains a point of contention. The number ranges from 121 (government's official number) to over 300 (see Justice and Reconciliation Project 2009).

areas by the army soon turned Barlonyo village into an IDP camp. In November 2003 a small army detach was set up, and the central army held public meetings to reassure people that they were protected. By January around 5000 people had based themselves next to the Barlonyo army detach[77].

According to survivors of the Barlonyo massacre, there were good relations between the army soldiers deployed at the camp and the camp residents. However, in late January 2004 the soldiers were withdrawn to reinforce the troops fighting the rebels in Teso District. The fighters that replaced the soldiers were local militia fighters known as the Amuka and LDU personnel. The replacement guard suffered from low morale from the start. For instance, no salary had been paid out to the soldiers, which meant they had to rely on the local community to provide for them. Of the 70 fighters that were brought in to replace the army soldiers, only 47 remained less than a month later (Justice and Reconciliation Project 2009).

On the other side, LRA command was angered by what they perceive as camp residents in Barlonyo collaborating with the government. When the rebels finally attacked it was under order "to kill every living thing". The rebels approached the camp during day light, and were sighted by several people working in the nearby fields. However, attempts to alert camp residents of the approaching danger were unsuccessful. Once at the camp, the LRA fighters expertly broke up into three groups. The first group attacked the army detach. Incidentally, the detachment was mostly vacated as the LDU fighters had received their first payment and had gone to town to buy provisions. Several Amuka fighters had also gone in search of food. The LRA fighters killed people inside the detach before joining the two other LRA groups in massacring and abducting camp residents. The LRA had surrounded the camp before attacking, and only a "small gap of fighters on the western side of the camp [allowed] some civilians, Amuka and LDU to escape" (ibid, p. 7). The onslaught continued uninterrupted for 2.5 hours before the LRA retreated with the abductees. Adult abductees were loaded with loot, and later killed, while many young abductees were either killed or taken to be trained as soldiers. Justice and Reconciliation Project report that "[l]ess than a dozen of those abducted from Barlonyo are known to have escaped captivity" (ibid, p. 12). However, like in Lokude IDP Camp, due to the lack of reliable camp registers and chaos during the attack, it is difficult establishing the correct number of people killed and people abducted.

Four hours after the attack had started, government forces arrived at Barlonyo. However, the difficulty in "[distinguishing] a rebel from civilian, a soldier from a militiaman, a victim from a

77 Also this number is disputed by survivors of Barlonyo massacre who hold that the number of camp residents were closer to 10 000 residents. No official camp records were kept (ibid).

perpetrator [meant]" (ibid, p. 13) that the army presence largely awarded the opposite to relief to the distraught victims. The following morning, as the news had spread, people crowded to the site, but the army prevented people from entering the camp. Instead, camp survivors were forced to collapse huts "on top of remains and bodies were buried in pit latrines" (ibid). Survivors also placed bodies in shallow graves, but due to the stench and dogs repeatedly dragging bodies out into the open "new orders [were given] to civilians to dig up the improvised graves, wrap the corpses in plastic sheeting and place them in the *adak* [(trenches)] surrounding the detach" (ibid). The *adaks* were subsequently cemented over. The army's irreverence with regard to the handling of the victims of the massacre was traumatic for survivors and relatives. It also compounded local suspicion towards the army: people felt that they were denied the right to perform the necessary rituals to restore the dignity of the dead, and appease their tormented spirits, and that the army was only interested in covering up the number of killed. Additionally, because many of the survivors (and relatives) had not witnessed the burial of their loved ones, or possible abductions, these people were left without any sort of closure.

The massacre in Barlonyo received both national and international attention and condemnation, and in March 2004 President Yoweri Museveni attended the official mass burial ceremony. The survivors were initially positive to the presence of the president. However, the ceremony proved to be controversial and upsetting for survivors and relatives as the memorial stone unveiled by the president only contained the names of 121 individuals killed during the attack. The president also stated during his speech the equivalent of 'what goes around comes around' further contributing to the sense of apprehension in the community. Some survivors interviewed by the Justice and Reconciliation Project attributed the lack of names on the memorial stone and the comments made by Museveni as a rebuke for the Luwero killings committed by Obote's mainly northern army, and that the president viewed the massacre as a 'fateful punishment'[78]. Other people interviewed went further questioning whether government forces had a direct "hand in the killings" (ibid, p. 14). In the end, what was supposed to be a ceremony that could provide survivors and mourners with a sense of closure instead contributed to the sense of confusion and unease in the community. Additionally, the "health centre, technical school, secondary school, and a bridge over the river" (ibid) pledged in honour of the victims never materialised, further compounding people's suspicions of the central government. In 2009, the Justice and Reconciliation Project (ibid, p. 15) concluded that the monument had for many become "a reminder that they have been forgotten, rather than a symbol which 'cools their hearts'".

[78] Obote being a Lango and Barlonyo being in Langoland

The NDCH-NMU project aimed to restore the memorial site physically and socio-culturally: though the site was supposed to be a place of reconciliation, it instead represented "an example of the conflict in northern Uganda where survivors still live with the memories of insecurity and brutality" (NMU 2011b, p. 10). When programme staff and advisors surveyed the site in 2009 and 2010 Barlonyo was a silent and traumatised place. Programme staff recounts how, in October 2009 when they visited for the first time,

> [t]here were a few shops along the road, with music blasting from a radio, but no laughter. A few men were just sitting there. An old man asked: 'What are we doing with our history of suffering? We had no answer, and left feeling emotionally drained and exhausted (NDCH 2013).

The survey visit also revealed that the existing memorial site and monument were in dire need of maintenance. The three trenches that were used as mass-graves for the victims of the massacre form a semi-circle shape[79]. There were cracks and repressions in the cemented surfaces, and there was a concern that the "graves might [eventually] collapse and expose the burial remains" (NMU 2011b, p. 9). Poor drainage at the site was identified as one of the reasons for the surfaces cracking, which again had led to the pollution of a nearby borehole. The monument, which was made of "concrete and ceramic tiles" (ibid, p.4) and consisted of a basement slab and a pillar, were also eroding: some of the tiles were broken; there was graffiti on the stone and the "site [was] littered with sugar cane trash" (ibid, p. 9). The burial grounds, which are situated in the midst of the settlement, were also used as a playground by children in the community: as the only flat and hard surface in the village the graves were ideal for playing card games and sports. The children's playground was further evidence of the failure of the site to be considered as a dignified place for mourning and reconciliation.

The NDCH-NMU intervention restored the burial sites, the area was cleared of rubbish, flowers were planted, and a small fence put up around the memorial site. Additionally, during 2013/2014, a community and information centre was built in Barlonyo[80]. The centre, which has electricity and lighting, contains a small library made available to the wider community. The centre also has a visitor centre, and there are local guides trained through project and that take visitors around the memorial site. The visitor centre is important for the community, as it allows them to share their stories with visitors (instead of visitors just taking pictures and leaving). One programme advisor at the NDCH commented that the community centre is also a small compensation for the children that lost their playground when the memorial site was restored (Interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014. The centre is run by the community, but owned and overseen by the NMU. The NMU (2011b, p.

79 The mass-grave to the west is 36 metres long and 2.3 metres wide; the burial site to the south is 34 metres long and 2.3 metres wide; and the northern site is 4 metres long and 2 metres wide (NMU 2011b, p. 9).

80 In 2012 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allocated an additional 120 000 NOK for the construction of a resource centre in Barlonyo (Interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014).

10) has stated that currently the memorial site is “the place where they [survivors] remember their loved ones. For the larger community it's a place where they come to reflect about the conflict and its impact”. Like in Pabbo IDP Camp, local inhabitants in Barlonyo have organised drama, dancing and song groups. Barlonyo has also had an annual commemoration ceremony for the victims of the massacre. As hoped the memorial site and the centre have become communal spaces and key in the revival of the community.

5.5 St. Mary's Aboke Girls School

St. Mary School for Girls in Aboke in Apac District was the fourth site chosen to be part of the NMU-NDCH pilot project. The Catholic boarding school was site of a mass-abduction by the LRA on the night of 9th October 1996. During the cover of night the rebels managed to secure entry to the girls’ dormitories. They proceeded to smash and destroy school property, raided the school clinic and attempted to set a number of buildings on fire, before taking off with 139 girls into the night. The girls, mostly aged between 15 and 17 years-old, were beaten and tied up by the rebels and marched into the bush. However, the deputy headmistress of the school, Sister Rachele Fassera, and the geography teacher, John Bosco, followed the rebels and the abducted girls into the bush (Strudsholm 1998). They continued to follow and plead with the rebels and in the end managed to secure the release of 109 girls. This meant that, in the end, thirty girls remained with the rebels in the bush. Of the thirty girls, nine girls had escaped by May 1997. The girls were given as wives to LRA commanders, four of the girls taken as wives by Joseph Kony himself (Human Rights Watch 1997).

Human Rights Watch (1997, p. 61) notes that, “[t]he scale of the Aboke abductions was unusual, as was the rebel mission into Apac, but the rebel tactic of raiding schools [was] typical”. However, the ordeal at Aboke received a great deal of attention, perhaps because of the unrelenting resolve of Sister Fassera. After pressure from the Sister, together with the Concerned Parents of Aboke (which was set up after the incident), the “Ugandan government began to negotiate with Sudan for the return of the girls, who believed to have been taken across the Sudanese border by the Lord's Resistance Army” (ibid, p. 85). Though Sudan denied knowing the whereabouts of the girls, Sister Fassera and a representative of the Concerned Parents of Aboke were allowed into several LRA/M camps in southern Sudan. However, despite repeated efforts, and involvement and promises from

various top politicians in both Uganda and Sudan, the girls were not released. It would take thirteen years before the last of the Aboke girls escaped the captivity in the bush[81].

When surveyed in 2009 and 2010 by NDCH and NMU, the programme staff established that there were already a number of well-functioning measures at the school aimed at healing the traumatic experiences that had taken place at the school and in connection with the subsequent abductions and captivity. For instance, the school marks the anniversary of the abduction every year for the abductees and their families, which Giblin (2012, p. 11) notes receives national attention as "the Aboke girls' story is retold each year through television and newspaper reports". The school had also "established a well maintained peace garden and a monument in order to cope with the painful memories" (NDCH 2010a, p. 2). However, the NDCH and NMU's main concern during the projects was the integrity of the school buildings. It was agreed with the school that the memorialisation project would restore five girls' dormitories from where the abductions took place. In addition, an archive has been set up which document the events. As the dormitories where the girls were abducted from are still in use for the school's students, an old storeroom has been made into a permanent exhibition where visitors can come and learn about the abductions and the students' plight.

The four project sites represent different aspects of the LRA conflict, as experienced by the different communities. The next section presents the final piece of the project, the exhibition and workshop in Kampala.

5.6 The Exhibition in Kampala

In addition to the activities undertaken at the four project sites presented above, the NDCH and NMU set up an exhibition and a workshop at the National Museum in Kampala to mark the end of the project period and "discuss findings and ways forward" (NDCH 2013, p. 2) in February/March 2013. The exhibition showcased the interventions undertaken at the four sites, and also presented peoples' stories from the conflict. However, the exhibition presented the programme staff with a number of intricate issues. The NDCH-NMU memorialisation project in northern Uganda was designed with a positive intervention in mind: "to address the sorrow surrounding the atrocities, and provide communities with tools to commemorate and start the healing process" (Tandberg 2012a, p. 12). However, already in the proposal stage the NDCH and NMU expressed concern that "the political situation in northern Uganda was 'precarious' and that as a result cultural heritage touched

81 Catherine Ajok, was the last to come out captivity (see Talemwa 2009). She spent thirteen years with the LRA as Kony's wife. Today, all but one girls is accounted for: 25 managed to escape and four girls are confirmed dead.

upon issues that were highly sensitive and politically controversial in Uganda" (Ibid). At the same time, a central aim of the exhibition was to "[give] a voice to those who otherwise would not be heard" (NDCH 2011b, p.12). An aim that was in keeping with the Ugandan National Cultural Policy. As expected by NDCH and NMU staff, the exhibition and the message it sought to present received considerable attention from the central government (Interview with NDCH, 11 September 2013). As such, whereas the project activity at the local level was very much focused on addressing the local community and individuals' experiences and concerns (and local communities were instrumental in directing programme activities on the ground), the exhibition in Kampala demanded that the local narratives were balanced against the political demands of the regime – which continues to argue that the LRA are terrorists with no legitimate political claims, and does not welcome alternative narratives on the conflict and its causes.

While there might not be one common understanding of the conflict in northern Uganda among people who have lived through the conflict, narrations collected often oppose the dominant narrative on the conflict fronted by the Museveni and the NRM/A. Some accounts collected in connection with the project question the state's motivation in the fighting, its unwillingness to end the conflict by political means and inability to end it by military means, while some accounts go further by directly criticising the state and its part in the conflict (Interview with former NDCH advisor, 16 September 2014). Whereas the projects on the ground open up for reflection around all these accounts, ultimately the NDCH and NMU programme aimed to preserve the integrity of peoples' testimonials of their lived experiences in war without antagonising the authorities.

In the end, the exhibition was named the *Road to Reconciliation*, with an emphasis on "the roads we have travelled" (NDCH 2012, p. 8). The exhibition, which focused on the projects themselves rather than the conflict, presented photos of the sites and various community members taken throughout the project period. In addition to the featured photos, museum curators had collated a mix of illustrations and short texts from project staff and people from the local communities that were presented at the opening. The short texts presented give the background to the sites and the interventions, but generally encourage visitors to reflect around paths to reconciliation instead of giving critical reflections on the conflict and the lack of public attention awarded to the survivors (Interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014). In this sense, the exhibition intentionally avoided questions of 'naming and blaming', while at the same time emphasising the conflict as a backdrop to the stories and photographs presented. The exhibition drew a number of politicians and statesmen from Ugandan society, and also several dignitaries from the international diplomatic community in Kampala. A number of people from the four communities also attended the opening in the capital, including the cultural groups. Their feedback to NDCH and NMU was that seeing their photographs

and stories narrated in the museum was immensely positive, particularly as the museum is perceived as having a lot of credibility among people (Interview with NDCH, 11 November 2013). NMU staff was also happy with the exhibition, which represented the museum's biggest event at the since Uganda gained its independence in 1962 (Interview with former NDCH advisor, 16 September 2014). The exhibition and workshop also drew pledges of funding from the Ugandan government (NDCH 2013), and the current strategy papers and budget published by the Ugandan Tourism and Museum Board has delineated funding for the maintenance of respective sites.

5.7 NDCH-NMU Projects: On the Road to Reconciliation?

The four project sites chosen for the project showcase different aspects of the conflict in northern Uganda: Pabbo IDP Camp represents the reality of mass-displacement in northern Uganda, Barlonyo and Lukode the harsh legacy of massacre on local communities, and Aboke the story of abduction and fear of children (girls) during the conflict. The exhibition presented the project sites and attempted to sum up and display the results of the cooperation between the NDCH, NMU and the communities engaged in the pilot projects. However, beyond the tangible aims of the project which have been largely fulfilled, it is difficult to measure the success and long-term effect of the intangible factors of the projects. Besides from the results achieved with respect to the material restoration and the documentation of the various sites, the project has certainly contributed to the institutional strengthening of both the NMU and NDCH in terms of running similar projects in the future. Though the exhibition seemingly shows the immaterial transformation that has taken place in the communities the NDCH and NMU have been involved in, this is trickier to measure. The programme material proposes that listening and attributing value to peoples' stories have generally meant a great deal to the communities that have experienced being largely ignored by the central government. The NDCH and NMU are careful to emphasise that they are not "psychologists or social workers" (NDCH 2013), but the process have brought communities together with the common aim of remembering and moving past the traumatic events and their losses. As such, though the cultural development projects are dealing with painful memories that are still raw, the communities seem to have been forthcoming and eager to shape the activities and subsequent management plans. One of the statements figuring in the exhibition was how "before you came we were more divided. We had more conflicts but things have improved. We work closely together and there is a positive dependency between us" (NDCH 2013). The memorial site coordinator in Aboke also stated in his project report to the Ugandan Commissioner of Museums and Monuments that, "the project has helped to reconcile the people from Acholi and [Lango] sub regions, and improved

on the cooperation, relationship and understanding between the four selected memorial site" (Appendix 1 in NDCH 2013, p. 10). In this sense, the network established during the project period, mitigate the divide between communities in northern and northeastern regions in Uganda.

However, because consultations relied heavily on political and cultural leaders, and did not differentiate between community members, it is impossible to know to what extent and the ways in which the projects have affected community members differently. Project staff at NDCH has commented on how communities that were 'stagnant' and 'introvert' have been revived, and how the communities seem to have a renewed energy in their outlook on life (Interview with NDCH, 11 November 2013; interview with former NDCH advisor, 16 September 2014). However, to what extent the transformation involves all of the community is difficult to ascertain.

The NDCH holds that the various song, dance and drama groups that have appeared in Pabbo, Lokude and Barlonyo, have given the community an instrument to deal with and move past the atrocities and are "powerful messages of creativity and survival" (NDCH 2013). The communities also organised a cultural and commemoration event in Aboke in October 2012, where the groups performed and the communities interacted and learned from each other. The communities expressed to NDCH and NMU staff at the time that they wanted this to be an annual event. While these initiatives do not stem directly from the NMU or the NDCH, the communities' attribute some credit to the projects undertaken and, as such, carry some testament to the intangible effect of the projects. One statement presented in the exhibition says the following:

> During the years of conflict singing in the camps had to be very subdued because of the rebels. The army and the rebels often had the same kind of uniforms and in the dark it was difficult to distinguish friends from enemies. Our songs tell important things about the conflict. The dance and the music create good relations with others, we keep fit and it is very good for our thoughts. It helps us to overcome what happened (NDCH 2013).

This view is corroborated by the Memorial Site Coordinator in Aboke (Appendix 1 in NDCH 2013, p. 10), who underlined that "[t]he project has helped us on the preservation of culture in the region". Perhaps then, it is more prudent to argue that the projects signify a small, but important step on the road to reconciliation for the communities. The discussion that follows in Chapter 6 will examine the project aims, implementation and tentative conclusion made by NDCH and NMU project staff in light of the greater discussion on the uses of cultural heritage in post-conflict settings as part of foreign interventions and the use of cultural heritage as an instrument to promoting peace, reconciliation and, ultimately, sustainable development.

PART 3

The discussion in Part 3 links the case in Part 2 to the larger theoretical discussion in Part 1. The NDCH-NMU project touches upon all concepts and practical considerations discussed in previous chapters. Chapter 6 discusses the findings and the lessons learned from the cultural-development project, and their relevance for both cultural-based approaches to development and more conventional development interventions in general. This is followed by the final conclusion.

Chapter 6

A Cultural-based Approach to Post-Conflict Healing and Development?

Culture shapes our outlook, what we value and desire, and how we relate to each other. Cultural narratives and cultural heritage are ways of making sense of the world. This is why culture should be an integral part of interventions and foreign cooperation. While conflict is an integral part of social relations, violent conflict is typically underlined by extreme forms of cultural narratives. This is why conflict adds an additional layer to cultural considerations in development interventions. However, the question is not how to avoid, but how to ensure that cultural frameworks support greater socio-political stability and developments that are sustainable and that benefits all members of a society.

As was discussed in Chapter 1 and 2, the notion that cultural heritage can be used to strengthen processes of reconciliation and promote peace is increasingly grounded in policy. At the same time it is worth noting that cultural heritage literature is divided on uses of heritage in post-conflict development and its ability to facilitate and promote cultural healing and stability (Giblin 2012). However, seen as a cultural process, the formation of cultural (heritage) narratives is an integral part of how communities orient themselves following violent and traumatic conflict. Cultural narratives are neither inherently good nor bad, but following from the Foucauldian understanding of power in knowledge, can be used to legitimate various ends. Cultural development interventions that engage with communities undertaking such processes must be seen as opportunities to create dialogue and exchanges that promote diversity and reduces the risk of relapse into violent conflict.

Northern Uganda has been the site of devastating atrocities, committed by both government forces and the LRA/M. Though the conflict is still marked by uncertainties and ambivalence, some cultural

narratives are more developed than others and cultural narratives and identities remain at the heart of the conflict. The NDCH-NMU project preconditions that cultural heritage in early post-conflict settings has the potential to help form narratives that can heal communities and help them move forward.

This chapter examines the strengths and weaknesses of the NDCH-NMU cultural development project in northern Uganda in light of Norwegian public and foreign policy in Chapter 3 and the wider discussion on culture, development and conflict in Chapter 2. The first section of this chapter looks at different forms of transitional justice mechanisms implemented in northern Uganda, and the conflicting and complementary role of formal and informal pressures and processes. This section also argues that success can be measured in relation to what degree initiatives are grounded in local realities. The second section explores the concept of forgiveness in Acholi contemporary narratives, and how these discourses are being used to strengthen the Acholi cultural identity and promote the viability of forgiveness as a means of moving forward for the community. The third section explores arguments for and against memorialisation and what memorialisation and reconciliation mean in the northern Ugandan context, with respect to local Acholi cosmologies and discursive power. This section also highlights that the strong emphasis on wrongdoings committed by the Acholi as a collective in the dominant narrative of the conflict is not conducive to reconciliation at national level. The fourth section examines to what extent the project manages to adequately build the project from bottom-up, while at the same addressing questions of power in the community that naturally arise in relation to questions of culture and representation. The fifth section takes up the discussion from Chapter 3 on the tensions between political and public diplomacy, and challenges that arise when examining foreign policy consideration in relation to public interventions like the NDCH and NMU's projects in northern Uganda. The last section sums up the wider implications of criticism and commendations for cultural-based interventions from both project level and the Norwegian public and foreign perspective, and transposes the lessons learned to policy in general**.**

6.1 Transitional Justice Mechanisms in Northern Uganda

There are various transitional justice strategies implemented in northern Uganda. These different transitional strategies illustrate the importance of grounding activities in both socio-cultural context and political will to succeed. When armed conflicts end or are displaced, communities and individuals can start the process of rebuilding broken and interrupted lives. However, rebuilding after violent conflict is a difficult and complex process. Rebuilding after internal civil wars is

particularly complicated, as the relation between the 'victors' and the 'vanquished' is often less clear-cut than in international wars (Lu 2008). In addition, modern conflicts are also characterised by murky boundaries between 'perpetrator' and 'victim', which again would complicate post-conflict efforts to reconcile divided communities. Beyond the immediate needs of the ones that are left to try come to terms with events that have passed and to orient themselves in the new reality, questions of stability and the risk of new violence need to be addressed. Managing difference with respect to conflict and violence is a critical part of post-conflict efforts. While dealing with rampant crime and rogue elements is important, it is imperative to address the issue of post-conflict grievances: following armed conflict there has typically been a build-up of grievances, and both internal feelings and external perspectives on groupings' responsibility for atrocities committed can be ground for perpetuating the conflict and lead to new aggressions and grievances. In this sense, groupings or individuals that "remain unreconciled to their defeat in the civil war and unreconciled to the new establishment of the new political order" (Lu 2008 p. 368) pose a serious challenge to the stability in post-conflict situations. Hutchison and Bleiker (2008 p. 386) also emphasise that the legacy of trauma, if left undressed, can "disrupt continuity and generate powerful emotions, most notably fear, anger and resentment" and that this again "can often produce new antagonism or reproduce those that have created violence and trauma in the first place". The consequence of this on domestic politics and/or intergroup relations in a country could be profound. Therefore, as Quinn argues (2007, p. 389), "repairing the social interactions and social institutions of a particular society is paramount, as it can help prevent the recurrence of violence". However, Quinn (p. 392) also cautions that whereas "acknowledging past crimes can […] lead to participation and civic engagement, the generation of social capital, and ultimately social cohesion", at the same time "in the course of such transitions, societies have to struggle over how much to acknowledge, whether to punish, and how to recover". In the context of post-conflict chaos the question remains how to promote the conditions that would allow processes of acknowledgement that can lead to forgiveness and reconciliation, and it is perhaps only natural that transitional justice has come to mean a range of things.

As was discussed in Chapter 4, there have been a number of initiatives aimed at ending hostilities, and rebuilding the communities in northern Uganda. However, as Quinn (2007, p. 393) underlines, the formal efforts of the Ugandan government represent a "strange, unwieldy combination of mechanisms" that have "unmistakably [hindered] the process of peacemaking and transition within the country". This can be attributed to the government's unwillingness to recognise the political crisis that underlies the conflict, and its tendency to emphasise the criminal and retributive aspects of the transitional justice in complete disregard of the wishes from local communities. This has led

to a situation where there is a stark opposition between formal and informal accountability mechanisms, and where the former has little place in peoples' lives locally. Moreover, the failure to acknowledge customary law and normative systems in formal spheres has resulted in a legal and normative plurality, where processes and initiatives often contradict each other.

A total disregard for current events and local wishes are significant reasons for why the ICC process in Uganda has been so controversial. Museveni formally requested the ICC to investigate and prosecute the top LRA leadership in 2003[82]. The international criminal tribunals have been a principal mechanism deployed by the international community for post-conflict transitions. The tribunals are supposed to mark "a movement from formal enmity towards peaceful coexistence and, potentially, their joint affirmation of a revised [...] order" (Lu 2008, p. 367). The ICC, like The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) before it, has an explicit focus on retribution and punishment and aim to reinstall the rule of law. The tribunals also represent the acknowledgement of atrocities and crimes committed during conflict. However, critics argue that the tribunals operate out of context both physically and socially, and are therefore limited in their ability to bring healing to communities. As such, whereas an underlying condition of the criminal courts is to help communities move away from conflict and hostilities, its principal focus on retributive justice can entail a failure to adequately address the wider needs of society. However, the tribunal's case in Uganda has resonated badly with a community that has repeatedly experienced being represented and dismissed as criminals by the central government. This is reinforced the political aspect of ICC's mandate which means that it does not extend to atrocities committed by the state and its army/agencies. There was also widespread concern in the communities in northern Uganda that the ICC was undercutting the 1999 Amnesty Act by eliminating senior LRA leaderships' incentive to come out of the bush and cease hostilities. Also, as long as the wanted rebel commanders stay in the bush the court proceedings cannot take place. Instead the ICC's arrest warrants have justified continued spending on costly military operations that have notoriously failed to produce any tangible results. Rather, these operations have caused the LRA/M to intensify its attacks on local communities in northern Uganda and southern Sudan. What is more, for communities repeatedly disempowered by the conflict, the ICC represented yet another external process of disempowerment for the Acholi community, as we shall see the direct opposite to notions of clan responsibility which is so important in Acholi culture. Following from this, the extent of the tribunal in being able to adequately get to grips with the multifaceted legacy and traumas of war in Uganda is grossly

82 The request was not publically declared until 2004. The ICC formally requested the arrest of the LRA/M leadership in May 2005 (ICC website).

overvalued. Instead, the ICC's investigations continue to represent an unwillingness to recognise the importance of informal processes of contributing to transitional justice.

Museveni has also been unwilling to establish a national truth and reconciliation process in Uganda. This is in contrast to countries like South Africa, Sierra Leone, Brazil, and Guatemala that chose to implement truth committees following deep and sustained division and violence. So far in Uganda calls to establish a truth commission to investigate atrocities committed since 1986 have so far fallen on deaf ears[83]. Truth committees are a way of giving victims of atrocities and injustices a voice, acknowledging the atrocities committed, and restoring social trust (Rowlands 2008, p. 138). Furthermore, truth committees "are consistent with a restorative ideology that focuses on making a community whole again, often bringing perpetrators back into the community and providing social teaching" (Quinn 2007, p. 392). A central purpose of a truth commission is also to generate a national narrative of the conflict and reconciliation. In this sense, national truth-telling processes can also bind together local, regional and national levels. However, it is worth noting that truth telling processes are subject to the political climate in which they operate, and frames for truth telling and investigations are typically set by the dominant faction(s) in power. This goes a long way in explaining the failure of Uganda's previous two truth commissions in providing restoration to victims. The Commissions had virtually zero practical application for the victims back then, and in the current political climate there is little to indicate that even if a new truth commission would be established it would be able to do more for victims of conflict and abuse in Uganda today. To find initiatives that have managed to promote some degree of transitional movement we have to look to processes and activities that have been influenced by or are grounded in local support.

In stark opposition to the ICC proceedings, and refusal to implement a national truth and reconciliation process in Uganda, initiatives and activities that have been influenced to a greater extent by communities have seemingly produced more tangible and relevant results for the communities in northern Uganda. An example where local wishes converged with national processes with considerable result is the 1999 Amnesty Act. The Amnesty, which was actively pursued by local cultural and traditional in the northern regions, received large popular support in northern Uganda from the beginning[84] (see Quinn 2007). Accordingly, although the 1999 Amnesty

83 There have been two Truth Commissions since Uganda gained independence in 1961. The first Truth commission, The Commission of Inquiry of Disappearances of People Since the 25th of January 1971, was set down in 1974 by Idi Amin. The report was never published. In an attempt to placate international calls for national reconciliation following the NRM's ascension to power in 1986, Museveni set down a Commission of Inquiry into Violations of Human Rights in the period between 1962-1986. This commission, was plagued by a vague mandate, chronically underfunded and short-staffed, and lacked the political power to make central agencies to cooperate with its investigations. Though the Commission eventually published a report, the results were never acted upon and its existence remains virtually unknown to the general population.

84 Throughout the Amnesty period local radio stations in northern Uganda broadcasted messages aimed at informing

encompassed rebel fighters from the whole country, it was nevertheless viewed with great ownership and pride in Acholiland. However, the government and its agencies have cast doubts on the viability of the Amnesty Act on numerous occasions by dragging its implementation, setting short deadlines, underfunding the Amnesty Commission, and, last but not least, by prosecuting former rebels despite them having been issued with an Amnesty Certificate. Moreover, as already mentioned, when the ICC launched its investigations into the LRA/M top command this was viewed in northern Uganda as an attempt to derail the Amnesty Act and by extension local peace initiatives.

The government has shown a deliberate reluctance to consult customary traditions, in direct opposition to the Uganda Constitution which states that "cultural and customary values that are consistent with the fundamental human rights and freedoms, human dignity and democracy […] may be developed and incorporated into all aspects of Ugandan life" and its own National Cultural Policy (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 2006, p. 11). Quinn (2007) underlines that Uganda's ethnic communities are still characterised by vibrant customary traditions, and that traditional institutions that regulate society are still in use in many places in Uganda. Ayisi emphasises that these "[t]raditional systems of government were not elaborate because law and order were maintained through the normative system which was part of the social structure (Ayisi in Quinn 2007, p. 395). The social institutions, and practices that are acted out through a combination of retributive, restorative and reparative measures to promote societal balance, typically represent more holistic approaches to communities' needs. Unlike the formal institutions, that are often limited by their mandates (e.g. the ICC and its focus on retributive justice), informal systems draw on a wider range of processes and tools to achieve societal balance: arbitration, mediation, social teaching, reconciliation and compensation. These are often dynamically employed based on the crime committed and the various parties involved. As such, the often complex processes commonly involve the offended, offender and the wider community. The processes are intensely social, and community leaders act by mediators by authorising the processes and by providing the normative context. In addition to formal processes, the Acholi have utilised customary traditions to mitigate the effects of the violent conflict and reintegrate community members, both voluntary members of rebel forces and those forcefully abducted, back into society. The next section briefly outlines the rituals and reviews the ensuing cultural narratives that support and promulgate these processes.

rebels that it was safe to come out of the bush (Rinaldo 2004).

6.2 Acholi Rituals and Transitional Justice: Forgiveness as Strategic Utility

The Acholi in northern Uganda have a number of cultural rituals aimed at mediating and ending hostilities within the community. The *Wang oo*, Acholi story-telling, which is an integral part of Acholi socialisation and transfer of moral truths, was attempted during the Juba process to draw the rebels to the negotiation table (Laker 2007). Although the LRA/M failed to show 150 community leaders from across the northern territory attended the session. Together, these rituals make up an impressive set of tools to help regulate conflict in society and mitigate its devastating effects in instances of transgression, by ensuring that moral lessons are transferred from one generation to the next.

The *nyono tonggweno*, or stepping on an egg over the *Opobo* twig, is an Acholi tradition that "involves the symbolic cleaning of people who have been away from the tribe for several months or more and have been contaminated by outside pressures, acts, and influences" (Finnegan 2010, p. 431). This ceremony has also been used among Acholi to welcoming former rebels back into the community, and Finnegan underlines that although the ritual centres on "reentry and cleanisng, nyono tonggweno implies a spirit of forgiveness through expression of warm welcome on behalf of the Acholi community" (ibid, p. 342)[85]. Taking the spirit of forgiveness one step further is the ritual of *mato oput*, drinking the bitter herb, which represents a tradition for facilitating reconciliation between clans in conflict. Leading up to the drinking of the herb, the disputing parties have participated in long process of negotiation. Finnegan notes how, the question of compensation – the acceptance of responsibility by the offending clan and its willingness and ability to pay compensation – are a central prerequisite to the process of reconciliation. After the question of compensation is settled, "representatives from each community perform several rituals including mock fighting, sharing food, and simultaneous drinking of a bitter root extract from the same bowl" (ibid). To end hostilities between groups in conflict, the Acholi have used the cultural ritual *gomo tong*, or bending of the spears ceremony (Afako 2006). This ceremony was for instance used to settle resentment between the Acholi and other ethnic groupings following the Atiak Massacre at the hands of LRA/M (see under).

These rituals represent important social functions in Acholi society with respect to promoting forgiveness and reconciliation processes in Acholi society. In particular *mato oput* has been instrumental in local post-conflict reconciliation efforts in northern Uganda. Finnegan (2010, p. 432) holds that,

> While some will contest the viability of *mato oput* to support reconciliation in the current war (Baines 2005), the contemporary discourse surrounding *mato oput* symbolizes an important Acholi

[85] For full description of ritual see Finnegan 2010, p. 432.

> ethic of forgiveness and reconciliation.

This is true on a general level by ensuring the continuation of and socialisation by community members into Acholi moral frames: the processes are stabilising in themselves due to the normative function. Finnegan draws on the concepts of integration and regulation, and the theoretical perspective of critical sociological events, in her study on forgiveness amongst the Acholi. From a context-based reading, she argues (2010, p. 425) that Acholi religious and cultural leaders have underlined "(1) a communal sense of war fatigue and (2) a sense of Acholi collective identity [...] to promote a pervasive public dialogue of forgiveness". This forgiveness-discourse acts as a social mechanism, allowing the Acholi to forgive and focus on the future. Finnegan (2010, p. 426) furthermore argues that the strategic utility of forgiveness is made possible by the broadness of 'social carriers' involved:

> Numerous cultural practices, social norms, and institutions – including the church, Acholi elders and cultural leaders, and various peace-building communities – that help shape Acholi collective identity have legitimized forgiveness as a viable option.

Moreover, whereas the social effect of the conflict has been pervasive, the collective trauma inflicted by years of abuse has instead strengthened the Acholi cultural identity. As such, whereas the pressed existence of Acholi during the conflict amounts to 'social torture' (Dolan 2005, p. 16), the collective coping mechanisms constitute the bases for the contemporary collective Acholi identity (see Alexander et al. 2004). An underlying cause for this is that (Finnegan 2010, p. 438),

> Acholi leaders have depicted the crisis in northern Uganda as one which the victims, their own Acholi people, are *not* simply sufferers who must wait for the international community to reconstruct their communities and handle issues of accountability and reconciliation.

However, though there is a strong discourse of forgiveness, there is also a sense of ambivalence surrounding transitional justice in northern Uganda. Allen (2006. p. 129) questions to what extent "the Acholi people have a special capacity to forgive" and maintains that people sometimes distinguish between public and private sentiments of retributive justice, with respect to the LRA. In this sense, forgiveness can be seen as a circumscribed choice: as a "deliberate, often reluctant, choice" (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2007, p. 30).

Pham et al.'s study (2005) reveals the complex landscape of post-war views on peace, justice and reconciliation in northern Uganda[86]. Unsurprisingly their results showed that the exposure to violence was tremendous: "[o]f the 2,585 respondents, 40 percent had been abducted by the LRA, 45 percent had witnessed the killing of a family member, and 23 percent had been physically mutilated at some point during the conflict" (2005, p. 4). However, when questioned about what to do with LRA fighters, although 66 percent interviewed called for punitive action against the LRA,

86 Pham et al. (2009; 2010a; 2010b) have done similar studies in more recent years, and their findings indicate similar perceptions on justice and peace in northern Uganda.

58 percent expressed that lower ranking fighter should not be punished. In contrast, 78 percent of respondents expressed that the central army should be held accountable for their crimes (ibid, p. 5). These numbers suggest that while there was an unwillingness to apply forgiveness unconditionally, there was wide recognition of the shared experience of violence by both victims and (unwilling) perpetrators in northern Uganda. Moreover, while the report makes a case for international justice mechanisms in the LRA conflict, the study also notes that respondents in Acholiland were more likely to refer to traditional justice systems and the positive change these could generate. Yet, it is important to keep in mind that the results are indicative of different degrees of immersion and incrimination in the fighting, and the tension between individuals and the collective.

Nevertheless, the statistics presented by Pham et al. support Finnegan's argument that the high level of war fatigue and the strong sense of Acholi cultural identity have promoted a call for forgiveness in the general Acholi population. Whether this forgiveness is internalised by every member of society is unlikely. However, as Finnegan highlights (2010, p. 436), "forgiveness of former LRA members has become one strategy to help bring peace and acquiesce the Acholi's search for urgent consolation and release negativity", which again has "been helpful for moving forward and focusing on peace efforts after the unfathomable suffering of war". Like Pham et al. (2005) Finnegan argues that the Acholi narrative of forgiveness was mostly an intra-group phenomenon – a highly successful one. Both Annan et al. (2009) and Beber and Blattman (2010) comment on the peaceful reintegration of former LRA/M rebels and abductees to communities in northern Uganda and, as such, intentions and thoughts expressed in the various studies discussed above reflect the reality on the ground: forgiveness has been a viable way of allowing peaceful resettlement of rebels and abductees into communities in northern Uganda.

However, Finnegan underlines that narratives of forgiveness were somewhat separate from questions of reconciliation amongst the Acholi. This distinction between forgiveness and reconciliation is important: whereas forgiveness implies an active action on part of the 'victim', reconciliation implies a reciprocal act or understanding. In other words, "forgiveness can be unilateral […] reconciliation is always mutual" (Appleby 2000, cited in Finnegan 2010, p. 428). More than this, compensation paid to victims by the transgressor is an integral part of Acholi reconciliation mechanisms. As Finnström notes (2008, p. 297), "social barriers can be dissolved by admitting wrongdoing and deciding on compensation". As such, in the Acholi context, reconciliation preconditions the participation of both the perpetrators and the victims, and expectations of reparations are a big part of the reconciliation processes. This is in line with the results presented by Pham et al. (2005, p. 5) which showed that of the respondents that expressed endorsement for the amnesty, "the vast majority noted that some form of acknowledgement and/or

retribution should be required of all those granted amnesty". As we shall see later, the notion of clan responsibility and collective shame both adds to the accountability process and complicates it. The next section explores further the notion of reconciliation in the Acholi cultural context, and links this discussion to processes of memorialisation.

6.3 Opportunities and Pitfalls of Reconciliation and Memorialisation: A Way Forward for Acholi Communities?

Forgiveness has been the dominant discourse in the transitional period amongst the Acholi in northern Uganda. However, the "desired long-term outcome" (Finnegan 2010, p. 437) is intergroup and national reconciliation. Following from the previous section, the question of reparation is integral to the notion of reconciliation in northern Uganda. Hopwood (2011, p. 6) maintains that "the issue of [reparation is the] greatest concern to affected communities". Yet, the pervasive violence and chaos caused by the conflict have severely complicated the customary reconciliation processes in northern Uganda and reparation in the traditional sense is not always possible.

Whereas reparation is a complex process, Hopwood argues that memorialisation can act as 'symbolic reparation', which can help promote a wider culture of healing and reconciliation in northern Uganda. Memorialisation is an extension of moral worlds and interpretation of lived experiences, and so embodies a "complexity of notions including remembering and forgetting, history versus memory, individual and collective memory, collective trauma, and victimhood and perpetratorhood" (Hopwood 2011, p. 9). This is why, as mentioned previously during the discussion on culture and conflict in Chapter 2, whereas memorialisation might aim to reconcile and build consensus, it can also divide and cause animosity. As Hutchison and Bleiker (2008, p. 386) underline, a successful memorialisation initiative must carve a "social environment through which fear and anger can be recognized in ways that allow divided societies to overcome ideas about justice that centre on retribution or revenge". In this sense, 'successful' memorials connect to a narrative or collective history in ways that gathers and re-establish humanity and dignity in a community.

When reviewing several memorialisation projects in northern Uganda, Hopwood (2011) identifies two major challenges to implementation of memorialisation and post-conflict cultural interventions, relating to the role of local cosmology in shaping perceptions of guilt and pain, on one hand, and Acholi apprehension of national narratives of the conflict on the other. Firstly, cultural frameworks shape the way we respond to different processes. When discussing the role of memorials, it is clear

that while memorials can influence emerging narratives and aid communities in recovering from trauma, "memorials can [also] have a perverse effect of keeping wounds open rather than healing them" (Hopwood 2011, p. 9). This statement is three-fold. (1) On a general basis, the timing of a cultural heritage project dealing with painful events is vital and at times controversial, and raises questions about how soon after conflict has ended memorialisation processes should take place[87]. (2) More specifically with respect to the Acholi moral world, as Hopwood notes, "in the context of traditional notions of collective clan responsibility [the Acholi is responsible] for the crimes of individual members"[88] (ibid). As the study by Pham et al. (2005) reflected, this significantly destabilises how Acholi people experience the relation between victim/perpetrator. Both Finnström (2008) and Hopwood (2011) note how, when LRA/M aggression targeted Acholi communities it spread destruction, fear and suffering in the community being attacked, but there was also shame and cause for discord in wider community attached to LRA/M activities in general. For instance, when Vincent Otti, an Acholi from Atiak, led the rebel attack on Atiak IDP camp in 1995 it was difficult to comprehend for the community how he could wreak violence on his own community (Hopwood 2011). At the same time other attacks led by Otti other places, would attribute shame to the Acholi clans in Atiak. As an Atiak community member explained to Hopwood (2011, p. 14):

> We were all blaming our child Otti. The Madi people were killing the Acholi people in revenge. The people from Kitgum and Pader were all blaming Gulu for the massacre. The people of Atiak and the Madi had a long running conflict even before the massacre and the massacre only worsened it but we didn't have any problem with the people from Kitgum and Pader. Immediately after the massacre, they were angry with us. We had to organize the gomo tong ceremony [a traditional ceremony marking the end of conflict between clans].

Despite the heinous acts committed by Otti he is still referred to as 'our child', which is testament to the deep-seated understanding of kinship and responsibility among the Acholi in northern Uganda. In a general sense, LRA/M's use of Acholi children to commit atrocities against them, and the LDU's and central army's extensive use of former rebel children to fight the LRA/M are also bound to have exacerbated the Acholi ambivalence around pain and shame.

(3) The third point of contention relates to who memorialisation projects are designed for and what functions they play. In the context of the Acholi in northern Uganda, Hopwood (2011, p. 9) emphasises that it is unclear whether Acholi traditional healing processes support or are in opposition to current memorialisation projects in northern Uganda. This is because local traditional

87 It is for instance worth nothing that, even now, the difficult heritage of World War II is being rewritten to include more nuances. In Norway this has meant recent discussions around the role played by Norwegian officials in the deportation and killing of Norwegian Jews, but this process of rewriting is not without controversy. This shows the long-term span of these processes.

88 There are differences between the Acholi clans and communities and how they perceive and assign blame. Hopwood notes how in western Acholi blame is delineated to the clan from which a particular perpetrator is from, while in eastern districts of Kitgum and Pader Acholiland blame is assigned to western Acholiland in general.

cosmology[89] holds that the dead "have the power to interact with the living and often exercise this ability by punishing and rewarding the living". This belief means that there a number of Acholi rituals centred on interaction between the living and dead, and the appeasement of the dead. While performing rituals and showing respect for the dead can bring blessings, most Acholi believe that the inability to ameliorate the pain and trauma suffered by the dead can conversely lead to further suffering for both the dead and the living (see Finnström 2009; Hopwood 2011). As such, although Hopwood (2011) notes that memorialisation projects in northern Uganda have had positive feedback on the effect of memorials from local communities, he also (p. 18) cautions that in some instances "remembering seemed linked to the notions of unfinished business, trauma, unpaid reparations, bad dreams, and the desire for vengeance", while "[f]orgetting […] was linked to moving on, forgiveness, writing of losses and compensation, recovery and closure".

Related to this, is the question to what extent memorialisation as symbolic reparation is relevant for the communities and members. To what extent questions of symbolic reparation can be altered to accommodate the current post-conflict reality for Acholi communities, ultimately relies on community leaders' ability to mediate these processes, and reframe challenges in a positive way which take in the communities' changing socio-political needs. However, some critics argue that pressures from conflict, but also modern life, have contributed to weakening the relevance of customary traditions and norms. The conflict, in particular, has disrupted and/or prevented people from carrying out rituals central to Acholi everyday life[90]. Moreover, displacement and subsequent disintegration of society means that young people have not been properly socialised into the moral world of rituals[91]. As a result the rituals loose meaning and become less effective. In addition, overlapping orientation may also function in direct opposition to local Acholi cosmologies. As such, memorialisation processes much engage with the presence of diverging value-systems and emergence of new traditions[92]. By engaging a wide spectre of community leaders, or social carriers, in dialogue one can accommodate the social differences that exist in the community and promote a

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89 Hopwood (2011, p. 13) underlines that there is a distinct spiritual and religious divide between traditionalists and born-again Christians in Acholiland, and that this affects the "efficacy of … memorials".

90 As discussed in Chapter 4, while Acholi cosmology is flexible in terms of location, the conflict has posed several challenges to the performance of cultural rituals. Amongst other because the rituals needed to move the ancestral shrines which are the central orientation principle in Acholi culture are expensive and need broad consensus in the community which has often been spread by the conflict (see Finnström 2008, p 146).

91 This is exacerbated in instances where the young have spent long periods away from kin, as was the case with many of the children forcefully recruited into LRA/M ranks The LRA subjected their abductees to threats and alternative teachings as part of the rebels strategy to ensure that children did not attempt to escape. However, some children/youngsters also recount religious and political teachings expounded by senior rebels (see Human Rights Watch 1997).

92 As noted above there is a distinct difference between traditionalists and other 'newer' forms of religious and spiritual beliefs. However, at the same time, there exists a range of combinations of traditional beliefs overlapping with Christian orientations, and people might not necessarily identify what belief systems come from where (see Finnström 2008).

common goal across different orientations. This brings us to the second major challenge to implementation of memorialisation and post-conflict cultural interventions in northern Uganda relates to what extent memorisation projects challenge dominant narratives that are 'harmful' for Acholi collective cultural identity.

There exists a very strong narrative in Uganda that fixes the Acholi ethnic group in a perpetrator position. Though the dominant sentiment in Uganda that the Acholi are particularly violent stems from a colonial stereotype, it is an understanding that has been further developed by the post-independence 'reality' in Uganda[93]. Museveni has continued the tradition of manipulating ethnic narratives in Uganda by playing directly on people's fear of the Acholi people. As Finnström notes (2008, p. 74), whereas Museveni evoked Bantu ties during his insurgency in the bush "in an effort to strengthen local support in the immediate war zone", at the same time "the colonial stereotype of the Acholi as warriors was evoked in an effort to deepen fear and mistrust of Obote's government and its army" (ibid, p. 75). This war propaganda continued after Museveni and the NRM/A seized Kampala in 198694: the stereotypes were publicly propagated in the media and, moreover, the Acholi people were specifically blamed for the country's violent past. The LRA conflict, which is typically deprived of its political context in the media and in peoples' minds in and outside Uganda, is seemingly further proof of the mindless violence fuelled by Acholis. It is perhaps not surprising then that a strong national perception remains in Uganda that Museveni's 'war for democracy' was in fact a war "against a regime of northerners" (Finnström 2008, p. 74).

This narrative is also known among the Acholi, and reinforces their fears with regard to perceived causes of the conflict, why it persisted so long, and why the NRM/A seemingly stood by and watched civilians being slaughtered (see Finnström 2008). Hopwood argues (2011, p. 14) that one of the most developed narratives of the war in the North relate to crimes committed by the government and its army. Accordingly, the persistent military focus was in fact punishment of northerners for the killings committed "against the Baganda in the Luwero Triangle during the 'Bush War' of 1981-1986". The subsequent material and socio-cultural destruction were part of the government's strategy to ruin the Acholi. While Hopwood underlines that this narrative is more

93 As discussed in Chapter 4, in particular the violence during the Obote years crystallised ethnic divides and further compounded the idea in Uganda that the Acholi people from the North are violent people. Acholi formed the main part of Obote II (1980-1985) and Okello (1985-1986), and "were particularly responsible for the atrocities committed in the counter insurgency campaigns in central Uganda" (Finnström 2008, p. 74). Finnström also notes that just as Idi Amin manipulated his ethnic and religious background to evoke ties that might strengthen his power base, Museveni has continued to manipulate ethnic narratives in Uganda.

94 The Obote propaganda machinery, on the other hand, had labelled "the NRM/A as Tutsi, Banyarwandan, or even Rwandan intruders" (Finnström 2008, p. 75). In fact, Kagame, the leader for the Rwanda Patriotic Front that opposed and eventually stopped the genocide in Rwanda, and current President in Rwanda, was trained as a combatant and commander in the NRM/A. The theme og Rwandan intruders has been repeated in statements made by the LRA/M.

"prevalent among the older population and the politically literate" (ibid), the marginalisation of the north in terms of development and investment is making these fears 'more true' also among younger people. As such, these external narratives are to a degree being internalised by the Acholi population.

At the same time, ambiguous narratives with regard to the LRA/M among the Acholi themselves muddle processes of reconciliation: memorialisation projects must also engage with the partial, contradictory or the possible 'no-presence' of a narrative which are also typical of the conflict in northern Uganda. As mentioned, coherent narratives concerning the LRA/M and their actions are yet to emerge in Acholiland, partly because the LRA/M's political motivation has been dwarfed by indiscriminate use of violence against civilians Kony purports to liberate from oppression (Finnström 2008; Hopwood 2011). Presently, narratives relating to the LRA/M are characterised by deep ambivalence and confusion. As discussed above, this is also intimately linked to the Acholi notion of clan responsibility, and this again feeds into the government's perpetrator claims.

The disarrayed external and internal narratives have implications for both intergroup dynamic and prospect of national reconciliation; these contrasting narratives lie at the heart of Acholi grievances and fears, and so should be the focus of cultural-based intervention. However, another focus for memorialisation and reconciliation projects is the repercussions of a cultural narrative which is constructed in opposition to the national identity. As we have seen, the forgiveness discourses, with respect to the LRA fighters are prevalent amongst the Acholi, have contributed to strengthening the collective sense of an Acholi cultural identity. Moreover, as argued above, collective reflections on events that threaten the Acholi social cohesion and identity have become an integral part of healing and reconciliation processes in Acholiland; the cultural discourse has been reinforced in response to outside pressures and antagonistic narratives of the Acholi people and the pervasive distrust of the central government in northern Uganda. Following from this, it might in the long run prove to be problematic the viability of national reconciliation, if local identities are strengthened at expense of and in opposition to national narrative and a possible national inclusive identity. For memorialisation to succeed in facilitating reconciliation in Uganda, it must bridge the gap between local and national narratives: represent symbolic reparation to local communities *and* promote narratives that support political dialogue at all levels – including at the national. In contrast, in an attempt to avoid politicising the message, the NDCH-NMU four cultural development projects and the final exhibition do not deal directly with Acholi fears of misrepresentation on part of the dominant narrative. By doing so, the projects has somewhat undermined its ability to facilitate engagement with trauma in the community on one hand, and the government's responsibility and

accountability towards the northern regions on the other. This is because, whereas external interventions must respect the cultural integrity of a society/community, they also represent important opportunities to influence the processes with respect to human rights perspectives. In order to balance claims of cultural self-determination against universal human rights principles, interventions need to conceptualise culture and value in ways that enable them to include different perspectives. This creates better platforms for inclusive processes that again can facilitate comprehensive reconciliation processes. The next section examines to what extent the projects engage with local cultural preconditions and narratives in a way that safeguards and promotes the realisation of human rights at community level.

6.4 Community-Based Approach to Cultural Development

The NDCH-NMU cultural development projects undertaken in Barlonyo, Lokude, Aboke, and Pabbo have seemingly been successful in connecting the narratives of forgiveness in the local communities and to ongoing processes of reconciliation. The staff, various plans and project reports, have repeatedly underlined that the interventions designed and implemented were carried out in close cooperation with the local communities: the NDCH-NMU project is envisioned as community-based project (Interview with NDCH, 11 November 2013), and consultation and community involvement were central principles during both planning and implementation phase. The consultation processes have allowed NDCH and NMU staff to facilitate dialogue in the local communities in bids to ensure the relevance of and subsequent ownership of the interventions implemented by the community, strengthen the dignity of the war ravaged communities and making the cultural development more sustainable.

As discussed above, managing and reducing conflict is a central concern for post-conflict interventions, as institutions used for regulating ‘every-day’ conflict in a community is often crippled after protracted periods of armed conflict. This was the case with institutions and customary practices that regulated conflict in Acholiland: the compounded effect of the integrated violence during the 1980s and 1990s increasingly overwhelmed the ‘normal’ mechanisms for conflict management in northern Uganda. As a result, social relations in a community are grossly undermined when social arenas and rituals customarily used for building and managing relationship and regulating conflict are displaced or have broken down. In order to make measures relevant and development measures more sustainable, interventions must focus on strengthening local capacities that regulate and mitigate conflict in a community. The NDCH-NMU project aimed to build community spaces that brought people together. The projects also focused on traditional and

political leaders, which would have reinforced the central role of leaders in mediating in the moral world. Gizelis and Kosek (2005, p. 368) draw on Hernandez and Iyengar when arguing that "the identity of the influencing agent with respect to the group is essential to motivate individuals to fulfil their duties and social obligations". However, while leaders are vital to community processes, and by extension community-based development, as they represent main cultural and social carriers and are in a position to legitimise processes and ends, both cultural and development policy dictate a greater consideration for deeper examination of power dynamics within communities: to what extent are these leaders representative for the community, and to what extent and in what ways are inherent tensions addressed? Without exploring these issues further the projects risk reinforcing socio-cultural practices that discriminate against or exclude certain groupings and individuals from decision-making processes.

As mentioned previously, gender is a relevant frame from which we can explore questions of power in culture and society. Yet, the NDCH-NMU project distinctly lacks a gendered profile. While NDCH staff stated that women were actively partaking in discussions around memorialisation and reconciliation in the communities (interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014; interview with former NDCH advisor, 16 September 2014), consultations were not gender sensitised (no additional focus groups were consulted). However, several studies reveal that there is significant gender discrimination at all levels in Ugandan society (see UNFPA 2009; IMF 2010). These gender differences were entrenched during the prolonged conflict. As such, to appreciate gendered dimensions in general is important, but in the context of violent conflict and warfare it becomes even more pressing. The ways in which gender considerations need to be an integral part of conflict prevention, peace building, peace keeping and the post-conflict efforts are, for instance, highlighted in the UN Security Council's Resolution 1325. The World Bank has also issued communiqués aiming to extend the understanding of women's roles in armed conflict.

The extended conflict in northern Uganda has had specific gendered dimensions. With respect to the LRA/M, while young adolescent boys were specifically targeted, "abductions of young females have also been undertaken in large scale" (Tandberg 2013, p. 8). Aboke is an example of abductions targeting girls, and where many of the girls were forced into marriages with rebels. Within the confinement of marriage, young girls were often raped and sexually abused and many girls gave birth in the bush. However, to reduce these girls to the LRA/M sexual slaves is a gross simplification, as females also performed other tasks for the LRA including engaging in active battle (see Tandberg 2013). Women also faced increased levels of violence as a result of the wider context of conflict in northern Uganda. Johnson-Sirleaf and Rhen (2002) underline that war compounds violence experienced by women in times of peace. As such, "while violence and

discrimination against women typically escalate during conflict, this is a perpetuation of a structural problem of gendered inequality and discrimination present also in peace-times" (Tandberg 2013, p. 10). Also, Bouta et al. (2005) underline that gender-based and sexual violence is normalised during violent conflict, and that these practices usually continue also after conflict has ended. In 2005, the Gulu District Sub-Committee on Sexual and Gender-based Violence and UNICEF commission a study into the levels of sexual and gender-based violence in Pabbo IDP Camp. The study revealed pervasive abuses of women and children by government soldiers, husbands, teachers, family, friends, and strangers (Okot et al. 2005, p. 2-4), and the surveys showed that around 60% of females in the camp had been raped at least once[95]. Widespread alcohol abuse also accounts for the rate of violence experienced by women in the camp. Considering the strong gendered dimensions in the conflict, without specific focus groups examining the gendered tensions in the communities it is difficult to comment on to what extent the projects are in agreement with women's realities in the camp. However, the failure to engage with this perspective is a project weakness as cultural narratives are reflected in societal values and organisation, which we know currently are discriminatory to women.

Socio-economic status is another analytical category that allows us to discern different influence and needs in communities. Though poverty is widespread in northern Uganda, differences do exist in terms of wealth, status and power. These differences again affect individuals' ability to influence decision-making and formation of cultural narratives. By focusing on the views and beliefs of the powerful and affluent in a society, we can gain a better and more nuanced understanding of how different people were impacted by the conflict and what they need. However, another approach to difference in the communities in northern Uganda would have been focus groups and discussions that address the divide between victims/perpetrators in the local communities: the effect caused by different levels of immersion and suffering during the conflict, amongst others as a result of the LRA/M's use of forced abductions and actions by kin during the conflict. This would for instance have been relevant in Lokude IDP Camp, where interviews conducted by the Justice and Reconciliation Project (2011) in 2010 and 2011 showed that there was a lingering atmosphere of fear and suspicion towards the families of high-ranking LRA commanders (that were not present in the camp at the time of the massacre), and a profound distrust of both LRA returnees and of the families whose abducted members had not yet returned. As long as these sentiments linger, they will undermine the cultural development projects implemented in Lokude. Focus groups would

95 Study suggests that this number is higher, as sexual violence was considered as a lesser crime and was often not reporter.

have given project staff the opportunity to create dialogue around differences and human rights within the community.

NDCH staff maintains that their role is primarily technocratic, their main responsibility is cultural heritage management, and that gains made with respect to human rights and sustainable development are indirect effects of the cooperation. However, the implication of the greater interlinking of cultural, human rights and development policy is that cultural heritage practitioners are obliged to show greater consideration for positions of difference in culture with respect to human rights: to not engage with issues such as gender, socio-economic differences etc. undermines the human rights commitments discussed in Chapter 2 and is also in breach of the Norwegian national policy aims outlined in Chapter 3. Moreover, as the head of international section at NDCH emphasised (interview with NDCH, 28 March 2014), "one can never be an expert on other peoples' culture", the methods that are deployed are instrumental in ensuring a balanced approach to the different considerations.

There are different ways of deconstructing power relations in communities. Using focus groups is a way of building an understanding from the sub-community level. More than this, to avoid top-down approaches interventions should make use of methods that depoliticise processes of discovery, and that highlight the dilemma caused by differences in power. Dialogue that takes as its starting-point findings from different focus groups is a great way on highlighting positions of difference in a community. This approach also promotes discussions on participants' experiences of positive and negative aspects of own culture, in light of arguments for cultural diversity and respect for human rights. Facilitating these community processes requires capacity and skills, and insight into the role one represents to the community and partners. The question remains to what extent the NDCH and/or the NMU are in a position to act as neutral facilitators in this respect. The next section examines the tension that exists between the local and national level, and the implication this has for NMU's and NDCH's management strategies.

6.5 Memorialisation in Political Context

The NDCH-NMU projects were designed to help the four war-affected communities to address the pain and suffering caused by the atrocities, and provide them with tools to commemorate, reconcile and start healing. As part of strengthening local capacities, the focus on local narratives of conflict and reconciliation was central in the work done in the communities. However, the pervasive scepticism between the central government and Acholi communities in northern Uganda meant that

the NDCH and NMU were concerned that the political nature of the projects would make the exhibition too controversial in the eyes of the central government. This tension between local and national level influences the balance between the promotion of cultural diversity and the promotion of national cohesion and identity in Uganda, and so strained the room for manoeuvring for the NDCH and NMU during the project period. Firstly, it affects the extent to which NMU mandate to promote and preserve cultural heritage in northern Uganda. Moreover, the inherent tensions between the central government and local communities in northern Uganda also raise questions in respect to Norwegian foreign policy considerations – what Scham (2002) refers to as the inherent tension between political and public diplomacy which was discussed in Chapter 3.

The cultural development projects facilitated by the NDCH and NMU in northern Uganda "rest upon a firm grounding of respect for traditions – in other words, the past" (Scham 2003, p. 168). While mutual institutional development and uses of cultural development to promote reconciliation and socio-political stability after extensive conflict is in line with international obligations and both Uganda and Norwegian national strategies, the version of past presented in local narratives contradicts the dominant representation that is being promoted by Museveni and the central government. Giblin (2012) compares national identity narratives in Rwanda and Uganda and argues that whereas the national narrative in Rwanda draws on pre-colonial identities to counter cultural and ethnic division in the country, the dominant Ugandan national narrative is based on difference and blame. Museveni has on several occasions directly linked Acholi and Lango ethnic characterisations directly to instability and violent conflict in Uganda since independence. For instance, during the inauguration speech of the initial memorial site of the massacre in the Barlonyo IDP Camp Museveni stated that the massacre was punishment for past crimes. Hopwood (2011, p. 12) notes that,

> [t]he president's remarks have echoed throughout the north as evidence of government antipathy and have arguably damaged national reconciliation efforts to a degree far outweighing any benefits that might have come from the ceremony or monuments.

Comments like this remain with people in northern Uganda, and destabilise the relation between the periphery and the central government. It also indicates the difficult political landscape the NMU operates in.

The NMU is perceived as an extension of the central government[96]. In this sense, the NDCH-NMU project represents a formal process that is informed by and builds on local initiatives. This can imply a number of things. Firstly, it can be positive in the sense that communities feel the

[96] Though to what extent people differentiate between Museveni and the central government and the various state organs and offices is uncertain.

government is taking an interest in the post-conflict narratives and cultural development of communities in northern Uganda. However, while this brings some level of recognition to the war-ravaged communities, this can also bring additional expectations that extend the scope of the intervention. Pham and Vinck (2010a; 2010b) population surveys show that remembrance activities, such as the ones performed by the project, are generally wanted by the local communities. However, Giblin (2012, p. 13) underlines that people he interviewed in relation to the NDCH-NMU memorial sites in northern Uganda were "overwhelmingly in favor of memorialization, because they believed it would foster community development". In particular the Lokude interviews (Giblin 2012) show expectations of more development to come, as people seem to link the memorial projects to further reparations. These expectations have been fuelled by politicians turning up to make promises about funding for further development in the communities (interview with NDCH, 2 April 2014). When expectations are not met, people start criticising the government's priorities. For instance, in Barlonyo, nine years after the massacre took place, people question senior rebel's resettlement packages when the victims of atrocities have not yet been compensated (Musinguza 2013a). Sentiments like these explain why memorialisation processes that were seen as meaningful to the communities are abandoned and left to fall into disrepair.

Secondly, having the NMU and NDCH facilitate dialogue around grievances of conflict, also give the communities a sense of their narratives as being meaningful: just like confusion and ambivalence surrounding the LRA/M have been prominent, narratives that question and criticise the NRM/A motivation and strategy are important to the communities. The function of the narratives is also to hold the central government accountable for the violent conflict and suffering in northern Uganda. Accordingly, whereas the strategy to emphasise common roads to reconciliation during the exhibition and workshop might have avoided a political controversy in the short term, it at the same time weakens the NMU's role in the communities. On a more general note, the inattention to critical narratives increases the risk of increasing the legitimacy of critical voices in the event projects fail to promote further development in the communities.

The strained relation between local and national level and the subsequent pressure on NMU to avoid politicising its work in northern Uganda, have also had repercussions for the NDCH and its mandate. However, while the government's interest in the message of the exhibition affect the NMU directly, there does not seem to have been the same pressure with respect to Norwegian foreign political considerations on the work by NDCH. This is perhaps not surprising considering that the cultural development project facilitated by the NDCH represented a miniscule part of the

total investment and development aid from Norway to Uganda[97]. Yet, NDCH staff's understanding of the difficult political climate has been an integral part of project plans from the beginning. Just like the failure to engage with different power positions within the community undercuts the processes and end-result of the project, to avoid questions of differentiated power position between local and national levels – and the NMU's role in this – has implication for cultural heritage management in Uganda. In addition, the cultural narrative compromise is also a compromise with regard to wider human rights considerations. In this sense, the political context that exists in Uganda has fundamentally shaped the cultural development project, particularly in terms of the final representation of the projects. The last section of Chapter 6 summarises the NDCH-NMU reconciliation and cultural development efforts in northern Uganda, and explores the link between cultural memorialisation and narratives in post-conflict settings to wider development concerns.

6.6 Post-Conflict Lessons: Relevance for Cultural Based Development initiatives?

This chapter has displayed the ways in which transitional processes that have been and continue to be useful and meaningful to people in northern Uganda are underlined by and grounded in local cultural considerations. In short, the initiatives that are in line with local understanding of reconciliation have made considerable gains in the local communities. Both Quinn (2009) and Finnegan (2010) argue that informal processes, particularly amongst the Acholi cultural group has been instrumental in creating cultural narratives that contribute to the healing of local communities in northern Uganda. In contrast, formal processes initiated by Museveni and the NRM/A, have repeatedly failed to end the conflict and promote local and national reconciliation, also despite promises made in connection with Juba in 2008. The NDCH-NMU project, which combined formal and informal components, has been largely successful in connecting to cultural narratives of forgiveness and reconciliation in northern Uganda. Following from Hopwood's (2011) understanding of cultural heritage as symbolic reparations, the NDCH-NMU projects have used consultation and local efforts to design and implement the memorialisation and cultural development programs at four sites in Gulu, Apac and Lango district in northern Uganda. The feedback from the communities has seemingly been positive. However, Hopwood (2011) warns that the complexity of cultural heritage and memorialisation means that it is not entirely positive, and that in the Acholi context some view forgetting as the best way of moving past the trauma of conflict. The project has also raised questions about its approach to community consultation. For

[97] The total bilateral assistance from Norway to Uganda in the period 2008 to 2013 amounted to 2447.8 million NOK. In comparison the total budget for the NDCH-NMU project was approx. 1.8 million (Uganda profile on NORAD website).

instance, the projects predominately used consultations with political and traditional/ local leaders. On one hand, local leaders act as social carriers and in this capacity are vital for the successful implementation of projects. Moreover, by strengthening the position of local leaders one also potentially increases the resilience of societies with respect to conflict management. However, as the project did not examine further the role of culture in producing and reproducing difference within the communities, it has only been partly successful in addressing questions of power in culture and representation: there was for instance no specific focus on gender, socio-economic status or other social categories during the consultation or implementation phase. This undermines the project-aim to build extensive community support and ownership of the projects. Moreover, the broader political situation in Uganda meant that project staff from NMU and NDCH decided to downplay the conflict as topic for the final exhibition in Kampala in February/March 2013; while the conflict figured as a backdrop to the exhibition, the focus on Uganda's road to reconciliation was a compromise brought about by the tension between political expectations and local narratives 'collected' during the project period. It is important to note that the political climate trumps Ugandan cultural policy considerations that emphasise the role of cultural heritage in "[enhancing][…] unity in diversity, national pride and dignity" (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 2006, p. 12).

Hutchison and Bleiker (2008, p. 387) argue that conventional "peace-building and post-conflict stabilisation [focus] on state building, particularly on the development of various security, legal and economic institutions". The problem with initiatives that exclusively focus on material infrastructure and re-building government institutions, is that they "[fail] to appreciate the role emotions play in shaping communities and the collective memories that influence the long-term success of conciliatory politics" (Hutchison and Bleiker 2008, p. 387). As such, what Hutchison and Bleiker refer to as a 'narrow' understanding of reconciliation fails to engage with the deeper processes that regulate social norms and activities. This insight can be transposed to development initiatives that disregard the wider socio-cultural context: interventions that manage to draw on local cultural and socio-political capacities that support peace are more sustainable, more democratic and also reduce the risk of conflict and/or risk of relapse into renewed conflict. Moreover, cultural-based approaches to development strengthen international cooperation while reducing the risk of paternalistic tendencies, this again offer us significant opportunities for a more engaged promotion of cultural diversity and human rights.

In this sense, the cultural development project facilitated by the NDCH and NMU in northern Uganda is also relevant for interventions in general, and the various issues discussed in relation to the NDCH-NMU project are also present in more conventional development interventions. Giblin

holds that "whilst issues of memory and identity may be more aggressively contested and constructed in post-conflict arenas, they are not confined to those contexts" (Giblin 2012, p. 18). The discussion on transitional justice in northern Uganda makes it clear that culture shapes the way people and communities orient and organise themselves. Conversely, by destroying or undermining the cultural heritage of a community and/or people, one destroys the framework which underpins a sense of common cultural identity, social cohesion and community. Also for conventional development an intrinsic consideration for factors that support or hinder the viability of intervention is important.

Bilateral assistance from Norway to Uganda has no specific cultural profile. While Norway has adopted a human-rights approach to development, there is also a strong drive to deploy a business model for development. In particular, in recent years Norwegian development has seen an increased focus on extractive industries and use of taxes for development. However, also these development projects need to be grounded in the cultural preconditions of the surrounding communities and wider society. If development assistance is predominantly based on Norwegian institutions and preferences, the cooperation will produce results which are culturally inept at functioning in other settings. Only when cultural preconditions are taken as the base-line for building projects can one promote support and ensure better accountability mechanisms. As the discussion on the NDCH-NMU project shows, this process is more problematic than policy papers assume. Moreover, considering the small scale of the cultural development project, and despite the fact that cultural heritage typically touches upon contentious issues, larger development projects involving more money and stronger vested interests are bound to be even more shrouded in political power plays. In the end, it is the explicit and continuous focus on human rights at all levels of society that can ensure a balanced approach to development. While this places massive demands on both donor and recipient countries, it reduces the use of political conditionality as projects would build from a common human rights frame and the local preconditions and vision. In cases of continued human rights abuses in recipient countries the stakes for donor countries are higher, as the implication of continued cooperation is reflected in a greater recognition that the actions of foreign states reinforce systemic inequalities, violence and suffering. In this way, cultural-based development cooperation reduces the paternalistic tendencies which are inherent in conventional development discourse and practice, promote project designs that are more suited to local preconditions, and balance project aims against a more comprehensive and inclusive human rights frame.

Conclusion

This thesis has traced the ways in which culture has become increasingly integrated into human rights and development narratives at international policy level and in the Norwegian public and foreign policy for the past twenty years. Based on the policy documents, the case study and the interview data discussed in the project, I argue that the greater interlinking of culture, human rights and development can help provide a greater consideration for the specific material and cultural preconditions in a society. In turn, this will have the dual effect of making development interventions less paternalistic and more relevant for the communities, as well as shift focus away from donor preferences. A deeper integration of the concepts will also mean increased support between disciplines and perspectives, which again can support an enhanced approach to culture, human rights and development in practice.

Cultural heritage is in particular and increasingly singled out as a means of ensuring peace, socio-political stability and sustainable development. I have argued that when cultural heritage is seen as a cultural process, it is applicable as a frame for public intervention, and as an extension of local or even national processes of negotiating and re-coding identities and narratives. In this sense, cultural heritage considerations are particularly critical in conflict and post-conflict contexts. As Giblin underlines (2012, p. 2),

> [cultural] heritage is often invoked for post-conflict development by international organisations, national governments, and sub-national groups to provide emotional and cultural, including economic, healing for individuals and societies.

A principal benefit of including a cultural-development case from a post-conflict setting has been that it makes processes of negotiation more visible. Following from the theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 on the relation between culture and power, the case has also highlighted the ways in which interventions are unable to discern whether programmes support capacities for peace or conflict (Anderson 1999). In order to or build on the peaceful or 'positive' forces in a communities, the case study reveals that there is a greater need for interventions and projects to undertake careful considerations of different narratives and stakeholders' aims, and its own role as facilitators/coordinators. This is because, just as cultural heritage can contribute to communal healing, it can also lead to violence and destruction. As such, while cultural heritage is widely praised for its ability to foster economic development, communal healing and social cohesion, and promotion of common universal values and cultural diversity, it also typically underlines cultural narratives in times of violent conflict and war.

Culture, development and human rights considerations are all highly political issues, and will often reveal tensions and contradictions at all levels of human society – from the individual, to local, national and international level. Norway adopted a human-rights based approach to all its policy areas in 2001, and the Norwegian foreign policy and national action plans reviewed in Chapter 3 were subsequently largely harmonised with the major international policy texts within the cultural and development field. However, Norway's stated policy commitment to a greater interlocking of the said elements in its interventions abroad is not necessarily in line with its main foreign policy interests. Moreover, documentary analysis revealed that neither its latest foreign policy strategy on cooperation with countries in the south nor its national policy documents on the use of a culturally-integrated human rights-based approach to promoting sustainable development have adequately problematised questions of power. Conversely, the simultaneous focus on business-related development and greater involvement in extractive industries – particularly in gas and oil – put pressure on Norway's willingness to employ a comprehensive culture- and human-rights based approach to its development cooperation. This claim is supported by the past two Norwegian presentations of its priorities to the UN General Assembly, where human rights' aims are not mentioned in relation to local preconditions (MFA 2013; MFA 2014). Norway's focus on MDGs without special attention to culture, also somewhat exhibits a reversal or disregard for the commitments to both international and Norwegian national policy concerning culture as the starting-point for all interventions and development cooperation. The current conservative-based coalition government will most likely continue to emphasise the role of business and private interest in driving development, something which will undermine further Norway's commitments to cultural-based considerations.

The NDCH-NMU project in northern Uganda illustrates both the importance of cultural framework in designing interventions that are relevant for local communities, and the political dimensions of such cultural processes. On one hand, cultural interventions like the cultural-aid projects facilitated by NDCH in northern Uganda represent important opportunities to influence processes with respect to human rights considerations. And, in this sense, cultural heritage interventions must be understood not as a form of therapy, but as a way of meeting the needs of communities where they are. However, interventions that are rooted in cultural rationales operate within a political context, which adds a number of considerations particularly in relation to the wider national narratives and interests.

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Acholiland has been the site of devastating atrocities, committed by both the central government and the LRA/M. Subsequently, the underlying emotive force for post-conflict heritage in northern Uganda is cultural trauma; among the Acholi in northern Uganda contemporary Acholi cultural narratives are shaped by a collective sense of pain and suffering Though the conflict is still characterised by uncertainties and ambivalence, narratives around the role of the government in perpetuating abuse and suffering for the Acholi during and after the armed LRA conflict are particularly developed. This is not politically accepted by the regime, which conversely portrays northern Ugandans as being particularly violent and destructive. In this sense, cultural narratives and identities remain at the heart of the continued antipathy in Uganda. The dominant representation of the ethnic grouping in northern Uganda, the Acholi, underlines the government's policy choices that have led to consistent political and economic marginalisation of the Acholi and other ethnic groupings in northern Uganda. The Foucauldian approach to questions of power in knowledge applied in this study provided an insight that certain narratives concerning the conflict in northern Uganda serve a specific power position legitimates the ends of powerful players. This in turn distorts the basis for effective post-conflict reparations and marginalises people's everyday needs. However, as the LRA conflict has shown, though cosmologies and spiritual beliefs and rituals seem alien and exotic to outsiders, failing to engage with how they shape the conflict not only reduces our potential to understand the conflict, but also obscures our understanding of how people act in conflict: people are active agents that in spite of prescribed or circumscribed options develop strategies and negotiate in difficult surroundings.

The tension between the central government and the northern districts has had significant repercussions for the Norwegian-backed cultural development project. The collaboration between the NDCH and NMU has been largely successful with respect to mutual institution building and the restoration and preservation of the demarcated project sites. The projects have also seemingly engaged with local narratives on forgiveness and created a dialogue around healing and reconciliation in the local communities. However, though project staff interviewed in this study display an impressive understanding of the intricacies of conflict, in the final exhibition the local narratives and views on the LRA conflict and the government's role in causing and perpetuating suffering for the communities in northern Uganda are reduced to a backdrop. While this avoids directly antagonising the central government, I have argued that national reconciliation is not possible without the full acknowledgment of the harmful effect of the dominant narrative and the government's hostile attitude towards the northern region: the strong emphasis on wrongdoings committed by the Acholi as a collective is not conducive to reconciliation at national level. Moreover, the decision to refrain from including opposing narratives at the exhibition acts to

reinforce the dominant national identity/narrative supported by Museveni and the central government. It also means that governments and state apparatuses' can continue to shy away from policy commitments made at international and national level.

The case has also illustrated that there were questions of power at the local level that have implications for the continued viability of the sites after the project-period ended. Whereas the NDCH-NMU project used extensive community consultation during the planning and implementation stages, consultation was predominately extended to political and traditional leaders. Local leaders have been important for the socio-political stability in northern Uganda, and their involvement in the project affected how the communities interacted with the project. However, there was little attempt to examine deeper power relations within the community. This again meant that deeper dialogue around community member's human rights was also not carried out.

The different challenges faced by the NDCH-NMU project, though focused on cultural heritage and memorialisation, are also applicable to more conventional development interventions. The drive to deepen the conceptual interlocking of culture, human rights and development is a trend which will most likely continue in policy circles - particularly around the UNESCO platform. Yet, there have been few examples of culturally integrated approaches to development in practice. The MDGs have been at the centre of international development efforts for the past decade. However, despite the additional note published on the importance of culture in realising goals in a meaningful way, they do not represent cultural-based interventions to sustainable development. This lack of attention to culture is indicative of powerful international players' preferences to continue 'business as usual'. The global financial crisis has also seemingly limited rich countries' commitment to more integrative interventions. However, smart development is development that takes pre-existing conditions as the starting point. Conversely, easy solutions which force development towards blue-print thinking will minimise the positive effects of development cooperation, costing communities more in the long run. Perpetuating conventional growth-based development will only increase the asymmetries between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', making cultural narratives that focus on difference and grievances more relevant thus only increasing the risk of violent conflict. Conventional development interventions that change local conditions to suit programme aims and donor preferences also run a risk of undermining the cultural integrity of the communities on the receiving end. When such cultural adjustments programmes are part of development initiatives, like they so often are in conventional development initiatives, they corrode cultural diversity in general. As the World Commission on Culture and Development (UNESCO 1996, p. 16) underline, "economic development that is combined with a decaying, stunted, oppressive, culture is bound to fail" (UNESCO 1995, p. 16).

Recommendations

For project and programme level planning and implementation:

- Knowledge of local conditions and culture is key for designing a successful intervention. Because one can never be an expert on other communities' culture, project plans need to be developed with the active involvement of all segments of a community.
- All human relations are characterised by conflict and negotiation. To ensure that interventions are representative and relevant for communities and different community members, deploy multilevel consultations and focus groups at every phase of the project/programme to consider positions of difference and power in culture. Examples of analytical categories for focus groups are gender, socio-economic backgrounds, age, occupation etc.
- Drawing on the results of the focus groups, examine the different narratives together with the community. What narratives or needs are excluded/included/problematic/inclusive, and why?
- Interventions need to map and manage community expectations: what are the aims of the intervention, what are realistic outcomes and what are possible limitations? What is expected and/ or needed from the community and community members during and after the project ends, and what are plans for continued maintenance if applicable?
- Wider political landscapes might support or oppose interventions. Include a wide range of stakeholders and promote discussions on common ground. An inclusive approach to discussions around policy and law, customary traditions, political pledges, existing activities is a way of increasing accountability from all parties.
- Evaluation of projects should be carried out with the participation of the community concerned. Multilevel consultation and focus groups are ways of assessing how projects/programmes have affected different segments of a community differently.
- Because cultural considerations are the starting point for project design, project staff should be open to project forms and activities that seem alien.

To Norad:

- Evaluate Norway's development assistance by sector in light of cultural considerations. In particular, programme activity such as the 'Oil for Development', 'Tax for Development' and REDD/REDD+ projects need to be examined in light of cultural rationales.
- Develop clear guidelines for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of

cultural-based approaches to development and human rights work.

To the Norwegian government:

- The conceptual discussions on culture in public and foreign policy papers need to engage more directly with questions of power. A clearer conceptual understanding of culture as difference reveals the ways in which cultural considerations can either support capacities for peace or conflict.
- The national strategy papers and policy relating to culture emphasise 'culture as expression'. Policy papers need to consider a deeper grounding in the 'culture as identity' frame.
- Cultural considerations, in particular with regard to human rights and development, should promptly be incorporated as the prerequisite component in all aspects of Norwegian development cooperation and assistance. Guidelines that clarify processes of integrating a cultural-based approach in different types of activities and enterprises should be developed in this regard.
- As international and Norwegian national policy increasingly link culture with human rights and development considerations, there is an urgent need to offer proper development and cultural education and training to sectors, public staff and partners whose work relates to the implementation of public and foreign strategies.
- Budget allocations for cultural considerations in development work should match the task at hand.

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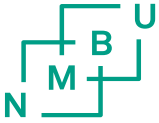

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