

# Everyday resistance, peacebuilding and state-making

*Insights from 'Africa's World War'*



**Marta Iñiguez de Heredia**



**EVERYDAY RESISTANCE, PEACEBUILDING  
AND STATE-MAKING**



Manchester University Press

## New Approaches to Conflict Analysis

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and state-making*

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MARTA IÑIGUEZ DE HEREDIA

Manchester University Press

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Published by Manchester University Press  
Altrincham Street, Manchester M1 7JA

[www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk](http://www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk)

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data applied for

ISBN 978 1 5261 0878 4 open access

ISBN 978 1 5261 0876 0 hardback

First published 2017

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by Toppan Best-set Premedia Limited

To the Congolese people who have died and survived aiming  
for a dignified future





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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I see my son growing, the African saying that 'it takes a whole village to raise a child' becomes even more meaningful. Something similar applies to academic work. It takes a whole community of scholars and their personal relationships to create it. This book has been made possible thanks to the support, encouragement, inspiration and understanding that I have received from many people. To acknowledge them all would be impossible as they include those who have shared their tears, thoughts, ideas, reflections, experiences, fears and aspirations during fieldwork either spontaneously or as part of formal interviews. The content of the book rests on their generosity and enlightenment. Additionally, the long journey this book has taken means that the list of debts is equally long. There are, however, particular people whom I would like to mention for sharing this entire journey and contributing to the book's final shape. George Lawson and Mark Hoffman have been a source of intellectual stimulation and professional support ever since they took me on as their supervisee. It was not until I finished my PhD that I became aware of the long-term commitment they had acquired. I wish I could reciprocate one day, but for now I can only hope that they know that their mentorship fosters enthusiasm for scholarship.

I would also like to thank my family and friends for their love and understanding. Many of them have shaped this book by offering helpful comments, editorial assistance and personal support. Special thanks go to Kathryn Fisher, Myriam Fotou, Juan Pedro García Cuevas, Joe Hoover, Paul Kirby, María Robles, Meera Sabaratnam, Ana Sama and to my mum, my father, my sister and Mavi. I do not know if my son, Pablo, who is just about three months old as I am writing these lines, will ever read this book. He will be free not to. But he has provided me with the necessary strength and hope to finish it with happiness.

I am grateful for the research assistance that I was provided by Jacques Abamba, Adili Romuald Amani, Jean Marie Kamalebo, Augustine Kilau, Janvier Lukele, Evariste Mfume, Baudouin Miruho, Charles Miruho and Fidele Ngeleka. Without them, my fieldwork would not have been possible. Jacques Abamba was assassinated by two unidentified men in June 2012 when he was on a fact-finding mission. His death is testimony to the difficult and dangerous task that research is in the DRC, especially for local researchers. My gratitude also goes to the UK Economic and Social Research Council for the funding it granted me to undertake this research (ref. number: EH/H17704/1). Funding was also granted by the International Relations Department at the London School of Economics for living expenses, fieldwork and conference attendance. Several other institutions to whom I would like to extend my gratitude have facilitated access to

## *Acknowledgements*

material and fieldwork support. The MONUC/MONUSCO provided me with logistical support, secure transport and opened as many doors to my research as I have asked. Pole Institute in Goma, CEPAS in Kinshasa, the Université Catholique in Bukavu, the DRC National Library, the Centre d'Etudes et Recherches Internationales-Science Po in Paris and the Museum of Africa in Tervuren, Belgium offered me the possibility to explore material that I would have not been able to find elsewhere. The latter was facilitated by Theodore Trefon, whose work was one the first insights I had into everyday life in the DRC.

Any errors remain entirely my own, but, whatever its imperfections, this book has been made possible by the warmth, love, support and inspiration of those who made me believe that I could write it. To all of you, thank you.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AFDL	l'Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo (led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila)
ANR	Agence Nationale de Renseignement (Congolese intelligence agency)
APR	Armée Patriotique Rwandaise (ex-Rwandan army)
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CNDP	Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (National Congress for the Defence of the People)
CNS	Conférence Nationale Souveraine (Conference for National Sovereignty)
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration of national armed groups
DDRRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Resettlement, and Reintegration of foreign armed groups
DDR(RR)	DDR and DDRRR programmes
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
fc	Congolese franc
FDLR	Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda)
FRF	Forces Républicaines Fédéralistes (Mai Mai – Fizi – Minembwe)
IB	Intervention Brigade
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDPs	internally displaced persons
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
IR	international relations
ISSSS	International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (ex-UNSSSS) – International support of STAREC
MLC	Mouvement de Libération du Congo, led by Jean-Pierre Bemba (Equateur)
MNC	multinational corporation
MONUC	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo (United Nations Organisation Mission in the DRC)

*List of abbreviations*

MONUSCO	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en RD Congo (United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in DR Congo)
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OAU	Organisation of the African Unity
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PARECO	Patriotes Résistants Congolais (Mai Mai – government funded – led by General Kakule Sikuli Vasaka Lafontaine)
PSCF	Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (2013)
RCD	Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (Rally for Congolese Democracy) – led initially by Professor Ernest Wamba dia Wamba and Arthur Zahidi Ngoma.
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
Simba Mai Mai/MRS	Simba Mai Mai/Mouvement Revolutionnaire Socialiste
SOCICO	Société Civile au Congo (Official Structure/Platform of civil society groups in Congo)
STAREC	Programme de Stabilisation et de Reconstruction des Zones sortant des Conflits Armés – Government's Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Areas coming out of Armed Conflict [Provinces of North and South Kivu, Maniema, Orientale and Katanga]
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
UDPS	Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social
UPDI	Union Paysanne pour le Developpement Integral
UPN-DDR	Unité d'Exécution du Programme national de Désarmement, Démobilisation et Réinsertion (DDR National Programme Execution Unit)

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1300** (approx.) Rise of Kongo Kingdom around the Congo River mouth and the Luba Kingdom (today's Katanga, towards Lake Tanganyika)
- 1482** Explorer Diego Cão arrives at the shore of the Congo River and initiates a period of political, cultural and commercial exchange with Portugal
- 1500–1600** Portuguese political and economic ambitions in Congo, added to a split in Congolese elites between pro-Portuguese/modernists and anti-colonial/traditionalists create political tensions in the Kingdom
- 1600–1700** Process of decay and social unrest, ending in the division of the Kongo Kingdom in 1667
- 1700s** Anti-colonial sentiment and a political movement to reunite the kingdom generate a series of movements, of which the most famous is the one led by prophetess Beatriz Kimpa Vita
- 1876** King Léopold II of Belgium convenes a conference of geographers and explorers as a civilising, scientific and humanitarian mission against slavery, which creates the International African Association
- 1878** King Léopold and Morton Henry Stanley seal deal to claim Congo as a Belgian colony
- 1885** Congo is internationally recognised as a Belgian territory at the Berlin Conference. Congo becomes a private territory of King Léopold and is renamed the Congo Free State
- 1890–1910** Reports of slavery, massacres and maiming raise international concern
- 1893–94** Germany's occupation of Rwanda-Burundi provokes the first Burundian migration into South Kivu between 1899 and 1903
- 1908** The Belgian parliament places Congo under the authority of the Belgian government, renaming the territory as the Belgian Congo

## *Chronology*

- 1911–18** First significant migrations of Rwandese population to Congo, settling in North Kivu, in Rutshuru and Masisi, and in South Kivu towards the Itombwe massif
- 1921** Simon Kimbangu becomes the leader of a prophetic movement in N’Kamba (Bas-Congo), which spreads as a symbol of anti-colonial resistance after his arrest
- 1937** The Belgian Colonial Administration begins a series of population movements from Ruanda-Urundi to Congo to balance out population numbers in the area
- 1954** Rwanda’s independence provokes an influx of Tutsi refugees into Congo
- 1958** Founding of the Mouvement National Congolais – a pro-independence party that later is led by Patrice Lumumba
- 1959** Several rebellions across the country, arrest of Lumumba and statement of King Baudouin favouring Congolese independence
- 1960** (January) Round table in Brussels, with the participation of a recently freed Lumumba, granting independence to Congo
- 1960** (June) Lumumba is declared prime minister after national elections
- 1960** (30 June) Congo’s independence from Belgium
- 1960** (July) Belgian troops’ intervention in Katanga and subsequent secession
- 1960** (September) Kasa Vubu dissolves parliament
- 1961** Lumumba is assassinated after his arrest
- 1963** Katanga secession ends under UN auspices
- 1964** Pierre Mulele leads a rebellion starting from Kwilu in Bandundu, followed by Laurent-Désiré Kabila in Uvira
- 1965** US and Belgium-backed coup d’état by Mobutu
- 1971** Mobutu renames the DRC as Zaire and starts the Zairianisation process
- 1985** Nationalisation Law
- 1990** Mobutu declares the end of the one-party state
- 1991** (August) Start of the Conference for National Sovereignty (CNS)
- 1991** (September) Pillages
- 1992** (August) CNS elects Etienne Tshisekedi (UDPS) as prime minister



## *Chronology*

- 1992** (December) Mobutu evicts Tshisekedi and the newly appointed government
- 1993** Bunyamulengue uprising
- 1994** (April) Rwandan genocide
- 1996** Start of AFDL War
- 1997** (April) Angola's intervention
- 1997** (20 May) Laurent-Désiré Kabila takes over Kinshasa
- 1997** (7 September) Mobutu dies of cancer in Morocco's capital, Rabat
- 1998** RCD/Africa's World War
- 1999** (July) Lusaka Peace Agreement
- 1999** (November) MONUC is authorised to deploy troops (UN Resolution 1279)
- 1999** (December) Deployment of South African troops under the OAU
- 2000** MONUC's mission is placed under a Chapter VII mandate
- 2001** Laurent-Désiré Kabila is shot by his bodyguard, Rachidi Kasereka
- 2002** Sun City Peace Agreement
- 2003** (June) EU intervention in Ituri
- 2003** (December) Global and Inclusive Accords – 1+4
- 2004** General Nkunda and Jules Mutebusi attack Bukavu
- 2005** National constitutional referendum supports constitutional reform
- 2006** (July) Creation of CNDP
- 2006** (30 July) Legislative and presidential elections – 1st round.
- 2006** (29 October) Kabila wins presidential election – 2nd round.
- 2006** (15–16 December) International Conference on the Great Lakes Region – Security and Stability Pact
- 2006** (December–early 2007) CNDP – General Nkunda's troops and FARDC defectors reject electoral results and set up parallel administrations
- 2007** (January) Kabila and CNDP agree for Nkunda's troops to undergo 'mixage' and to combat the FDLR together
- 2007** (March) MLC troops confront Kabila supporters in Kinshasa contesting electoral results
- 2008** (6–23 January) Goma Accords creating the Amani Programme, STAREC, and subsequent UNSSSS – later turned into ISSSS. Joint military operations by Rwanda and the DRC, and MONUC and the DRC, to disarm/expel all remaining national and foreign armed groups
- 2008** (June) Bemba is arrested for crimes against humanity in the CAR

## *Chronology*

- 2009** (January) FARDC-RDF Umoja Wetu Operation
- 2009** (March) FARDC-MONUC Kimya II Operation
- 2009** (23 March) CNDP-Kabila agreement
- 2010** (January) FARDC-MONUC Amani Leo Operation is launched
- 2010** (April) Commitment of CNDP to end parallel administration
- 2010** (June) MONUC becomes MONUSCO, with the main mandate of restoring state authority and protecting civilians
- 2011** Presidential election gives Kabila a second turn, amid accusations of fraud
- 2012** (23 March) A series of FARDC defect in North and South Kivu to join a renewed CNDP rebellion – M-23 – principally around Masisi and Rutshuru
- 2012** (20 November) The M-23 takes Sake and Goma, including the Goma/MONUSCO airport
- 2013** (24 February) Signature of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region
- 2013** (18 March) Bosco Ntaganda surrenders to the US embassy in Kigali
- 2013** (28 March) Creation of the Intervention Brigade
- 2014–15** Several military operations undertaken against LRA and FDLR
- 2015** (January) Protests spread after President Joseph Kabila announces that a new population census will be carried out, which implicitly means the extension of his mandate
- 2015** (2 September) Trial of Bosco Ntaganda opens at the ICC

## *Introduction*

### *Resistance and the liberal peace: a missing link*

There is no conflict between communities here. (Administrative Local Authority 2014; Association Paix et Concorde (APC) Representative (no. 180) 2014; DDRRR Officer 2014)

The demobilisation programmes cannot achieve success because they are not tackling the real causes of conflict. The armed groups have the government as their main target and they are largely supported by the civilian population. (DDRRR Officer 2014)

The problems we face now sparked with the Rwandan genocide, although some come from before; but they continue because we need a political negotiation, a land reform, jobs and a real democracy where people can participate and not just be put in jail. (Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral Representative 2014)

**T**hese statements reflect some important sentiments of those who have experienced war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Great Lakes since the 1990s.<sup>1</sup> They imply an interpretation of the conflict as stemming from several overlapping economic and political issues that cannot be reduced to a military issue, a problem of state failure or a problem of identity among the different ethnic groups in the country. Embedded in them is a criticism both of the actors of the conflict and of those who are involved in the peacebuilding process. They therefore evoke the different forms of resistance against lack of progress to solve the political and economic issues that underpin the conflict. An analysis of these forms of resistance allows understanding of that experience, the conflict and the process of peacebuilding.

Building peace is a political process where the distribution of political and economic goods, including decision-making power, privileges, rights and access to material resources, is established. This process both continues and changes the distributing mechanisms that were in place before the conflict started. Peacebuilding is therefore a process that is constituted and resisted by the multiple actors involved. However, it has been studied much more as an instrument of power and order than as a process that is resisted.

The liberal peace debates have produced a body of critical research that has analysed the theory and practice of contemporary peace interventions from different positions. These debates have questioned the paradigm of the liberal peace, inquiring about how liberal and how successful these interventions are. The paradigm of the liberal peace has served to identify the consensus on the rationale and goals of these interventions since the 1990s. This consensus revolves around the idea that ‘democracy, the rule of law and market economics would create sustainable peace in post-conflict and transitional states and societies, and in the larger international order that they were a part of’ (Campbell, Chandler, and Sabaratnam 2011: 1). From different critical perspectives, peacebuilding has been seen as a Western-driven strategy that fundamentally serves Western interests, whether as a form of control, discipline, extraction, or even as a new form of imperialism (Chandler 2006; Duffield 2007, esp. Ch. 7 and 8; Richmond 2010, 2011a). For Vivienne Jabri (2007), peacebuilding signals a much deeper transformation of the nature of war and the maintenance of international order where war and peace have an intimate and co-constitutive relationship.

Yet, without an account of resistance, the critique of peacebuilding risks distorting the power and commitment these interventions have to achieve such aims. Resistance has been present all along in peace and conflict studies but it has not been until recently, in the context of the liberal peace debates, that resistance has been developed more systematically (Falk 1995; Manning 2003; Newman and Richmond 2006; Stedman 1997). In fact, the liberal peace debates have experienced what could be termed as a *turn to resistance*. In the attempt to offer a more nuanced account of peacebuilding, resistance has been made central to the critique of the liberal peace. Over the decade since 2006, different works have offered a more sustained theorisation of resistance in this context (Keranen 2013; Mac Ginty 2006, 2008, 2011, 2012; Mitchell 2011a; Newman and Richmond 2006; Richmond 2009a, 2011a, 2011b, 2012; Richmond and Mitchell 2012a; Zanotti 2006). They have argued that *international* peacebuilding is a complex process that *local* societies shape and oppose with multiple strategies. They have questioned the categories of the *international* and *local* created in policy and scholarly research. What has changed is, firstly, that studying resistance has come to serve a critical normative agenda about what peacebuilding is and/or should be; secondly, it has opened the scope to study a vast array of forms of resistance, including unorganised and even individual forms of non-compliance; thirdly, it has challenged an early view of peacebuilders as overpowering actors and societies undergoing peacebuilding as powerless or passive recipients; finally, it has contributed to the politicisation of the interventions. As a result, not only has the power exercised by these interventions been contextualised and examined more thoroughly, exploring the political nature of the aims of these interventions; they have also contributed to exploring the political aims and alternatives of intervened societies.

However, most problematically, this turn has generated a vague account of resistance and has ended up missing it by focusing on hybridity instead. Several other problems are connected to this. The locus of resistance has been placed on an international–local contention, and not only has this reified the binaries that were meant to be surpassed, but the ‘locals’ have been depoliticised by locating their agency of resistance in a vague account of local culture, rather than in power relations along class, gender and race lines. Culture is a source of resistance, but it has to be explained and linked to the material and symbolic underpinnings of power relations. Additionally, despite this turn being underpinned by everyday theorists such as Michel de Certeau and James Scott, much of this framework remains under-theorised.

This book takes these issues as its starting point. It locates resistance in the experiences of war, peacebuilding and state-making and critically applies the work of James Scott and Michel de Certeau. It defines resistance as the pattern of acts by individuals and collectives in a position of subordination against the everyday experience of domination. What is resisted is not the fact that interventions are liberal or externally driven but the reproduction of a coercive and extractive order through war and through the process of reconstituting state authority. The aim of this book is not only to highlight how contested peacebuilding processes are, but also to examine the practices that constitute, challenge and subvert them. This approach to resistance implies a sociological approach to peacebuilding and entails focusing on the practices of coercion and extraction that are embedded in the practices of state-making. With this, the book highlights the myriad of contradictory projects and actors that are involved in such a task. It also theorises peacebuilding within the continuum of practices of assertion of state authority that constitute the backbone of peacebuilding.

The book explores these dynamics through the case of ‘Africa’s World War’. The concept of ‘Africa’s World War’ or, more specifically, ‘Africa’s first World War’<sup>2</sup> has been applied to the conflict that took place between 1998 and 2003 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Although the book retains a focus on the DRC, following Gerard Prunier (2009) it uses the concept of ‘Africa’s World War’ to emphasise the transformative nature of a series of conflicts that took place in the mid-1990s in the central and Great Lakes regions, and that have to do with historical, global, regional and local factors. The examination of resistance in this case allows for the politicisation of the conflict and the players involved, looking at the role that popular classes’ rejection of historical conditions of domination has played in the outbreak and continuation of the conflicts until today. This is also a case whose complexity allows for a deep insight into one of the longest and largest peacebuilding interventions in the post-Cold War period, with the participation of multiple international and regional organisations, sometimes, as in the case of the European Union (EU), for the first time in their history. The focus on resistance, as previously suggested,

also aims to offer a deeper examination of the conflict itself. This deeper analysis entails moving away from simple explanations of the conflict as stemming from state failure, greed or identity. Its goal is to grasp the overlapping issues in historical perspective, to connect transversal issues at the global, regional and national/local levels. This chapter offers an overview of the main arguments of the book and of the chapters that follow.

### **Hybridity and the functional focus on resistance**

As previously mentioned, the attention to resistance has ultimately served to account for how hybridity comes about. Resistance produces hybridity, although hybridity is also an outcome of the practical challenges and innumerable clashes that are present in any war and post-war context. Hybridity refers to the complex interactions and mutual transformations between interveners and local societies, identifying how the liberal peace is not entirely successful in imposing its agenda (Belloni 2012; Mac Ginty 2010, 2011; Richmond 2009b). The conclusions from Anna Jarstad and Roberto Belloni's edited volume on hybrid governance summarise the main contentions of the hybridity debates: hybridity already exists from previous international–local interactions; there are a mixture of informal and formal mechanisms; and a hybrid peace may well reinforce violence and oppression, but has the potential to offer peace processes stability and legitimacy (Jarstad and Belloni 2012: 4).

For Belloni (2012), hybrid peace governance grasps the fact that peace processes feature a series of liberal, illiberal, international, local, formal, informal, war and peace elements. Hybridity is therefore an analytical alternative to the liberal peace. But beyond its analytical purchase, hybrid peace governance also implies for Belloni a rejection of the universal value and applicability of the liberal peace, a rejection of the 'patronizing top-down approach' and an alternative to 'Western social engineering and paternalism' (Belloni 2012: 34). Hybridity is therefore not just an outcome but also a means to make the international agenda work and actually constitutive of peacebuilding (Belloni 2012; Martin-Ortega and Herman 2012; Richmond and Mitchell 2012b; Sriram 2012). Subsequent developments of hybridity have increasingly theorised such dynamics, though under other terms, for instance 'friction' or 'heterotopias' (Björkdahl and Höglund 2013; van Leeuwen, Verkoren, and Boedeltje 2012).

Not only has resistance played a secondary and subservient role to hybridity, but the hybridity framework also has several shortcomings. Chandler and Nadarajah and Rampton identify that one of the pivotal claims of the turn to hybridity is that peacebuilding could be legitimate if it operated from the bottom up, considering local customs and culture (Chandler 2010b; Nadarajah and Rampton 2015). With this, hybridity offers a way into the liberal peace and not away from it. The hybridity framework also suffers from a certain presentism

that disregards the historical constitution of subjects and power relations. When studying resistance in processes linked to the constitution and transformation of political, economic and social institutions, it has to be understood and studied as a political category forged historically. Even if the targets of resistance are 'international' actors or international institutions, resistance cannot be delinked from the historicity of class and patterns in relations of domination. As Nadarajah and Rampton put it:

Through a selective engagement with hybridity that neglects the multilectical character of hybridisation and the *longue dureé* timeframe through which hybridity manifests, and instead concentrating on the contemporary dynamics in a presentist fashion, the hybrid peace approach fails to take seriously the historical co-constitution of the international, national, and local and the relations of power that connect these in both peace and conflict. (2015: 50–1)

Examining resistance from the perspective of Michel de Certeau and James Scott entails looking at the patterns in power relations. Contrary to what the hybridity debates suggest, where there could be an end point where legitimacy is achieved, for Certeau and Scott, relations of domination can never be legitimate as such. Power relations are a constant struggle where legitimacy and obedience are always limited and government requires repression. This approach has the capacity to achieve the aims of politicising, disaggregating, historicising and problematising peacebuilding beyond hybridity.

### *Resistance in the hybridity literature*

The works that have more consistently looked at resistance are evidence that the theorisation of resistance has played a secondary role to that of hybridity. For Oliver Richmond, '[r]esistance to the liberal peace in post-colonial terms implies a hybrid form of peace with its own transformative qualities, which are resistant to exclusion' (2012a: 197). Resistance is a form of local everyday agency that hybridises the liberal peace. Thus portrayed, this agency is vague in terms of identifying the subjects that carry it out and limited in its critique of the liberal peace, since this agency has the ability to tame the oppressive elements of the liberal peace and realise its emancipatory potential (Richmond 2011a: 241–2). Roger Mac Ginty's *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance* does not offer a framework of resistance because resistance is part of the four-tiered framework of hybridity which includes 'the coercive power of the liberal peace, the incentivising power of the liberal peace, the ability of local actors to resist the liberal peace, and the ability of local actors to provide alternatives to the liberal peace' (2011: 92). Resistance is broadly defined as 'the ability of local actors, networks, and structures to resist, ignore, subvert, and adapt liberal peace interventions' (Mac Ginty 2011: 78). Yet too many questions remain open. For Mac



Ginty, resistance can be elite or non-elite driven, conscious or unconscious, and it can be both an engagement against and a disengagement from peacebuilding (2011: 6, 10–11, 72–3, 84–5). Audra Mitchell (2011a) has offered one of the most sophisticated applications of Michel de Certeau in peacebuilding contexts, and although resistance is not the main focus, she offers some clues about it. For her, ‘both the “powerful” and the “weak” are the subjects and objects of resistance’ and, as such, resistance ‘is a mutual dynamic in which all parties feel capable of (at least to some degree) controlling, shaping or intervening in the acts, powers or logics that shape their lives’ (Mitchell 2011a: 31). What Mitchell wants to capture is that peacebuilding is a process defined by conflict and transformation. Yet, from her account, what, if anything, distinguishes resistance from agency and power politics, and resistance of the ‘powerful’ from resistance of the ‘weak’ is left unexplained.

In an edited volume by Richmond and Mitchell (2012a), resistance is the driving force to again focus on hybridity. According to the editors, everyday agency is the site of hybridisation of liberal peace. It is the site of the encounter of international and local agencies which accept, co-opt and resist each other, giving way to mutual transformations of both the liberal agenda and local environments (Richmond and Mitchell 2012b). They outline their two approaches to the everyday: post-colonial (Richmond) and sociological (Mitchell) – the latter with a subdivision between post-Marxist and post-modern approaches. For Richmond and Mitchell locals are ‘indigenous actors’ and, although material inequalities need to be taken into account, resistance cannot be seen ‘as the agency of the powerless against the powerful, in which the latter are irresistible for the former’ (2012b: 26). Instead, echoing Mitchell’s previous works, ‘many ways of resisting should be viewed as a shared dynamic, or as a reflexive tension, in which all actors are simultaneously objects and subjects of change and must negotiate, shape or help to determine the nature of this change’ (Richmond and Mitchell 2012b: 26). Although they are right in pointing out that resistance is not an exclusive domain of the powerless, it seems that resistance may have different connotations and implications, when it is done in the realm of government against international donors, to the resistance peasants may offer against certain economic agreements affecting land distribution.

Even so, Richmond’s and Mitchell’s volume is one of the few that looks consistently at resistance. However, although the editors offer an overall theoretical framework that draws on Michel de Certeau, the chapters discuss too wide a range of ‘tactics’ to be able to systematically link them to Certeau, and in fact only few of them explicitly refer to him or offer a definition of what resistance is. One of the exceptions is that of Alison Watson for whom ‘the smallest act of everyday resistance may represent the challenge to what is perceived to be the accepted boundaries of political behaviour’ (2012: 42). Another is the chapter by Liam Kelly and Audra Mitchell, who, drawing on Michel de Certeau,



see peace building as “strategies” – that is, comprehensive, rationalizing logics of power that control and shape their external environment’ (2012: 278). These strategies and the logics that constitute them are subverted and contested by ‘conflictual acts’ which include graffiti painting, rioting, the building of walls and flying of flags, the display of emblems or doing damage to security cameras. The chapters in Richmond and Mitchell’s volume thoroughly and with empirical data show actions that reject, refuse, transform, question, contest or ignore the actions of the liberal peace, but without explaining the difference and relationship between these actions, especially when they can be individual, collective, conscious, unconscious, ideologically or not ideologically driven, self-interested and selfless acts. Thus it is unclear how, for example, the act of mothering (Watson) relates to the armed Meekamui movement in Bougainville (Boege 2012). Beyond the identification of ‘local’ actors, it is also unclear who the subject of resistance is. Roland Bleiker’s point in the conclusion to the volume, that resistance is not about hostility but about how resistance shapes hybridity, demonstrates that resistance in this volume is a means to theorise hybridity, and many things remain to be known about resistance (2012: 296).

There have been other approaches which have not relied on the everyday framework to account for resistance but where hybridity gives the rationale for analysing resistance (Keranen 2013; Zanotti 2011). They have focused on examining actions that the political elite in societies have taken against international actors. Zanotti makes an important critique of the theorisation of resistance. From a Foucauldian perspective, Zanotti offers a critical exploration of the interconnections, struggles, mutual manipulations and accommodations of international power and local resistance in the context of United Nations (UN) peace interventions. With Foucault, power is observed in the practices of governmentality, biopolitics and carceralization that are deployed through the promotion of democracy, legal reforms, advice, methods of increasing legibility, disciplinarity and monitoring the application of political, economic and social reforms. This is complemented with a Marxist perspective regarding uneven distributions of power and the key role of material and economic conditions in political life. Resistance in this framework is defined as agonistic, that is, as inscribed within subjects’ power relations, as ‘a transformative action’ (Zanotti 2011: 10). Zanotti’s aim is to not totalise power or to romanticise resistance, and the conclusion is that peacebuilding interventions are not all successful in imposing their aims and resistance is not a full-on emancipatory enterprise. They are ‘hybrid’ and ‘ambiguous’ (2011: 134 and 136).

Yet, in carving her contribution, the argument is put against normative extremes. Zanotti’s conclusion that ‘[n]o overarching malignant trait is associated with international normalizing “power” or liberatory quality with local “resistance”’ does not seem to represent the reality of the literature or of the actors in the interventions (2011: 11). Duffield and Hardt and Negri, discussed

as representatives of the 'demonization of interventions and the romanticisation of the resistance', raise many caveats that take Zanotti's concerns into account (2011: 11). Duffield (2001, 2007) identifies sites of resistance with a wide range of confrontations, boycotts, sabotages and violence that go from the tacit refusal to apply World Bank policies to actions by the Taliban government. While Duffield is vague in his conceptualisation of resistance, he notes the ambiguities therein. Similarly, Hardt and Negri also discuss resistance strategies and struggles that have failed, ended in even more exploitative regimes or been narrowly conceived (2001, Ch. 1.3 and 3.3). Their point (made from a political theory approach) is the capacity of these struggles to reproduce in ways that can bring about change (Hardt and Negri 2001, Part 4). Whether that change looks emancipatory is another matter, for resistance cannot be studied as a struggle of the good against the bad or vice versa. Focusing on everyday acts of resistance facilitates distancing from an overarching tale of liberation while understanding the many quotidian ways in which domination is mitigated.

*What hybridity has missed*

The main problems with these accounts are that the three core elements of resistance regarding the subjects, object and means of resistance have remained ambiguous. 'Who' is the subject of resistance has been seen as an undefined 'local'. 'What' is the object of resistance has been theorised as 'the liberal peace', whereas the extent to which these interventions follow liberal values or *locals* reject liberal values is questionable. 'How' resistance is undertaken has been seen as hidden and ungraspable without due explanation. This has resulted in a vague account of resistance, in a drift away from the original framework of everyday resistance and in a limited politicisation of peace operations.

As seen, the local seems to identify the bulk of the targeted 'indigenous' society undergoing peacebuilding. For Oliver Richmond, who has gone further in theorising the *local*, it has diverse meanings and grasps the different intersecting relations from within society, between the interveners and societies, and the processes of hybridisation amongst them (2011a: 13–14). The local can signify the space where interventions take place, an internationally defined subject, or a pre-existing subject. Yet none of these meanings offers the basis for an account of resistance as an act of subjects in a socioeconomic hierarchy. Rather, these agencies and subjects are representatives of a shared culture that is threatened by the illegitimate aspects of the liberal peace. Resistance in peace and conflict studies has not offered an analysis of the genesis of agency beyond the view that locals reject international agendas. Class, gender, race and other sources of domination are referred to but they are not treated as structures, relations or practices of domination before, during and after peacebuilding, impacting the object, subjects and means of resistance. They have been evacuated and replaced

by a notion of the local that seems to be simultaneously power and resistance, oppressor and oppressed. The idea of a hybrid alternative is seen as a mutually beneficial outcome where the critical aspects of the analysis of resistance are reduced to a question of legitimacy, whereas, as previously stated, resistance reveals that legitimacy is contingent and changing.

The object of resistance has been seen as the liberal peace, producing a false division between the international as liberal and the *locals* as illiberal. What exactly is being resisted beyond an artificial ideological divide needs to be established. The areas of resistance this book focuses on show that such an ideological divide does not exist. The UN missions in the DRC have presented elements of authoritarianism; for example, although the set-up of the mission was negotiated at the time of the first peace agreement in Lusaka in 1999, it will finish when the UN Security Council decides (MONUSCO-PNUD-OCHA 2015). Corruption and rape have not been absent from the mission (UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon 2015; Escobales 2008; Zeid Al-Hussein 2005: para. 6–13). Additionally, the *modus operandi* of ‘adapting the working mechanisms to the context of the country’ seems to imply that illiberal elements are part of the approach, regardless of where they come from (MONUC Political Affairs Officer (no. 7) 2009). Similarly, democracy, representativeness and participation are demands that are part of the agenda of many peasants, armed groups and civil society members in the DRC. This does not show that *locals* are also *liberal* or that peacebuilding processes are not liberal enough, but that presenting a conflict along lines clear cut like this is not a productive way to understand the politics of any given war and peacebuilding context.

Liberal-ness does not define interveners or interventions at large, nor does illiberal-ness define intervened societies. Conceiving of the target of resistance in this way does not fully reflect the issues that are still present from war or, in fact, from the historical configuration of a particular polity. Rooting resistance in the practices of state-making allows us to explore relations of domination in a disaggregated historical manner, taking into account the ambiguities that exist in these contexts. It does not mean seeing resistance as an anti-state crusade; it means highlighting processes of authority assertion, violence and extraction linked to the practices of state-making that can be exercised by a variety of actors, ranging from state agents, the military and corporations to international interveners.

The problems of who resists and what is resisted are echoed in ‘the how’. Resistance has been conceived in the liberal peace debates as an ad hoc response to the actions of the internationals rather than as part of continuous relations of oppression, of conflicts that emerged before, during and after the war and as an opportunity to stage long-time aspirations in a context of political change. Additionally, from the overview of the approaches to resistance observed above, a dichotomy can be distinguished between the visible public and largely

organised resistance of elites and the unorganised, invisible and disorganised resistance of non-elites. Elaboration on what the relationship between these forms of resistance and violence is or what it means for resistance to be 'hidden' and 'ungraspable' is lacking. For example, Richmond refers to a wide range of practices, from non-compliance and subsistence strategies to Gandhian and Latin American pro-democracy-inspired civil movements (2011a: 119 – 22). He characterises the nature of this agency, and hence of resistance, as being 'hidden, fragmented, often disguised and localised' (2011a: 13).<sup>3</sup> The explanation is insufficient to equate hiddenness and disguise with non-violent resistance, while simultaneously exemplifying it with more organised and public forms of mobilisation. Although this is done via the social movements literature and, in particular, the work of Alberto Melucci, how these different arguments and frameworks relate to an account of resistance requires further explanation (Richmond 2011a: 130).

Not all authors have rejected the idea of including violence in their framework of everyday resistance. Violence in Mac Ginty is linked to the coercive and violent political context of post-conflict interventions in which violent resistance comes alongside other practices that range from 'outright resistance' to 'forms of non-compliance' (2011: 80). The relationship between them is the capacity they have of hybridising state-building, and not the link they have to an account of resistance. In exploring the transformative capacity that peace processes, conflict and violence have, Mitchell has examined that peacebuilding and resistance can take a violent form too. Acts can take many forms and can actually be used to advance a position of power. What would make them acts of resistance in the everyday framework is their use to deny or mitigate subordination.

The dynamics of survival and armed resistance are illustrated in the tensions around the mine of Kamituga, a remote location of South Kivu. The mine has been closed since 1996.<sup>4</sup> Even after Banro gained a new concession and began explorations in 2011, the mine has not re-opened. This has not stopped thousands of miners occupying the mine and extracting gold illegally, even at the risk of being jailed. It is a question of survival. Groups are formed to exploit a vein. Generally one is able to get a small amount of gold some days per week, but it can take several years to find a vein, let alone exploit the entire vein. The group is formed of diggers, porters, grinders and those who separate the gold from the rock. Sometimes the tasks are paid separately if the group is not big enough. About 0.15 g of gold (measured as one and a half toothpicks) is worth 5,000 Congolese francs (fc), to be shared between those who have worked in the process. Working in the mine is a survival mechanism, not a way to get rich. Most of Kamituga's population has some form of relationship with the mine, but they resent their working conditions and the little profit that the mine brings to those who work directly and to the town as a whole. This resentment builds on years of neglect in a region that has experienced

large-scale conflict and continues to be threatened by the operations of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and armed groups such as Nyakiriba. In this context, people from around the area have established links with these and other armed groups such as Raïa Mutomboki. This is paid with all sorts of reciprocal agreements, such as security in return for information, food or refuge.

Self-reliance, critique, survival and violence are all mechanisms that resist the continuation of conflict, poverty and marginal decision-making power. The chapters that follow show that resistance discourses displayed by peasants, market sellers and civil society members are shared by members of armed groups. They also show that, although it is difficult to generalise, civil society members and the civilian population cannot be seen as separated from armed groups. The subsistence activities that pose a challenge to the channels of distribution that funnel resources upwards, marginalising the vast majority of the population, are a fundamental part of everyday forms of non-violent and violent resistance.

Without these elements an account of resistance continues to be vague. Currently it is used alongside a plethora of other concepts such as 'critical agency', 'subversion', 'contestation', 'distortion' and 'hybridisation' (Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2011a). Other scholars have also referred to 'reactions, resistance, contestation and rejection' (Autesserre 2014, esp. Ch. 3), 'boycotts', 'transformation and subversion' (Mitchell 2011a: 30–32), 'social resistance and unruliness' (Hume 2011; Pugh 2011) and 'friction' (Björkdahl and Höglund 2013). This signals a lack of conceptual precision and that the focus is not on resistance as such; the concepts have added to a critique of the liberal peace but have left the concept of resistance too open. The result is a limited account of resistance that has yet to fulfil the aims of repoliticisation, disaggregation and critical analysis of peace interventions. This book aims to work in that direction, although it is not the final word on the matter. Resistance needs to be contextualised, and there is much to be learned from the analysis of different cases.

### **A reworked account of resistance and peacebuilding applied to 'Africa's World War'**

The main implication that the study of resistance has in a context of conflict and peacebuilding is therefore not that the kind of peace that comes out of those processes is hybrid. As many scholars of hybridity have pointed out, societies are all already hybrid. The main implication is that peacebuilding becomes part of the spectrum of authority, imposing claims on the population. It engages in the same practices of state-making. It is constitutive of the process of the assertion of state authority and therefore it is not external to the practices of coercion and extraction that come with it. A sociological reading of peacebuilding as

state-making shows the impossibility of disentangling the long patterns of coercion and extraction both in state–society relations and in domestic–international relations from how distribution of political and economic goods is done during conflict and peacebuilding processes. This is not dissimilar to Vivienne Jabri’s insights about the co-constitutive nature of war and peace, but it adds a historical perspective. This allows resistance to be grounded in authority claims, coercive and extractive practices, all of which have a long history, and exposes the long-term aspirations of popular classes.

*The methodology of practice*

This sociological view aims to take a historical and long-term approach and leads the book to analyse resistance and state-making as a set of practices. Practices are understood, following Certeau and Scott, as a representation of the *practical* ways of dealing with the experience of domination in everyday life, as well as a reflection of millenarian practices of subordinate classes. Practices are the mechanisms, informalities and improvisations that allow for certain schemes to be put ‘in practice’ (Scott 1998: 6). Adler and Pouliot identify five characteristics that clearly convey this meaning. Practices: (1) are a ‘performance’, which is the doing or making of something; (2) they are a ‘pattern’, constituting ‘regularity of behaviour’ and ‘the flow of history’; (3) they are ‘socially recognisable’; (4) they ‘represent a skill (more than knowledge)’; and (5) they ‘weave together discursive and material worlds’ (2011: 6–7). In this account, practices and actors do not represent just a hybrid outcome but are part of a process of continuity and change.

A focus on everyday resistance allows understanding ‘practical knowledge’ or ‘*mētis*’ (Scott 1998: 313). For resistance, this methodology implies a focus on individual, collective, ideological and material insubordination; for statebuilding, it focuses on the practices that facilitate and concretise the operationalisation of formal schemes. This connects with Africanist literature that has focused on actual practices to observe the *practical* ways in which states work, beyond and even in contradiction to formal regulations. These practical ways create their own routines that knit together how public administration, services and norms work (De Herdt and de Sardan 2015; Meagher 2012; Meagher, De Herdt, and Titeca 2014; Raeymaekers 2014). These approaches in the Africanist literature offer an analysis of hybrid institutions and routines that enable regulations and norms by state and non-state actors alike (Laudati 2013; Seay 2013; de Sardan 2012; Leinweber 2012; Titeca and De Herdt 2011). In a different way, this book concentrates on practices that define state-making more generally and where resistance is rooted.

‘Practices’ cannot be disentangled from the relationships, context and processes of which they are part. These ways of *doing* in everyday life have a history



and are representative of patterns. They are not random or one-time acts that can be taken purely on their own but, rather, the evidence of the contingent and historical nature of the present. A focus on everyday practices provides an opportunity 'to reveal the present as a malleable construct which is embedded in a historical context, thereby serving to unearth the process of temporal continuity and discontinuity with previous social practices' (Hobson 2002: 7). The continuities, and not just the transformations, need to be accounted for as part and parcel of the intentions, incoherence, purpose and mismanagement of statebuilding. Accounting for resistance thus requires historicising the everyday, even if focusing on present everyday activities.

A focus on practices does not automatically mean doing ethnography even if there has been a close relationship between the two in the liberal peace debates. Richmond openly calls his work ethnographic, further claiming that this approach is amenable to an active-research that has an emancipatory aim in mind (2011a: 129). This ethnography has to be used to study the 'practices, discourses and rationalities [that] produce governmentality' as well as the practices of subversion that, against each other, create hybridity (Richmond 2011a: 12). Wanda Vradi (2008) has argued that the use of ethnography in international relations (IR) since the end of the 1980s has been selective and instrumental, mainly for data-collection purposes or as a way of critiquing the standard methodological foundations of the discipline while maintaining the credentials for remaining within the parameters of scientific research. According to Vradi, this use has not taken account of the political implications of employing this method, its imperial legacy and the critical transformation that it has undergone within anthropology. Taking 'the Comaroffs puzzle', Vradi wonders: 'How do we explain that, just when ethnography was being challenged within cultural Anthropology for its structuralist, Orientalist and masculinist foundations, other disciplines, IR included, turned to ethnography as a potential source of political emancipation?' (Jean and John Comaroff cited in Vradi 2008: 294). Vradi's article has opened a debate about the relationship between IR's ontology and methodological avenues.<sup>5</sup> This is not to deny the value of ethnography for IR – in fact, Vradi calls upon international scholars to engage critically with ethnography, and not to disregard it. What Vradi's critique illustrates is the need to engage with the intellectual baggage of theoretical and methodological approaches used and incorporated into research.

This book takes this critique seriously and, although it follows Scott and some of his methodological approach with a focus on practices, it is not ethnography (1998: 312). This is because the time spent in the field is considered to have been insufficient, and because a full and critical engagement with the legacy of ethnography from anthropology falls outside the book's scope. Despite this, there is still an acknowledgement of what Ruth Behar calls the 'epiphany' that material, research and analysis have undergone between the observation,

the field and the final text (cited in Vrsti 2010: 84).<sup>6</sup> There is also an exercise of ‘zooming in’ to observe a person criticising the government, or another entering into a negotiation to tame the authoritarian nature of military rule, followed by a ‘zooming out’ to extrapolate these to patterns of actions whereby domination is resisted.<sup>7</sup>

*Peacebuilding as state-making*

As Chapter 1 will argue, peacebuilding has a state-making ethos. This means that the reconstruction of the state, *statebuilding*, has become the preferred formula for *peacebuilding*. This understanding underpins the critical peacebuilding literature (Chandler 2009; Mac Ginty 2011: 12; Richmond 2011a: 14). In fact, as Hameiri (2014) points out, the decline of the liberal peace does not extend to statebuilding. The new explicit focus on security and stability in UN missions gives evidence to the fact that if they were ever separate, peacebuilding primarily entails building the state apparatus, reforming the security sector and monopolising the means of violence. Missions in the DRC, the Central African Republic (CAR), Mali and Haiti focus on ‘stabilisation’, being renamed the Mission of Stabilisation in Congo (MONUSCO), Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the CAR, Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali and United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti. Scholars have seen in these changes a conservative status-quo turn from the liberal peace agenda (Natorski 2011). However, peace interventions have generally illustrated an understanding of the state as ‘[t]he foundation-stone of international peace and order’ (UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali 1992, para. 17). States that no longer fulfil that task need to be reconstructed.

As Navari argues, the conception of the state as the embodiment of peace is not extraneous for either IR or political theory, for which the state is ‘an arena of moral choice’ (1993: 44). It depends only on whether the state is seen as the ethical order (Hobbes/Hegel), in which case intervention might be ruled out; or whether the state is seen as the best order available (Locke), in which case intervention might be required to preserve or infer some changes within states (Navari 1993: 48). Interventions have adopted a Lockean approach. However, seeing the state as a peace-broker denotes what Navari also identifies as ‘a series of epistemological devices amalgamated with political theory’ (1978: 108). She refers to the theoretical practice of stripping the state of its historical and sociological elements as a historically contingent institution of domination and turning it into a necessary organising mechanism to maintain national and international order. Seeing peacebuilding as state-making attempts to break with these limitations.

The book sees peacebuilding as primarily concerned with the practice of asserting state authority. To do so it must build simultaneously on practices of



coercion and extraction with an overarching claim to legitimacy. Underpinning this understanding of state-making is Charles Tilly's theory of state-formation whereby states have generally been formed by a process of accumulation of capital and coercion. This does not suggest that war has necessarily contributed to the centralising and organising of the coercive and extractive apparatus of the state in a Tillyan sense. In fact it could be the opposite (Taylor and Botea 2008). Tilly offers an account of historical patterns in the practices of state-making, with a focus on coercion and extraction, and a reference point on which to articulate relations of domination and resistance. What this framework tries to do is to stay away from normative political questions about what a state should be and instead construct one to understand how states work.

However the book goes well beyond Tilly. Firstly, in seeing practices of assertion of state authority as coercion, extraction and claims to legitimacy, it is more broadly framed within a Weberian tradition. With this, the book illustrates that these practices are constitutive of state authority and not limited to a region or a historical context. In fact, what contemporary authors writing in this tradition have argued is that states are the result of competing, chaotic plural processes and transversal interests both from within and from without (e.g. Mann 1993; Skocpol 1979; Tilly 1990). These are not far from the dynamics and features identified by theorists of African states.

Secondly, despite the similarities, African states have been formed out of a different experience, including that of colonisation and slavery. Additionally, Weberian approaches are Eurocentric. Not only do they portray the European state as self-made, but they underpin the tendency to portray the European state as the model with which to compare all other states. These methodological and ethical concerns take the book to draw on Africanist literature, and in particular on Achille Mbembe's theorisation of Africa's political space (Mbembe 1991c, 2001, 2003). The work of Mbembe allows us to observe the particularities of state-making in Africa due to its historical configuration from pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial experiences. Observing these particularities also studies an African case from a more general state-making experience, avoiding pre-conceptions of Africa as an exceptional case. Understanding how the configurations of political authority have tended to produce forms of indirect authority, delegating in the military, commercial elites, corporations and more recently in armed groups and peacebuilders is important. Such is the understanding of the dynamics that maintain African states as producers of raw materials and debt repayments. Peacebuilding does not represent a new time that has broken with the past; it adds to the spectrum of practices of authority already in place, reflecting the patterns in relations of domination. It is this historicisation that the book takes up as its foundation to explain the nature of resistance and its context. This historicity counters the main narratives of the DRC, which have seen the DRC's conflict as a representation

of a transhistorical dynamic of plunder and violence, or as a transhistorical conflict over land and identity, and ultimately as a failure. The insight that the DRC provides is that peacebuilding is not so much a 'hybrid' of international and local agency as it is a process of state reconstruction that reflects the co-constituted nature of any given political institution and order in world politics. State-making per se, as Tilly and other Weberian authors show, is an internationalised process where, as Mbembe argues, domestic and international spheres are entangled.

### *Resistance*

In Chapter 2 the book offers an alternative account of resistance based on James Scott, with elements of Michel de Certeau. As observed above, the peace and conflict studies literature has primarily drawn on Certeau. His framework is appropriate to theorise hybridity, yet it leaves many aspects of resistance undefined. Certeau analyses two kinds of practices which he links to a Clausewitzian understanding of strategy and tactic in war. 'Strategy' is that of the general. It represents power ('a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution') and its practices relate to the delimitation of a place from which external threats and targets can be controlled and managed (Certeau 1984: 37). A 'tactic' is 'the art of the weak', of the soldier, the private; it operates within 'the enemy's field of vision' but it does not have the vision of the enemy as a whole, rather, it plays with it, mostly in the form of 'trickery' (Certeau 1984: 18). In Certeau's analysis, power and resistance, strategy and tactic respond to an 'everyday war' of targeting and trickery, of delimitation and avoidance, of control of autonomy and of reappropriating the everyday order of life according to one's own logic.

Certeau's notion of resistance comes from his discussion of 'la perruque' (the wig). Workers may sometimes play the role of the employee, as if wearing a wig, but may not be performing the work assigned. Certeau defines it as follows:

It differs from absenteeism in that the worker is officially on the job. La perruque may be as simple a matter as a secretary's writing a love letter on 'company time' or as complex as a cabinetmaker's 'borrowing' a lathe to make a piece of furniture for his living room. (1984: 25)

Here it is possible to see how, for Certeau, the doing – that is, the writing of the love letter, which responds to the logic of the secretary's own life and interests – is a way of subverting the logic of work and the power relation between employer and worker. It is also clear that the figures of the 'weak' and the 'soldier' against the 'strong' and 'the general' point to a notion of subversion that is linked to their material relations and social hierarchy. Seeing 'tactics' as a form of resistance by elites does not follow straightforwardly from this

framework. Resistance for Certeau is not an oppositional organised collective act against capitalism. It is a quotidian strategy that subverts subordination.

However, this lays ambiguous ground due to the fact that these practices need to be comprehended by their outcomes. If can we assume resistance only when the logic of power has been subverted, a trap is created by the fact that power is generally successfully imposed. Conversely, there may not be any situation in which the logic of power is not subverted somehow. In the context of statebuilding, the logic of subversion and outcomes applies best when theorising hybridity (an outcome) but resistance remains elusive. This is not to disregard Certeau. Quite the contrary, the proposal here is to make a more specific use of his framework.

The book draws on critical analysis of the work of James Scott and Certeau (Certeau 1984; Scott 1985, 1990, 2009). Scott concretises the account by basing it on patterns and subordinate groups against claims from authority, however uncoordinated and limited their practices might be.<sup>8</sup> Although this is a contentious aspect of the framework, the framework also provides an account of the intent and motivations resisters have. It encompasses both material and symbolic claims, individual and collective actions; and it finally examines a diverse range of acts, including how violent and non-violent practices relate to everyday resistance. However, Scott's definition could be improved by referring directly to the patterned character of resistance rather than defining it mainly as an intentional act against domination. Additionally, intentions and motivations could be more directly linked, and, since Scott's ideas are developed in a pacified context, more could be said about the relationship between everyday resistance and violence. Following Michel de Certeau, Scott's approach could also include acts that do not oppose or address authority claims directly but are used to fulfil one's own needs to the detriment of claims made by authority.

My definition of resistance that is used throughout this book will be as follows: 'Resistance is the pattern of acts undertaken by individuals or collectives in a subordinated position to mitigate or deny the claims made by elites and the effects of domination, while advancing their own agenda' (cf. Scott 1985: 290). The book identifies subordinate classes with what Nzongola-Ntalaja names as the working class (both skilled and unskilled) and the peasantry (1983: 58–9);<sup>9</sup> and with what Barrington Moore calls 'lower classes', 'those with little or no property, income, education, power, authority, or prestige' (1978: 35 and xiii). The concept of subordinate/non-elite is complex and contingent. It is intersected by the different kinds of subordination that cut across economic, social and political relations including class, gender, ethnic group, race, age, sexuality and physical ability. In the context of African politics this has been problematised even more, pointing out the fluidity and muddled nature of social and political relations, especially as privileges, rights and material goods are delivered informally, hinging on personal relations (Magubane and Nzongola-Ntalaja 1983;

Schatzberg 1980). Yet, as Gerard Prunier argues, noting the fluidity of the social and political world in Africa and linking classes with their networks in the informal economy does not rule out the existence of classes, but only a recognition of their problematisation and nuances (1991: 4). The implication of Prunier's argument is that in the exercise of accumulation and power, distribution may follow networks of kin and proximity (where ethnic groups and their own rankings add an extra layer of social stratification) and may also create fluid boundaries but maintain an unequal class system. This book notes how different kinds of subordinate experiences relate to different kinds of resistance, but its main focus is on linking these to broader dynamics of resistance in the exercise of building state authority.

Two different categories will be proposed. On the one hand, and closer to Scott's account, there are acts that address authority's claims more directly (claim-regarding acts) – for example, tax evasion and denigration of legitimacy. On the other hand, and closer to Michel de Certeau, there are acts that follow 'self-logics' and in doing so mitigate authority's claims and the effects of domination (self-regarding acts). These acts are done in solidarity with one's friends and family or prioritising one's own needs (Certeau 1984: 25–6). Survival strategies in the DRC, which are generally adopted following relations of proximity and based on an ethic of reciprocity, not only provide ways to mitigate poverty and deteriorating living conditions in a militarised context, they also enact alternative forms of social organisation and political authority.

Resistance is explored through different discursive, violent and survival practices in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, respectively. These practices include denigration, slander, mockery and reworking of mainstream statebuilding discourse; the activities of Mai Mai militias and their use by rural communities to provide security; and creative survival practices that range from tax evasion to land reappropriation and the provision of all sorts of social services. Scott has often been criticised on the grounds that intentions are ungraspable, that resistance acts are too ambiguous and ambivalent to serve as a category of analysis and that he excessively simplifies social reality (Hibou 2011a: Ch. 1; Mbembe 2001: 103–8; Ortner 1995; Weaver Shipley 2010: 666). In response to these critiques, which have also concluded that resistance does not exist or is incomprehensible, this book argues that resistance cannot be accounted for in all-or-nothing terms. It proposes a gradation of some elements depending on the visibility of the intentionality, the intensity and exposure of the acts used and how directly authority claims have been addressed.

In exploring these different elements, as mentioned earlier, this book argues that the practices of everyday resistance are determined by the political context. The context of the DRC, although defined as 'post-conflict', 'peace consolidation', 'peace-building' or 'stabilisation', is one of ongoing war, increasing militarisation and plural authority (Dolan 2010; ISSSS 2013; UN Security Council

2010, 2013; UNSSSS/ ISSSS 2009). The ways in which rural communities engage in multiple acts of resistance should be seen as an attempt to deny and mitigate domination provoked by that context. Ultimately there is no universal, all-encompassing framework of resistance. Any framework needs to connect its major defining elements of patterns, motivations, acts and actors, and be contextualised.

*'Africa's World War'*

As Zubairu Wai (2012a: 3) demonstrates, there is a certain epistemology of African conflicts that takes their most brutal aspects to be the overarching frame of analysis. The DRC conflict is a vivid example of that. The failure of state institutions and the race for resources, in addition to the barbarous aspects of war including rape and torture have been seen to be the underlying issues (Collier 2000; Collier and Hoeffler 2000; Kaplan 2000; Rotberg 2003). According to the state-failure and resource-wars theses, countries in the region, elites and politicians in the DRC as well as ruthless militias have entered into conflict to battle for the control of resources, making it impossible for the DRC to develop politically and economically. The logics of corruption, of profiting from conflict and the behaviour of some political elites in the distribution of privileges and power have been inscribed within the logics of neopatrimonialism and bad governance (Collier 2007; Reno 1998b). These explanations are premised on a normative rather than an analytical paradigm that compares a pathological image of the DRC to an idealised rational bureaucratic view of politics and the economy.

Since about 2010 there has been a shift in thinking about the roots of conflict in the DRC that has moved towards land and identity. Unresolved historical cleavages around land and power distribution, both of which are linked to identity and belonging, create the basis for political mobilisation through violence (Autesserre 2010, 2012a; Bøås 2012; Fahey 2010, 2011). The international peacebuilding response has prioritised international actors' interests and agendas, compromising core peacebuilding and stabilisation goals, leaving the local sources of conflict unaddressed. It has also taken a complacent approach to Congolese and regional actors, who have ignored or even manipulated international participants to pursue their own interests while continuing to receive international funding (Autesserre 2012a; Trefon 2011; Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2009). Although these analyses have offered nuanced explanations of the micro-dynamics of conflict and point out important trends in security and peacebuilding policies in the DRC, the way that some of them have detached conflicts from their regional and international contexts risks reproducing a depoliticising and pathological account of the conflict. Not only does the localisation of conflicts portray the local as an autonomous ahistorical sphere, additionally

this approach does not emphasise enough the role that popular classes' political aspirations have played in the start and continuation of conflict, and does not consider patterns of mediation and shared authority in world politics (MacMillan, Little, and Lawson 2014).

These aspects have been taken up by those who have focused on the political and regional roots of conflict from different perspectives (Marriage 2013; Ndaywel è Nziem 1998; Ngoie Tshibambe 2013; Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002; Prunier 2009; Raeymaekers 2014; Stearns 2011; Vlassenroot 2002; Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2004a). Most of this literature, however, is still based on the paradigm of the failed neopatrimonial state. This book contributes to these debates by analysing the political, economic, regional and historical roots of conflict, although it avoids normative conceptions of the state. This is done by focusing on resistance and looking at longer patterns in state–society relations and highlighting patterns of extraction and coercion that link the local conditions of the DRC with the global economy. Peasants have become involved in the war not only because they have been primary targets, but also because the war awoke amongst them a latent desire for revolt that continues to this day in different ways, including through violence. French anthropological and sociological literature has looked at these issues in some detail, but little has been done in the English IR literature (Acker and Vlassenroot 2001; ADEPAE et al. 2011; Amuri Misako 2007; Autesserre 2010; Vlassenroot 2002). The moral economy of survival also needs to be explored as a space for resistance, and not just as a space of oppression and suffering (Ela 1994, 1998). Resistance has a *longue durée* that is inseparable from how political authority has been configured historically.

The book draws on 48 weeks of fieldwork between 2009 and 2014, and a close follow-up of the case from the first democratic elections in the DRC in 2006. This includes 174 interviews with UN, government and army officers, as well as with Congolese NGOs, trade unionists, combatants and ex-combatants of armed groups (Yakutumba, Federal Republican Forces (FRF), Simba Mai Mai/MRS (Mouvement Revolutionnaire Socialiste), Raïa Mutomboki, Mai Mai Nyakiriba, ex-Mai Mai Dunia and ex-Mai Mai Padiri), members of peasant cooperatives, street and market sellers and miners. The material used also comes from 17 formal participant observations, seven focus groups, one small survey and multiple informal conversations. Fieldwork took place in Kinshasa, in the province of North Kivu (in Beni, Butembo, Masisi, Nyiragongo and Goma) and in the province of South Kivu (in Bukavu, Bunyakiri, Fizi and Mwenga).

The purpose of the case study is not to make causal inferences or to test hypotheses. The question it addresses is not why but what everyday resistance is and how it happens. The book systematically examines different practices of resistance against practices of domination fostered by conflict and state-making. Thus, following Patrick T. Jackson, the book is more an inquiry than a test of



nullifiable hypothesis (2010, esp. Introduction). This does not mean that resistance does not exist beyond our thinking, but that researching and theorising resistance is not an exercise of objective measurement of independently existing facts. The evidence provided throughout the book is verifiable in so far as these are not hidden or invisible acts. It claims that 'its validity is internal to its own methodology', and while its interpretation is open to challenge, it is consistent (Jackson 2010: 191). This may not be 'science' but it is 'something to use as guidance for systematic thorough inquiry that has the potential to produce a certain kind of knowledge' (Jackson 2010: 191).

The conflict in the DRC and the way peacebuilding strategies have been designed and applied can serve to compare other case studies. Much of the fieldwork is focused on North and South Kivu because they are the provinces where conflict continues and where peacebuilding strategies have focused the most. The context of North and South Kivu is complex but cannot be separated from the politics of the DRC and the broader central and Great Lakes regions as a whole. The regions also reflect African politics more generally. The elements of how violence takes place, the importance of seeing the material and symbolic underpinnings of different forms of resistance, as well as how coercion, extraction and the claims to legitimacy play out, are all important to understanding relations of power and resistance in conflict and peace processes beyond this case and Africa.

There are limits to the generalisations that can be made. For Scott, '[w]hile something can indeed be said about forestry, urban planning, agriculture, and rural settlement in general, this will take us only so far in understanding *this* forest, *this* revolution, *this* urbanization, *this* farm' (1998: 318). This means that although it is possible to argue that the nature of political authority enabled through peacebuilding processes is plural, what it really means in Eastern DRC (e.g. plural centres of power including state and non-state actors in parts of North Kivu, or statebuilding through the deployment of the military) may imply important shaded differences to what it means in Bosnia (e.g. the influence of the EU and the US amongst different Bosniak and Croat political projects). In other words, highlighting certain practices as resistance may provide a methodological container that will be meaningful only once they are contextualised.

### **What lies ahead**

The chapters that follow pave the way for research focused on resistance in peace and conflict studies. They lay the path to continue a necessary journey that was started but that has taken a detour towards hybridity. As was already mentioned, the book starts with the three framing chapters, followed by three empirical chapters. It starts by rearticulating peacebuilding, focusing on its core element:

the reconstitution of state authority. It continues with the framework of resistance, followed by an overview of Africa's World War. The three empirical chapters focus on the three arenas of resistance that the book proposes to explore: discourses, violence and survival. The Conclusion discusses the implications of this new understanding. One of these implications is to serve as a connection between peace and conflict studies, security studies, IR, sociology and anthropology in their study of resistance. The book adds to the growing number of resistance studies in IR, counterbalancing the focus the discipline has placed on the study of power. Ultimately, order needs an account of resistance to be fully explained. While this is becoming a common call among IR scholars, the study of resistance still plays a secondary role in the discipline (Armstrong, Farrell, and Maignushca 2004; Eschle and Maignushca 2007; Hirst 2015; Stern 2005).

Resistance is not different within international peacebuilding, since it is embedded more broadly in patterns of society relations, in the dynamics of international political economy and in state constitutive patterns of world order. Power–resistance relations are not an isolated relationship between authority and subject. In fact, one of the insights from looking at peacebuilding from a historical sociological perspective and from an African case study is that this relationship is a plural relationship of 'multiple authorities and centres of political control', not a binary (Raeymaekers 2007: 173). The particular context is marked by, on the one hand, increasing militarisation, authoritarianism and impoverishment of the civilian population and, on the other, by a political discourse of peace, democracy and development. Peacebuilding in the DRC is undertaken and mediated by a wide array of international, national, state and non-state actors. The process of reconstituting state authority leads these actors to engage in contradictory practices of militarisation, peacebuilding, shared sovereignty and proxy wars. Peacebuilding is in this sense the representation of the practices of state-making more generally. Resistance counters the different forms of extraction and violence that continue or worsen unwanted conditions of living, not the intervention of international actors.

The book proposes to embrace ambiguity and plurality to look at both resistance and state-making. Similar to Hollander and Einwohner it sees resistance as 'socially constructed' (2004: 548). In the process of identifying what is resistance and what is not, its recognition by those who resist, those who are targeted and those who observe creates a complex interconnection of subjective meaning. However, despite these complexities, the book sees resistance as a political category worth studying in its own right. Recent analyses of post-conflict statebuilding through the lens of state-making have afforded a better understanding of this process (Berger and Weber 2006; Bliesemann de Guevara 2010, 2012; Jung 2008; Migdal and Schlichte 2005; Schlichte 2009). What these analyses do not emphasise enough is that both statebuilding and state-formation (as



ideal-type processes) share patterns in governing and resistance practices. Resistance features intermittently in these analyses to argue that different actors mould the state, that there are hegemonic as well as subordinate agencies and that these may not necessarily follow a top-down approach. Similar to the hybridity debates, resistance in these studies is also mentioned to point out that statebuilding is contested and mediated, but not as a developed account of it. This book sees resistance as a prevalent historical practice in everyday life that needs to be studied and comprehended.

In the book, embracing these complexities entails seeing resistance not in normative terms but as *Janus-faced*, highlighting how there are multiple self-interested power-seeking agendas behind it (Lawson 2007; Selbin 2009). Yet the claim is that in order to attain a better understanding of how resistance operates, resisters and dominant actors must be analytically categorised by their symbolic and material privileges, their decision-making power and class. Its advantage is to formulate a way to observe patterns in social relations that simultaneously capture the complexity of an internationalised context of war and state-making. The ultimate aim is not to portray a romantic view of resistance but to open up paths to study forms of resistance and contribute to the project of a nuanced and critical analysis of peacebuilding operations.

#### NOTES

- 1 These quotes are representative of many experiences recorded throughout the period of field research between 2009 and 2014.
- 2 The term 'Africa's First World War' was apparently coined by Assistant Secretary of State Susan Rice, although it has been legated by journalist Lynne Duke, who, in a biographical/journalistic account of Africa's contemporary history, notes that 'Susan Rice, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for Africa, would call this conflict the first "world war" of Africa because of its continental proportions, the array of regional powers involved, and the high stakes at play' (Duke 2003: 237).
- 3 These remain as a reference throughout Richmond's book.
- 4 The information in this paragraph comes from: Participant Observation XXVII (2014); Focus Group Femmes Kamituga (2014); Mai Mai Nyakiriba1 (2014); Mai Mai Nyakiriba 2 (2014).
- 5 See the discussion in *Millennium Journal of International Studies* (Vrasti 2008, 2010; Ranatore 2010; see also the engagement of Richmond with Vrasti, Richmond 2011a: 129).
- 6 See also the transition from 'history' to 'text' in Certeau (1988: Ch. 1).
- 7 For Certeau, using 'zoom lenses' provides the 'sociological and anthropological perspective that privileges the anonymous and the everyday' (Certeau 1984: v).
- 8 This does not mean that loose social movements do not exist (Richmond 2011a). In the case of the DRC, a tapestry of civil and political organisations and ongoing social and political struggles take place in a more public sphere. This is seen through the struggle of collectives that have been particularly vocal and also particularly persecuted, like human rights organisations, journalists, feminists, women's-rights organisations, students, peace activists, pygmies, etc. However, not only are the practices Scott focuses on more

*Everyday resistance, peacebuilding and state-making*

prevalent, they also form the basis of these more public struggles. See for example De Villers and Tshonda (2004).

- 9 Cf. Nzongola-Ntalaja adds a third category, the 'lumpenproletariat', not included here because this serves a Marxist category of a class not interested in revolutionary politics, and does not have analytical value in this book.

## *Legitimacy, violence and extraction in the practice of building states*

[T]o govern men as to produce and collect goods is inseparable from the specific modes of the distribution and modulation of violence. (Mbembe 1991a: 7)

### **Ruling over people**

Whatever other challenges peacebuilding faces, whether administrative reform, economic reactivation or the stabilisation of conflicts, it poses peacebuilders with the basic question of how to assert state rule. Peacebuilding has a state-making ethos and, as Weber argues, states are ‘associations of rule’ (1978: 51). Since 1945, a significant quantitative and qualitative development in the doctrines of intervention and conflict management has made state–society relations the sphere of international intervention.<sup>1</sup> These operations have included programmes for economic, security sector and civil administration reform, as well as for promoting certain civil society activities. Since 2001, when so-called failed states were designated as the major cause of conflicts, interventions have aimed at the transformation of the state apparatus, supporting governments and the central administration, in so far as the state is considered the cornerstone for the end of conflict and for the establishment of a long-lasting peace. Operations such as those in Bosnia, East Timor, Afghanistan and Kosovo heralded an era in which peacebuilding is statebuilding, by whatever other name it is called (Chesterman 2004). Current policy indicates that statebuilding has survived other aspects of the liberal peace agenda (Bliesemann de Guevara 2010; Hameiri 2014), and, in fact, it has a wide consensus from Western and non-Western governments (Curtis 2013).

These processes have generally been studied under a global governance framework. The very few historical-sociological approaches demonstrate that little is known about how the reconstruction of state authority impacts on peacebuilding (Bliesemann de Guevara 2012, 2015; Jung 2008; Migdal and Schlichte 2005). As Newman argues,

In historical perspective statebuilding has generally been a coercive and often a violent process. Statebuilding involves imposing a unified, centralised state and subjugating peripheral regions, securing border areas and imposing regulation, institutions, taxation and control. This has been a violent process because it threatens the interests of recalcitrant actors and it encounters outlying resistance which must be suppressed. [...] In stark contrast, in the twenty-first century scholars and policy analysts interested in peacebuilding portray peacebuilding and statebuilding as complementary or even mutually dependent. (2013: 141)

However, Newman himself falls short of fully developing a historical-sociological approach. This chapter analyses statebuilding from the practices and patterns that constitute it presently and historically. It argues that peacebuilding as statebuilding is based on the same practices of coercion, extraction and claims to legitimacy that define state-making, and that these practices are the ground for resistance. Resistance reflects not just issues of bad governance, or a rejection of internationally led agendas that impinge on a local culture. It reflects the experience of war, poverty, and political processes as intolerable and humiliating. However, as Eric Wolf states, social science cannot be restricted to the study of 'self-contained' societies (1982: 385). Resistance needs to be seen as an expression of an experience that is historical and inseparable from global political and economic processes.

Peacebuilding shares with state-making the claims to legitimate authority to distribute rights, privileges, violence and economic resources. It is based on a high-modernist discourse of peace, democracy and development that promises to be the solution to the problems (post-)conflict states and societies face; it is based on the support of a strong winning party or a power-sharing agreement, in a way that militarises government; and it continues or establishes new ways of extraction that tend to reinforce patterns of accumulation and dispossession.

These three elements (coercion, capital and legitimacy), which relate to the legacy of Max Weber, are part and parcel of a widely embraced tradition about what states are and how they came into being. As Hintze pointed out, Weber's insight is to have revealed the state as an 'institutional enterprise possessing coercive force', tearing down ideological conceptions of the state as a neutral and collective good (cited in Anter 2014: 40). But this approach has its limitations.

Hannah Arendt criticised Weber for having merged violence and power. She argued that violence does not create power, but destroys it (1970: 35–8). For Arendt, the issue is not to have linked violence with the exercise of state violence but to have established a causal and ontological link. Weber is also at the root of the 'bellicist' account, which, although it establishes what Teschke calls the 'core hypothesis constitut[ing] the dominant paradigm of state formation theory in contemporary scholarship', does not fit the formation of *all* states (2003:

119).<sup>2</sup> The ‘bellicist’ account entails a process which Norbert Elias (1982) saw as having ‘two phases’. In the first phase, the threat and preparation for war provides the momentum to recruit men and taxes, simultaneously creating the incentives to centralise and develop institutions for the securing of the territory. A second phase takes place when this institution is democratised. The problem of this account is that it is focused on the process of power concentration and later democratisation that ultimately reflects the unfolding of the modern European nation-state.

The benefit of the Weberian tradition is to offer a relatively simple formula that allows us to sharpen the perspective about the continuities, changes, specificities and generalities of different states and different past and contemporary state-making processes. In this book, state-making (and peacebuilding/statebuilding) is a process of asserting, consolidating and exercising rule through the management of violence and wealth that has both national and international elements. This simple formula fits a wide range of states, and in particular African states, which have been forged out of processes marked by violence and extraction, with claims to legitimacy. For Achille Mbembe, rule and states in Africa were consolidated during colonisation through two different forms of violence, one of conquest under a claim of ‘right to rule’ and another of ‘domestication’ under the discourse of civilising the natives (2001: Ch. 1). The particularities of peacebuilding come from the contexts and international structure in which they are embedded. The contemporary reconstruction of state authority after conflict has not represented an authority resting on popular consent, but the political compromises of different parties through power sharing which international actors have advocated for. The discourse of peacebuilding informs these strategies and underpins the need for these compromises, also affording a platform for legitimising international actors. Recognising common practices as longer patterns of state-making that link different kinds of states with different historical developments allows us to depathologise ‘failed’ states.

The chapter starts with a discussion of Weberian historical sociology in order to analyse not only coercion, extraction and claims to legitimacy as constitutive practices of states, but also how informal and plural forms of governance do not make the DRC pathological; in fact, they characterise the nature of peacebuilding as a plural and improvised form of ruling. This is illustrated with some empirical examples in the fourth section of the chapter. Before that, a third section analyses both Africa’s normality and exceptionalism. It first discusses the main critiques that Weberian historical sociology has received in making African states a ‘shadow’ of the ideal European states (cf. Ferguson 2006) and then goes on to analyse particularities of African states through the work of Achille Mbembe. The section highlights the need to take Africa’s historicity into account in order to understand its politics and its interconnected nature with global

politics. The chapter facilitates an analysis of the object of resistance beyond international actors, while also pointing to several challenges of theorising resistance in this context. These will be more fully developed in the following chapters.

### **Practices and patterns of state-making**

Historical sociology has provided some of the most extensive research and theorisation on state theory and state formation. It is not unitary, as there have been different approaches within it, nor does it necessarily provide the best account. It suffers from important critiques, since it is underpinned by Weber and his Eurocentric approach. Other theories have also added important insights. Michel Foucault, post-structuralism and feminism have identified the constitutive links between the private and public arenas, the plural and decentralising exercise that power relations within states give rise to and the important relationship between formal and informal processes (Ashley 1988; Foucault 2008, 1991; Wilmer 2009). Some of these features, explored below, are synthesised in Achille Mbembe's theory of the African political space.

Historical sociology, and some elements of Weberian theory, are still useful to observe not the specificities of the European state but the broader patterns through which states assert rule. Historical sociology is a corrective to three misunderstandings commonly made in peacebuilding literature and policy, which are that: (1) statebuilding, as an internationally led enterprise, is external to the actual practice of ruling and is a solution to the problems of war; (2) the state is a naturally, and not historically, occurring institution, and its problems can be solved by changing its internal dynamics, without addressing the inequalities and dynamics of the global political economy; and (3) the state is the 'hero', able to harmonise competing interests inside and outside (cf. Ashley 1988). This form is an ideal version of the state as a service provider, with a central and coherent administration based on routinised bureaucratic practices and with high levels of legitimacy to distribute and manage wealth and violence, based on the rule of law. Peacebuilding thus exposes an ideal version of the Weberian state, which not only sanitises its history and disregards the constraints that the international context imposes, but ascribes to it features that do not belong to even the most organised and consolidated states.

By contrast, (post-)conflict states and, in particular, African states are characterised by neopatrimonial practices. As discussed below and in Chapter 3, the sources of state failure and of conflict come down to how violence, wealth, rights and services are distributed through personal networks of patronage rather than rational, bureaucratised procedures. Yet this understanding ceases to be a policy or analytical argument and becomes normative political theory about how society should be organised and about the way political and economic goods should be distributed.

An analysis of historical sociology shows that centralisation, monopoly of violence, impersonal bureaucratised practices and legitimacy are all limited and contested. The hallmark of Weberian theory is to see the state through the lens of the institutionalisation and legitimation of the means of coercion which grants the state the organisational capacity to administer the population of a particular territory (Weber 1978: 54–6). Territory and rule, backed by force under a claim to legitimacy, were all necessary elements in the definition of a state. Weber is generally misunderstood on this, for he never implied that the state would have the monopoly of coercion, just that it would have the *legitimate* means of coercion. This could be extended to his vision of ruling. Weber looked at the state, and indeed at every social relationship, as an association in which two elements, force and rule, were combined (Anter 2014: 46). In fact, ‘the state as a relation of rulership consisting of command and compliance [became] *the* paradigm of political thought in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries’ (Anter 2014: 48).

Contemporary historical sociology has added nuances to a Weberian state theory that many consider unfinished (Anter 2014: 1–2; Mann 1993: 58). Mann’s ‘institutional statism’ sought to synthesise two currents that until then had seen the state either as a place to host particular interests or as an actor, entirely driven by an elite administration. Mann’s categorisation allows us to see some of the flaws in the approaches to the conflict in the DRC and current peacebuilding policy. The first current, which sees states as places, has a class-based/Marxist version and a liberal/pluralist version. Class-based theorists think that states are the result of class struggle at two crucial points during feudalism and early capitalism. This gives states their capitalist character and their fundamental function as instruments for ‘capital accumulation and class regulation’ (Mann 1993: 45). In many respects, though generally outside the historical-materialist framework, this links to the vision of resource wars and post-colonial states as instruments for the enrichment of the elites and their allies that end up serving the status quo within states (Deneault 2008; Renton, Seddon, and Zeilig 2007). Mann’s liberal version of this approach, pluralism, is for him ‘liberal democracy’s (especially American democracy’s) view of itself’ (1993: 45). It accounts for the birth of the democratic state through the rise of pressure groups contesting old regimes and their institutions and increasing popular participation (Mann 1993: 45). This reflects the vision of much peacebuilding policy and liberal scholarship. An old, undemocratic ‘neopatrimonial’ state is the cause of conflict, it is illegitimate and it needs to be replaced by a legitimate democratic state where a wide spectrum of the population is represented and is able to participate (ISSSS 2013; Lemay-Hébert 2009; Fukuyama 2004). In both versions of the ‘state as a place’, society is almost equated with the state and, as Mann notes, there is no account of how the state operates (at least partly)



autonomously, nor of how it is intervened and constituted by transnational pressures (1993: 47).

Mann's second current refers to those who think of the state as an actor, or what he sees as 'true elitists' (1993: 48). This is a branch of state theory initiated by Mosca and Pareto, and later elaborated on by Oppenheimer and Skocpol. The latter version posits that states have autonomous power to distribute resources and act in their own geopolitical environment. Whereas this approach managed to clearly identify states as actors in a world of states, it still took the state as unitary and systemic, too concentrated on the actual rulers, and forgot to account for transnational actors and international interference, as well as state-society relations (Mann 1993: 48-52). The practice and priorities of many peacebuilding operations also reflect a focus on the actual government. As mentioned before, this has been the case of many flawed democratic elections, power-sharing agreements and, in general, the focus on the security apparatus of the state.

Mann's proposal is to see state power emanating from the autonomous power of different political institutions, as it has been able to constrain past and present struggles. The resulting institutionalised power represents 'state power' and not just 'elite power', which simultaneously emphasises not just that 'elites' dominate civil society but that 'all actors are constrained by existing political institutions' (Mann 1993: 52). The virtue of this approach, to which Skocpol, Tilly, Weir and others contributed, is to present the state's nature as 'chaotic, irrational, with multiple departmental autonomies, pressured erratically and intermittently by capitalists but also by other interest groups' (Mann 1993: 53). By this means Mann captures the nature of states as configured by a complex interconnection of historical processes and actors. Tilly's particular contribution is to capture the practices of state-making as common to the exercise of state authority.

Tilly's landmark study on state formation opens with the story of Hammurabi's conquest of the nearby Mesopotamian city-states around late 18 BC, asserting that it was representative of patterns of state formation in history (1990: 1). Tilly acknowledged that the deployment of a discourse that legitimised Hammurabi's rule as divine and just was important to the process of subjecting the population of these states to his own Babylonian rule. Hammurabi claimed a right and an obligation to make laws, under the divine dictate of the god Marduk, thus further vilifying all resistance as going against divine will (Tilly 1990: 1). For Tilly, although this conquest contained an important cultural, religious and rule-making exercise, it was coercive power that allowed Hammurabi to create his state. The underlying theory is that state-making is an act of power concentration determined in large part by mutually influencing external and internal pressures. Different combinations of these dynamics provided different types of states, but the pathways were similar.<sup>3</sup> The rivalry and



conquest of elites provoked wars; this provoked the need for military conscription and taxation, centralising state power and turning it into an instrument of coercion against the population and for the subjugation of rivals. The absolutism of this new institution was transformed into more democratic forms of government only several centuries later, through wars and revolutions, and not through a social contract (Tilly 1990: 110–19). State–society bargaining, added to the development of commercial, military and diplomatic alliances, gave way to the modern European state system (Tilly 1990: 15–22). This should not be read in terms of the necessary pathway all states should or would follow in an evolution towards better and more progressive ways of ruling. What Tilly is arguing is that democracy was not part of the natural evolution of European states; it was a hard and long struggle, fought over centuries. In fact, for Tilly:

At least for the European experience of the past few centuries, a portrait of war makers and state makers as coercive and self-seeking entrepreneurs bears a far greater resemblance to the facts than do its chief alternatives: the idea of a social contract, the idea of an open market in which operators of armies and states offer services to willing consumers, the idea of a society whose shared norms and expectations call forth a certain kind of government. (1985: 169)

For Tilly, war-making and the taming of competitors for state-making was not about annihilating them so much as it was a process of fostering alliances. This is well exemplified by Tilly's thesis of *state-making as organised crime* (1985), which also sheds light on the limited legitimacy and limited monopoly of means of violence that states have. By this measure, states were protection rackets. State-makers rise as protectors of allies and competitors when the threats are real, but also when they are invented. In order to foster rule, channel accumulation and gain allies, the government could invent a threat and portray itself into a protector in the eyes of elites, transferring wealth and punishing the population if necessary (Tilly 1985: 171). Organised crime was not a challenge to the state but its actual source, used to gather elite support, maintain extraction and yield coercive power. In this equation, the distinction between “legitimate” and “illegitimate” force makes no difference to the fact’ (Tilly 1985: 171). For Tilly, the fact is that state authority requires the management and, if possible, the monopoly of violence (1985: 171). The Tillean account of coercion and accumulation offers the possibility of understanding coercion and extraction as connected to state-making not only as an account of the formation of a new state, but as continuous practices of the assertion of state authority.

These authors focus on a process that has as its outcome the European state, but their vision is only partial. Additionally, they take the European state as a self-made miracle, not accounting for the input that colonisation had. Mann's definition of the state centres on the rise of differentiated institutions and personnel whose power radiates from the centre, that are linked to a particular

territory and exercise authority with the capacity to impose binding rules backed by 'some organized physical force' (1993: 55). Although Mann acknowledges the limited monopoly of force, and the 'capacity' rather than the 'legitimacy' to impose rules, he still emphasises centralisation and bureaucratisation as defining state features. This does not, however, account for shared and delegated authority. Mann also saw states as based on and constituted by a class system as well as patriarchy, but separated the specific mode of production from the mode of rule-making and force. In particular, Mann (1984) saw militarism as separate from the rise of capitalism and contingent to it, originating in the geopolitical needs of states. This accounts only partially for the rise of contemporary African states, so tied to the capitalist and militaristic enterprise of European expansion. In general, the Weberian account of the state centres excessively on the outcome of the European state, rather than on an open-ended process with common practices, where processes of legitimation and contest are permanent. Mann and Tilly, however, internationalise Weber's account, adding the impact of international processes, actors and structures on the local environment. They also show that coercion and extraction are not always seen as legitimate and that resistance shapes states.

Bourdieu offers a practice-based understanding of states and state formation, while remaining within a Weberian framework. He sees states as the result of the accumulation of different forms of capital that are rooted in the preparation for war, but offers insight into the ways these practices have been routinised. For Bourdieu (1994), the requirements of war involve the formation of 'capital of physical force', which simultaneously implies the formation of 'economic capital'. This is expanded with 'information capital', which includes statistics and census, cartography and cultural means. The different forms of capital require 'symbolic capital', that is, legitimacy. These different forms of capital do not only account for the rise of the state as kings, armies and their agents, but also for the bureaucratisation of state rule. This means the systematisation, routinisation and depersonalisation of functions related to the management and concentration of those forms of capital. The transition from the administration of justice directly by the king with his immediate vassals to the administration of justice by a specialised body under a codified law is very important for legitimacy. Yet legitimacy is always limited because consent is limited (Bourdieu 1994: 14–15).

Different forms of resistance have impinged upon state-making. The heterogeneity of the population was a difficulty for establishing state rule across Europe, and this became the target of increasing homogenisation in terms of language, religion, and administration (Tilly 1990: 107). The more these types of mechanisms disturbed the subordinate population, the more resistance they gathered (Tilly 1990: 100). Subordinate groups were likely to '[employ] the "weapons of the weak"' (James Scott, cited in Tilly 1990: 101),

but these turned into outright revolt when the state's actions were particularly damaging to their collective identities, when they had strong ties between them or with national or international elites and when they had identified the state's vulnerabilities. States have impacted on the form resistance has taken, but that resistance has also determined the form of the state (Tilly 1990: 117–22).

Two initial conclusions come from the above. Firstly, states have been forged through long historical processes and continue to be shaped by multiple pressures. Secondly, despite the complexity that states have achieved, they retain a common pattern in their rule-making efforts through the management of violence and wealth under a claim to legitimacy. Peacebuilding is then a process of supporting state claims, while establishing claims of its own. State-making, even in its contemporary form, entails practices of coercion and extraction, both symbolic and material, that simultaneously demand the recognition of legitimate authority. Extraction needs not to be seen only in terms of tax extraction. As Tilly argues, 'capital' is what allows the state to finance its war-making, state-making and the continuation of the running of the state, and this comes from taxes as well as from credit, debt and rents (1990: 84–6). These coercive and extractive practices, whether in the form of the threat or the use of force, taxation, wealth and rights redistribution, are the object of resistance. Yet much more needs to be said about how specifically these aspects and dynamics are represented in a context of war and peacebuilding in contemporary Africa. Additionally, a response to the Eurocentrism of this Weberian legacy of historical sociology is required.

### **African states: challenges, particularities and generalities**

It has been precisely a Weberian account of the state that has underpinned the vision that the DRC does not exist or that it does not function in the *right* way (Eriksen 2011: 237–9). For Migdal and Schlichte (2005: 4) a Weberian 'image' of the state as 'coherent, fairly unified actors, set apart from, or above, other social organizations' has permeated both academic research and policy-making. In fact, for Migdal, the state is a 'field of power marked by the use and threat of violence and shaped by 1) the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory, and 2) the actual practices involving those staffing its multiple parts and those they engage in their roles as state officials' (2004: 15–16). The use of informal extra-official channels does not mean that these are not geared towards ruling and asserting authority. Migdal and Schlichte agree with the view that violence is central to state power (2005: 16). Their view is that this power, which affects practices of norm-making, tax and labour extraction, bureaucratic administration and the use of force, will vary across states (Migdal and Schlichte 2005:

16). A focus on actual practices beyond legal/illegal, formal/informal or public/private divides is what can demonstrate the ways in which states operate (Migdal and Schlichte 2005: 16 and 31). This focus has also taken scholars to note the multiple forms of governance that have emerged as a result of civil society groups taking over, as well as from the consequences of war (Meagher et al. 2014; Titeca and De Herdt 2011); although, as De Herdt and Sardan argue, the implication of civil society in governance and informal arrangements is hardly a new phenomenon (2015: 3). For Achille Mbembe, as will be seen below, what defines African states is their entanglement with time, processes and dynamics that make them assert their authority by means of coercion and extraction under claims of legitimacy through private and informal channels. The ideal version of Weberian state theory underpinning the measurement of the capacity and propriety of states raises important ethical implications and leaves many aspects of African states unexplained.

*Ethical challenges to the bellicist account*

One of the main challenges to the bellicist account is its Eurocentric narrative, which has an ethical and a methodological dimension. The experience of African state formation has particular specificities marked by the experience of slavery and colonisation. As Makau Mutua notes (2001), this experience configures different a state–subjects relation to that of Western states, which is based on struggles embedded in the processes of industrialisation and the rise of the bourgeoisie.

The bellicist account's 'elision of empire' has been the target of critiques (Carvalho, Leira and Hobson 2011: 737). Bhambra (2007) argues that the Weberian-inspired narrative has a civilisational bias. Its narrow view of processes outside violence and war has artificially created a 'success' story by which to measure others. Yet it is important to recognise that even in the relatively parochial narrative of European state formation its sources of authority, as Tilly points out, are not consent and democracy, but war, coercion and accumulation. When colonisation is added to this narrative, which, as Bhambra (2010) argues, is constitutive and not a consequence of modernity, it shows that European states were not entirely self-made but have benefited from extraction, exploitation and war in the colonies.

The challenge to the Eurocentric versions of the rise of Europe and capitalism does not necessarily undermine the argument that war, coercion and accumulation played a role in the emergence of states. Hobson's research (2004) shows how tools and ideas fundamental for the rise of 'the West' were the result of the copying, appropriation and exchange of inventions and technologies developed in East Asia and North Africa. With the example of Central America, Holden (2004) sees that the climax of state power, well into the twentieth

century, was not so much the concentration of coercive power in the hands of the state but its dispersal amongst the population. Common to these accounts is what Veena Das saw as the fundamental flaw in Weber's argument: "The state's monopoly over what Weber called "legitimate" violence does not end violence – it redistributes it" (2007: 4). The flaw is in having concentrated exclusively on the mechanisms of centralisation rather than on coercive and military practices as important to the process.

Other critiques argue that war, in particular, has not played such a fundamental role in Europe, and less so elsewhere. Teschke notes that royal marriages and the process of class formation in Europe gave way (somewhere close to the early nineteenth century, and not the Westphalian peace) to the so-called modern state system (2003: 11; 220–5). He also challenges the notion of the concentration of coercive mechanisms. He argues that:

due to peasant possession of the means of subsistence, feudal mobility enforced access to peasant produce by political and military means. Since every lord reproduced himself not only politically but also individually on the basis of his lordship, control over the means of violence was not monopolised by the state, but oligopolistically dispersed among a landed nobility. (2003: 46)

This resonates with the state-formation theses outside Europe (Clapham 2000; Herbst 2000; Young 1997). Patterns of state formation in central Africa have been varied. The Great Lakes region, together with the Ethiopian highlands, have had 'the longest traditions of relatively centralized state structures' (Herbst 2000: 11). These have been the result of migration flows and the influence of the centralising exercises of political rule in the Kongo, Luba-Lunda and the Kunda kingdoms (Muiu and Martin 2009: 104). Wa Muiu and Martin argue that the Kongo kingdom had developed a highly centralised structure around a single currency, a centralised army and the king (Muiu and Martin 2009: 104–5). However, this power was articulated on a mutual assurance of authority between the king and local elites. Protection and tribute formed a network of political authority where elites shared power, and their allegiance to the king was linked to religious, identity, security and economic agendas (Ndaywel è Nziem 2009: 135–6). State-making was not just about concentrating power away from competitors but also about sharing sovereignties. Resistance on the part of the population took the form of flight from authorities. Distance to the centralised administration of power meant laxer power, and this encouraged authorities and elites to extend their rule through alliances rather than war (Muiu and Martin 2009: 104).

Looking at actual practices of governance, James Scott provides a different account, arguing that what drives state-makers is 'high modernism', that is, the 'faith' in administration, science and technocracy to organise people and nature in a productive way (1998: 4–6). As Proudhon argues,

To be ruled is to be kept an eye on, inspected, spied on, regulated, indoctrinated, sermonized, listed and checked off, estimated, appraised, censured, ordered about. ... To be ruled is at every operation, transaction, movement, to be noted, registered, counted, priced, admonished, prevented, reformed, redressed, corrected. (Cited in Scott 1998: 183)

Statebuilding in this version is an exercise of control that aims at making the population and the environment legible, hence simplified and homogenous. These practices are still underlined by the logic of asserting rule and extracting consent, taxes and labour under the threat of or use of coercion. Additionally, in the DRC these *homogenising* practices have not been the hallmark of the statebuilding exercise. The largest census undertaken was done only in 2011 for voting purposes.<sup>4</sup> Even the biometric census completed in 2015 for the military and its new phone-payment system do not change the fact that governance practices do not rely on turning the Congolese into consuming and working taxpayers (EEAS 2015; UNDP 2010).

There is a deeper question of the feasibility and ethics of offering an intelligible reading of the forms of social and political imagination in contemporary Africa solely through conceptual structures and fictional representations used precisely to deny African societies any historical depth and to define them as radically other, as all that the West is not (Mbembe 2001: 11). Not least, the European state, most prominently embedded in an *idealised service-provider* form in policy documents, makes the African state a *bad* state. Dunn noted that '[s]ince citizenship, territorial integrity, and monopoly on the tools of coercion are all considered prerequisites for statehood, this raises serious doubts about whether African states are in fact states at all' (2001: 55). Dunn shows how common misunderstandings in both IR and Africanist state theory, which take the state as a given, impose a European model as shorthand for what states are. As a result 'African' states are applied all sorts of 'madlibs' – adjectives to be inserted in a blank space next to the word 'state' – all of them accentuating its lack of something, its failure. Dunn's (2001: 46) survey of these 'labels' includes:

'failed' (Leys 1976), 'lame' (Sandbrook 1985), 'fictive' (Callaghy 1987), 'weak' (Rothchild 1987), 'collapsing' (Diamond 1987), 'quasi' (Migdal 1988), 'invented' and 'imposed' (Jackson 1990), 'shadow' (O'Brien 1991), 'over-developed' and 'centralized' (Davidson 1992), 'swollen' (Zartman 1995), 'soft' (Herbst 1996), 'extractive' and 'parasitic' (Clark 1998a), 'premodern' (Buzan 1998) and 'post-state' (Boone 1998).

The pervasiveness of these labels speaks not just of how accurate the framework of coercion and extraction is, but also of how it is applied to African politics. Therefore, a focus on the historical practices embedded in the present could bring about a richer view of contemporary statebuilding. State-making should



be seen as an 'ongoing and open-ended process' rather than as a pathway to a particular institutional arrangement (Jung 2008: 40). These critiques also highlight the need to contextualise in order to understand the particularities of each process and place.

*The Africanist approach*

A focus on African states highlights that there are not different times in world history, but that different state configurations are the result of their historical interconnections. This is best put by Achille Mbembe in his notion of entanglement. Mbembe is representative of a heterogeneous Africanist school that has theorised African politics and social processes through their historicity. In theorising the nature of political power in Africa, Mbembe develops several useful arguments about state-making. Firstly, Mbembe argues that violence, extraction and symbolic representations are inseparable. Secondly, these take place across several divides that are ultimately irrelevant: dominants/dominated, formal/informal, local/global, public/private and historical/present. Finally, this can be grasped only through the notion of 'entanglement', meaning mutual transformations and syncretism, not only of actors and processes, but also of time and space. This notion includes practices, structures and systems of representation. These form the complex political space, called the 'postcolony'. For Mbembe:

The notion 'postcolony' identifies specifically a given historical trajectory – that of societies recently emerging from the experience of colonization and the violence which the colonial relationship involves. To be sure, the postcolony is *chaotically pluralistic*; it has nonetheless an internal coherence. It is a specific system of signs, a particular way of fabricating simulacra or re-forming stereotypes. [It] is characterized by a distinctive style of political improvisation, by a tendency to excess and lack of proportion, as well as by distinctive ways identities are multiplied, transformed, and put into circulation. But the postcolony is also made up of a series of corporate institutions and a political machinery that, once in place, constitute a distinctive regime of violence. In this sense, the postcolony is a particularly revealing, and rather dramatic, stage on which are played out the wider problems of subjection and its corollary, [in]discipline [– and of the emancipation of the subject]. (2001: 102–3, emphasis added)<sup>5</sup>

At its core, what characterises 'the political' in post-colonial Africa is its own historicity, its pluralism, its institutional structure and its practices simultaneously constituted by violence, symbolism and a *modus operandi* of excess, improvisation and subjection. It is not surprising for Mbembe that the post-colonial state is 'itself a form of domination', due to the use of 'universal techniques (a state and its apparatus)' (2001: 60). What has shaped post-colonial states' 'institutional machinery' is the confrontation and symbiosis of the new educated

elites (*evolués*) and the old colonial administration (Mbembe 2001: 40). Elites' struggles were aggravated by foreign interventions and the new ways in which African economies were inserted into the global economy. During the Cold War great powers forcefully removed democratically elected leaders across Africa (e.g. Lumumba, Krumah, Sankara, amongst others). The introduction of cash crops, of economic adjustments dictated by the Bretton Woods institutions and corporate pressures fostered externally backed factionalism, social inequality and even wars (Mbembe 2001: 41). Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) dismantled much of the state infrastructure that even minimally sustained public services such as health and education. They also consolidated the African rural environment as an export-orientated production area and peasants as consumers of manufactured goods, including basic products like wheat and corn (Chossudovsky 1997).

The problem is that this historical trajectory, entangled with different actors and processes that are both national and international, is occluded by the accounts of the sources of conflict in the DRC and Africa in general. The literature on statebuilding, with the discourse of state failure, and the Africanist literature, with the discourse of 'neopatrimonialism', have made coercion and accumulation pathological practices of statecraft (Migdal and Schlichte 2005: 12–13; Wai 2012b). In fact, neopatrimonialism has turned into the fundamental characteristic of state failure, and hence conflict, in peacebuilding policy in the DRC (ISSSS 2013).

These accounts, however, raise many of the issues seen above in regard to the portrayal of an idealised European model versus the depoliticised and pathologised African state. Neopatrimonialism is a contemporary application of Weber's concept of patrimonialism. What Weber wanted to conceptualise is a type of authority which corresponds to what he calls 'traditional' societies, and captures the ways in which rule, distribution and accountability are exercised (Weber 1978: Ch. 12 and 13). The political and economic spheres are not autonomous rational, bureaucratised activities. These are enmeshed in social personal relations permeating the whole society. The problem is that Weber's concept has been misused by conceiving it as a totalising regime, where forms of accountability and control do not exist (Pitcher, Moran, and Johnston 2009: 129). The outcome of this approach has been to portray neopatrimonialism as an 'inherent', 'core' and even 'inevitable' feature of African politics and to see African politics as corrupt and backward (Bratton and Van de Walle 1994; Darnton 1994).

Neopatrimonialism, and the particular version of it that has been applied to account for the sources of conflict in the DRC, premises the nature of politics under a paradigm of unproductiveness. The problem is not the fact that there is violence and extraction, nor that authorities exercise them, but that they do so in a self-gain-seeking way through informal personal networks of patronage.



Violence no longer produces public order or political contestation that is later channelled as institutional development.

As Crawford Young notes of the DRC, conflict is part of a trend in which 'armed groups exhausted anti-colonial and socialist ideologies, turning into gangs and jumping on the bandwagon of the resource revenues, fostered also by an increasing state weakness' (2002: 28). Rulers, no longer able to count on the support they received during the Cold War, have been forced to engage in criminal strategies of illegal trafficking and support of armed groups and to depend on non-state economic alliances (Reno 1998b). 'These rulers', Reno argues, 'reject the pursuit of a broader project of creating a state that serves a collective good or even of creating institutions that are capable of developing independent perspectives and acting on behalf of interests distinct from their rulers' personal exercise of power' (1998b: 1). The underlying assumption is that this violence has not served a social revolution or a developmental project as in Europe, giving rise to the view of the DRC as a 'cancer' (Dunn 2003: Ch. 5).

The argument about *unproductive* violence is closely related to the argument about *unproductive* rent extraction. Bayart argues that the 'politics of the belly', that is, 'the social struggles that make up the quest for hegemony and the production of the State bear the hallmarks of the rush for spoils in which all actors – rich and poor – participate in the role of networks' (2009: 235). Taking account of the historical trajectory of African politics, Bayart's argument concentrates on the failure of elites to transform people into labour and capital into investment. Rent extraction is presented *only* as a tool for gathering elite support and foster kin-links. In other words, there is economic production but the surplus is 'dilapidated' (Mbembe 1991c: 14). Challenging these theses, Mbembe notes that they:

seem to argue that it is only in Africa that the economy is inserted in social relations. And that ... [the economy] is not (as we imagine it must be) a domain separated, autonomous, of the social organisation. The relations of reciprocity, redistribution and circulation are, therefore, treated as 'extra-economic'. (1991c: 15)

Not only are there 'many economic regimes' but also '[t]he processes of accumulation are, consequently, multi-formed' (Mbembe 1991c: 16). Rent and productivity, far from being incompatible, are a source of authority (Mbembe 1991c: 17). In the DRC as in other places, military and economic actors provide a presence of authority.

Additionally, and taking Weber's stricter meaning of neopatrimonialism, if we look closely it is possible to see that 'patronage' is not a one-way approach, but is part of a system of mutual accountability. As Sophia Mappa points out, amongst most ethnic communities across Eastern DRC, authority is seen as an obligation that the chief cannot avoid. Authority is then premised on its value to serve and not for its capacity to command (Mappa 1998: 57–9). The role of

reciprocity is not simply a matter of who gets the most riches from whom; it is a question of how the basis for distribution is established. Reciprocity could be seen as a contested and changing system by which a community establishes its norms of political and economic distribution. This may not be the result of legislation, but it is the result of negotiations in which a large part of the community, at the grassroots level, participates. This is not to argue that there are no corrupt politicians in the DRC who are actively promoting violence. The point here is to warn against making generalising descriptions of 'Congo politics' as neopatrimonial, and against premising the solution to this 'disease' on the development of forms of accountability and legitimacy that look like an idealised version of Western states, politics and democracy. Neopatrimonialism remains as a powerful simplifying account of both policy and literature, making the problems of the DRC something localised (De Grassi 2008: 21).

Mbembe's insights allow us to go beyond these simplifications and look further into the nature of political authority and the nature of domination. At the very least, we should understand that the DRC's political infrastructure is still conditioned by those broader historical and international political-economic processes. The DRC is also still based on a dual customary and administrative system, conditioning present sources of war, land conflicts and the deployment of authority. Customary chiefs today play a role as agents of state power in statebuilding strategies, or as necessary accomplices, either voluntarily or by force, for the extractive activities of multinational corporations (MNCs), armed groups and foreign governments. They also play a role in conveying resistance.

### **Complexities and the challenge to resistance**

However, these complex relations and blurred divides lead Mbembe to cast doubt on resistance and argue that political relations are *convivial*. For Mbembe this means that the political landscape is more defined by an agency of subjection, of accommodation and 'entanglement' than by conflict between a category of resisters and dominants. Mbembe provides us here with a fundamental challenge that should be addressed. But let us briefly take a look at the present context of the DRC.

Since 1996, the DRC conflict has been characterised more by the targeting of the civilian population than by a conflict between armed groups. The civilian population have been systematically subjected to different forms of domination, through war, forceful displacement, killings, torture, sexual violence, forced labour and forced marriages (Human Rights Watch 2010; Pillay 2010: 289). This has at times been carried out by foreign and national armies, as well as by popular militias who were operating as part of a broader government strategy. Throughout the different wars, the DRC has gone through the toppling of a long-term dictator, two moments of genocide and several international

interventions (by the African Union (AU), EU and UN). Although the most common strategy followed by the population against the war has been flight, civilians have actively participated in it in different roles, by either contesting or facilitating these forms of violence.

When Mbembe calls the African post-colonial political space an 'economy of death' and a 'regime of impunity', it partly resonates with the cacophony of events in the present DRC. What Mbembe wants to capture is, on the one hand, a condition, which is that of the nature of the political space in Africa as one that has become cohabited by those who kill and get killed; and, on the other hand, a sort of 'agency' of subjugation (Mbembe 2001: 11–8; 200–5). Killing and being killed are no longer the domain of any particular class or state agent or the domain of power. They are entangled, meaning actual, even intimate hybridisation between domination and subjugation.

The result, however, is an exaggerated theory of domination, or, as Judith Butler (1992) puts it, a sort of 'extravagant power'. While Mbembe rejects almost all social-theoretical concepts for doing violence to the nature of African politics, society and culture, his notion of domination as an inescapable desired 'masculine Thanatos' projects a vision of Africa that reproduces the assumptions he wants to challenge (Weate 2003: 39). Although this is a departure from earlier thinking, where he captured the fluidity of relationships, the modes of exercising domination and their subversion, here he is not only ignoring the capacity for insubordination within structures of domination but also the important relations of solidarity and mutual support that come to add to the relations of death and abuse.<sup>6</sup>

Resistance in colonial and post-colonial times has tended to subvert the terms of such cohabitation. For example, Mamdani points out that whereas the colonial state apparatus relied on ethnic and religious authorities, 'one finds it difficult to recall a single major peasant uprising over the colonial period that has not been either ethnic or religious in inspiration' (1996: 24). Nzongola-Ntalaja also argues that resistance in colonial times emerged in the 'new structures that colonialism had itself created: colonial army, workers, camps and compulsory agricultural labour' (2002: 13). These analyses indicate the need to account for practices of resistance in the daily experience of relations of domination. Mbembe shows that relations of domination and resistance are not necessarily a story of good and bad, not even of the advance of an ethical agenda. This warning against simplifying an analysis of resistance leads to embracing the ambiguous realms in which relations of domination take place.

### **Peacebuilding and state-making in Africa in the twenty-first century**

African states have generally been seen as the epitome of state failure. The DRC, along with Sierra Leone and Somalia, has featured prominently under this

paradigm (Rotberg 2003). In the DRC the claims to legitimacy to carry out peacebuilding strategies have been built on the claim that peacebuilders have the capacity and knowledge to build the state apparatus and to enable policies that serve the goals of peace, development and democracy. These practices have also tended to reproduce formulae of indirect and shared government rather than crystallising in the centralised bureaucratic authority that peacebuilding policies have as a model. Authority has been shared, whether as a way of extending state authority, as a way of fostering alliances or as a compromise in the light of external and internal pressures. The exercise of coercion and extraction has been undertaken by a myriad of state and non-state actors. Coercive practices have also ensued from the fact that, as Chapter 3 will show, war has been directed against the civilian population. This is not just a feature of contemporary African states; as Krasner argues, ‘rulers have frequently departed from the principle that external actors should be excluded from authority’ (1999: 8). This has been done through invitation, intervention or negotiation. Having outlined above a schema of what the practices of statebuilding are, this section contextualises how plurality and decentralisation in the exercise of authority, coercion and extraction take place in the DRC and links these to the ways in which the discourse of statebuilding provides a legitimating mechanism for those practices and their actors.

*Sharing authority, sharing coercive and extractive capacity*

The forms of private indirect government that Mbembe speaks of have been a prominent way of asserting authority. This is particularly the case of the Kivus, where, aside from being a region that has traditionally been ruled through the power of customary chiefs, conflict is ongoing, adding a variety of actors that claim authority, coercive and extractive power. The DRC Government has shared means of coercion and tax extraction with armed groups, neighbouring countries and non-state actors. The UN and donors like the US and the UK have encouraged this option in order to have state representation in certain areas.

Both government and UN officials acknowledge that the presence of peacekeepers in those places where the Government is not present acts as a form of state authority.<sup>7</sup> It is not uncommon to see multinational corporations, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), UN mission representatives, the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and poorly equipped government officials undertaking what could be seen as state functions. They patrol, provide civil order, tax the population, build infrastructure and provide arbitration, amongst other things. As Raeymaekers, Menkhaus and Vlassenroot state, ‘the post-election security predicament in the DR Congo [...] combines elements of non-state governance such as military control over

resources and cross-border regulation' (2008: 16). Hence, as shown in later chapters, they become targets of resistance.

For instance, peace agreements, encouraged by donors, have granted the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) – a Rwandan-backed armed group operating from about 2006 to 2010 – decision-making power in the Tripartite agreement to return refugees to the region.<sup>8</sup> Although the DRC is the signatory to these agreements with the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the governments of Tanzania and of Rwanda, it was the CNDP that represented the DRC Government. In a US embassy cable, Ambassador Garvelink reported that

A UNHCR official candidly said that the Congolese delegation had signed the Tripartite 'for the gallery' and that much of the refugee return process was 'out of the government's control' – overseen by the CNDP parallel administration, which the official suggested would become even more entrenched following the recent GDRC [Government of the DRC] cabinet reshuffle which excluded the CNDP. (2010, para. 7)

This statement represents the widespread acknowledgement of Rwanda's presence in Eastern DRC. It also shows that there are different statebuilding projects taking place simultaneously, each having a difficult relationship with the promotion of peace and stability in the region (Shepherd 2010). However, more than a political compromise, in so far as this geopolitical social engineering is activated under the premise that the alternative is war, it is coercive. And in so far as it has an impact on land access and local political representation, it also has an extractive effect.

Shared authority is seen in cases where public authority has been left to multinational corporations. This was the case of Anvil Mining operations in the village of Kilwa, Katanga.<sup>9</sup> Most villagers worked for the company, which operated as a de facto government. When in 2004 villagers revolted against the mining company, they created a poorly armed group to start looting the mine. Their reason was that the mine was not providing the village with jobs. The company had expelled most local workers except for the security guards. Anvil Mining in this case retaliated by flying the army into the village and massacring up to 100 people. Although this case caused outrage, not only due to the number of dead, but also due to how the MNC–army link operated as a despotic government, the strategy of allowing companies to operate as de facto governments is still in place.

In Twangiza, South Kivu, for example, the MNC Banro is the de facto government (Banro Representative 2010). The old town was on the site of a gold deposit that Banro wanted to mine. Negotiations with the customary chief and the mediation of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) whom Banro's

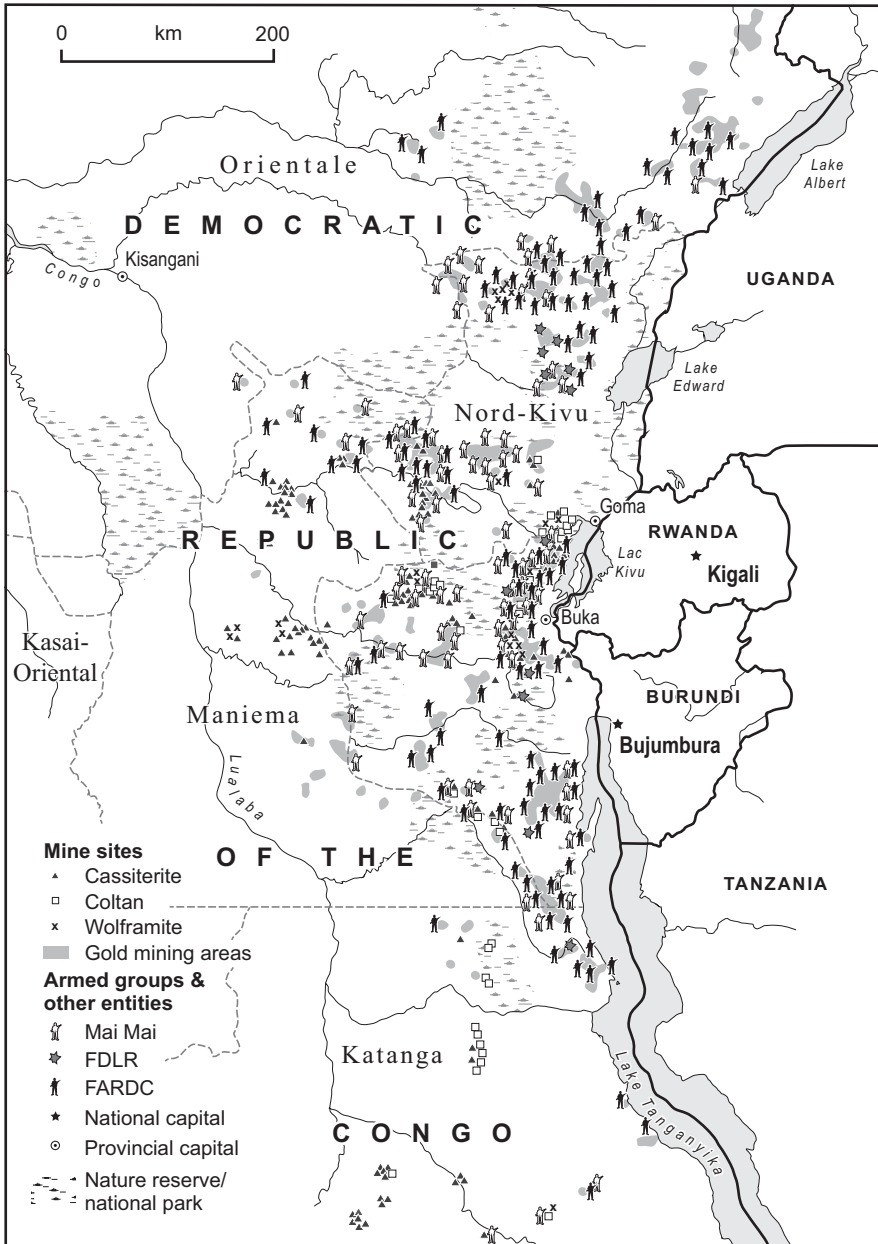
representative was not allowed to name resulted in the moving of residents to a newly built town a few kilometres away from the old one. This is nothing new in the DRC, whose 'trinity' of colonial authority was exercised by the state, the corporation and the Church (Turner 2007: 28). However, in the context of war, mining companies take on special security roles (Hönke 2012). These roles include putting in place an indirect form of government by providing services to the population such as patrolling operations, recruitment of private security and cooperating with government intelligence agencies to assure civil peace.<sup>10</sup> This is actually promoted by international agencies, especially international financial institutions and MONUC/MONUSCO, which seek to reconstruct state sovereignty that is able 'to legitimize deals with foreign firms and creditors' (Dunn 2001: 53). This strategy also 'leaves in place an interlocutor who acknowledges debts and provides a point of contact between foreign state officials and strongmen' (William Reno cited in Dunn 2001: 53). Still, the result is the plural constitution of political authority.

Authority is inseparable from its coercive and extractive capacity. As detailed more extensively in Chapter 3, the clearest example is the power-sharing agreements that came out of the 2002 Sun City agreements. Those who gained seats in government were not only warring parties but also those who had spoiled most resources during the war (UN Panel of Experts 2001). There has also been a policy ever since these agreements of reintegrating armed groups into the army but deploying them in the same areas where they had been operating before. This has officialised their tax levying, mine exploitation and informal order maintenance in those localities. This has been the case of the FDLR in the area of Shabunda in 2002, or the CNDP in 2007.

The military operations that have taken place since 2009 as an invigorated strategy against armed groups have had ambiguous effects in relation to the restoration of state authority. On the one hand, military operations have had the effect of giving the FARDC increasing control over mining (Global Witness 2010b). On the other hand, this is a sign of Rwandan interventionism. As Map 1.1 shows, FARDC has control of the greater number of mines. However, as many of the FARDC deployments in control of the mines are in fact ex-CNDP troops, these continued to serve the CNDP structure until recently and have continued to grant Rwanda access to mineral exploitation (UN Group of Experts 2012a, 2012b, para. 141).

These arrangements are certainly a feature of the political compromises necessary to end war, but they also go hand in hand with the strategy of deploying the military and police as a representation of state authority which has also largely been encouraged by the UN and DRC's main donors. The FARDC has been identified as the biggest human rights abuser, yet the consequences of having them deployed among the population are left for the population to deal with. Populations are claimed to give consent to this form of authoritarianism, to





Map 1.1 Democratic Republic of Congo: presence at mine sites of armed groups and other entities

Source: Humanitarian Information Unit, US Government (2016)<sup>11</sup>

which the general response is either to negotiate or to resist. This is not a parallel-state order but the one on which statebuilding in the DRC rests. Certainly, when the state is not particularly present, state agents and those on which consent is claimed can and do subvert roles. As is observed in Chapter 7, this means that subordinate classes might use the opportunity to enter into exchanges to mutually benefit from this relation, just as much as those representing authorities might use the opportunity to garner their support.

*High modernism as legitimacy*

The authority of statebuilding stems from a discourse that defines it as the process necessary to foster peace, promote democracy and enable economic development after conflict. Embedded in this discourse is a claim that asserts the knowledge and capacity for undertaking the task of statebuilding in addition to decision-making. This discourse portrays the state as an institution of protection and social change. On the one hand, war, oppression and poverty are the effect of state failure; on the other hand, the state is the embodiment of liberty, peace and development. These two premises have provided a sort of auto-generated legitimacy to statebuilders, making the state and their interventions public goods in themselves. Scott's vision of statebuilding as 'high modernism' fits here in that it is primarily a 'faith' and a 'belief'. In Scott's words, high modernism is:

the belief in the capacity of technicians and engineers to design and implement comprehensive new forms of living and production that would be superior – that is, more 'progressive', productive, healthy, and humane to anything thus far devised. (1999: 284)

Nevertheless statebuilding provides neither protection nor social change in the form that is stated. Chapter 4 will show how this failure gives way to a blame exchange between the DRC Government and the MONUC/MONUSCO. What is important to remark on here is that the discourse plays two important functions in terms of legitimacy: (1) it turns statebuilding into authority without the need for popular consent; and (2) it maintains legitimacy in the face of failure (Heathershaw 2008). To undertake statebuilding for the maintenance of international peace and security and for the protection of the population does not need negotiation or consent from the population. Since about 2010 in the Kivus an increased militarisation of the region, a subsequent increase in violence towards the civilian population and the fostering of networks of patronage against economic development mean that the effects of military/corporate rule are externalised onto the population while leaving few mechanisms of accountability standing.

Statebuilders, whether national or international, have no illusions that a *Keynesian*-type state will be built in the DRC in the near future, nor that their



own practices are totally representative of what is stated in policy documents. A MONUC officer put it succinctly:

Our main focus is to build the minimum necessary for institutionalisation – the state will take 50 or 100 years to function. Civil society needs to play an advocacy role and also be a partner for reconstruction. We also need to rebuild the morale. (MONUC Political Affairs Officer (no. 7) 2009)

This is representative of a discourse that is deployed as an authority claim but that externalises any failures or blames onto the actual target. In this sense, the DRC is an instance of a pattern rather than an exception. Defining the problem as the lack of the state allows the solution to be defined in both technical and ethical ways. The technocraticism infused in statebuilding is also based on an ethic of ‘doing something’. As Chandler argues, ‘[t]his simplistic focus sets up an interventionist discourse where western governments are seen to have the solution to problems of non-western states and where any western government action, regardless of its outcome, can generally be portrayed as better than acquiescence and passivity’ (2003: 305). The underlying construction of local inadequacy simultaneously reifies an image of international responsibility, knowledge and capacity.

These practices are part of a logic of state authority assertion as much as a practice of domination. These aspects identify post-conflict statebuilding as a combination of the micro-politics of the DRC, the politics of the region and the politics of post-conflict statebuilding. This interaction reflects factors of historical continuity and change. How they are present through governing arrangements, proxy wars and UN-supported military operations leads us to contextualise *how* these practices take place. One of the distinctive features is that centralisation of authority, of coercion and extraction is not as central as the management of state authority throughout the territory is. However, this opens new sources of violence and does not always guarantee the extension of state authority. In this regard, the discourse of protection and social change provides a stronger mechanism for legitimacy, even in the face of failure, than popular consent does.

### **Ambiguity and pluralism in peacebuilding and resistance**

This chapter has consolidated three key ideas that run through the book. Firstly, that peacebuilding is a process of asserting, consolidating and exercising state rule through coercive and extractive practices under a claim to legitimacy. This takes the form of improvised discharge and peacebuilding becomes mediated by multiple actors that create plural authority. Its discourse of social change and protection provides a way to claim legitimate authority. Secondly, the chapter has highlighted that resistance is rooted in the coercive and

extractive practices embedded in the exercise of state rule and the assertion of state authority. The outcome of the peacebuilding process is not increasing rights and fostering of development but the externalisation of violence and of political agendas onto the population. Finally, and most importantly, the relationship between statebuilding and resistance speaks of a historically contingent process rather than a dynamic of liberal/international statebuilding and local resistance.

A critical reading of historical-sociological accounts of state formation, especially from an Africanist perspective, has provided the theoretical standpoint from which to observe how the nature of the political context determines practices of resistance. To this extent, practices of violence and extraction refer to patterns in state-making. However, it has been highlighted that not only concentration of coercive means and accumulation account for statebuilding. Following Mbembe, it has been shown that management, distribution and sharing can provide further coercive and extractive power and a way to exercise state authority. The claim to legitimacy and symbolic capital allows for these practices to be carried out under the premise of necessity and civilian protection.

The context of power relations in which multiple statebuilding projects coalesce impinges on resistance. Plural forms of domination give rise to a series of resistance strategies that make resistance heterogeneous. The internationally led programmes under which government and NGOs operate do not reproduce a different structure of authority or a different type of resistance. Zürcher (2011) sees this as 'the local' being imposed on 'the international'. But, as we have seen, it is more that these two spheres (international and local) do not provide adequate analytical categories for studying resistance or statebuilding. There is no 'international' statebuilding as an outcome. The insight that the DRC provides in this perspective is that peacebuilding is not so much a 'hybrid' of international and local agency as it is a process of state reconstruction that reflects the co-constituted nature of any given political institution and order in world politics.

This resonates with an everyday framework of resistance. The use of everyday theory in peace and conflict studies has been done to theorise the ways in which local practices have subverted internationally led policies. The trade-off has been the loss of significant historical and sociological depth, not only in regard to the state-making process but also in regard to the political spaces where these processes have taken place. As such, if the everyday framework is to be fully applied, it would have to respond to the nature of statebuilding not as an international policy but as a process entangled in the historicity of Africa, muddled by ambiguities, improvisations, continuities and changes. The everyday framework would have to live up to the challenge of a 'chaotically pluralistic' political space and even become an insight into it.

NOTES

- 1 This book understands intervention in the broad sense that it has within peace and conflict studies. It includes forms of interference in the domestic affairs of another state, military acts of aggression and collective security mechanisms activated by the UN Security Council. It also includes a broad spectrum of conflict and post-conflict formulas, including humanitarian intervention, peacekeeping, peace-building strategies and capacity-building, amongst others (Brahimi 2000; Chandler, Chesterman, and Laakso 2007; UN General Assembly 1945: 1.1 and 2.7).
- 2 The centrality of war in this account leads Centeno to speak of it as the 'bellicist' account (2003: 11–26).
- 3 Tilly differentiates states according to their organisational structure, including: city-states, tribute-taking empires and nation-states (1990: 21–5).
- 4 The last census dates from 1984. For electoral purposes, in 2011 a registry of the adult population was undertaken (Carter Center 2012; Institut National de la Statistique 2012; UN Statistics Division 2010).
- 5 Please also note that on p. 103 of the cited English version the translation ends the quote with the word 'discipline'. However, the French version is slightly different: 'Voilà pourquoi la postcolonie pose, de façon fort aiguë, le problème de l'assujettissement, et de son corollaire, l'indiscipline ou, pour ainsi dire, de l'émancipation du sujet.' It is an important nuance. It is more likely that, after having identified the characteristics, features and structures of domination in the postcolony, Mbembe ends the paragraph reflecting on how subjection, indiscipline and emancipation play out in that political space (Mbembe 2000b: 140).
- 6 For Mbembe's earlier thinking see Mbembe (1988, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c). In his latest work, Mbembe refines the argument, asserting that change and emancipation are possible through a reinvention of the subject (Mbembe 2010).
- 7 This was a common view amongst 17 UN officers interviewed. A UN officer stated in an interview something quite obvious in Eastern Congo: 'in some places we are the only visible authority' (MONUC Civil Affairs Officer (no. 14), 2009). This was also shared by some government officials (e.g. North Kivu Provincial Assembly Representative 2010).
- 8 Discussed more extensively in Chapter 3.
- 9 The information in this paragraph comes from Deneault (2008: 67–71). See also: ABC Radio (2005).
- 10 Speaking in general of the link between businesses and the Government, a representative of a security company said that it supported and sometimes took over policing tasks (Security Contractor 2010).
- 11 Please note that this map does not show all mining sites or all armed groups' positions. For details on the compilation of the map and a statement of caveats please refer to the original source (Humanitarian Information Unit 2016).

## *Patterns and practices of everyday resistance: a view from below*

### What is everyday resistance?

The informalities, ambiguities and contradictions that peacebuilding runs into reflect the political nature of the process. These become visible when examined from the everyday practices of the actors involved. In IR the everyday has become synonymous with the makings of actual subjects in their most quotidian roles (Autesserre 2014; Hobson and Seabrooke 2007; Mitchell 2011b; Neumann 2002). This is not so much a new field of study, as it represents a common call throughout the social sciences, and especially from critical theorists, to connect the micro-dynamics of daily life with macro structures and processes, even as a way of embodying them (Bleiker 2000; Davies and Niemann 2009; Enloe 1989; Marchand 2000; Tickner 2005; Wilcox 2015). In peace and conflict studies, ‘practices’ and ‘everydayness’ have always been the epistemological choice. The emergence of peace and conflict was already a kind of ‘everyday turn’ against the focus of strategic studies of the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1980s, authors such as Andrew Mack, David Dunn, Richard Falk and Johan Galtung started shifting the focus of strategic studies towards peace studies. They also advanced the idea of security as relating not to the capacity of the sovereign state to accumulate power and use military means, but to human security, justice and everyday life (Dunn 1985; Falk 1983; Galtung 1969; Mack 1985).

As was pointed out in the Introduction, the everyday in the liberal peace debates has been a methodological pathway to theorise peacebuilding’s content and format. It has also served to contextualise the research, taking into account the more complex texture and depth of the processes societies go through. The focus on everyday resistance has identified a variety of practices ranging from violent responses, protests and boycotts to acts of non-compliance and unintended actions with subversive outcomes. How these different acts relate to each other and to a concept of resistance has remained limited to emphasising how these practices hybridise peacebuilding. Resistance has thus been theorised in relation to an outcome more than in relation to its practices and subjects. The tendency of this critical literature to portray resistance as a response to the

international and liberal nature of peacebuilding has missed important insights from examining resistance as a response to the coercive and extractive practices of state-making.

Everyday resistance is generally associated with the work of James Scott and Michel de Certeau, but they are by no means the only theorists. As Bleiker points out, one can trace the steps back to the satirical writings of Rabelais (Bleiker 2000: 203). Additionally, the *intellectual genealogies* of the concept have to be traced back to the sources these authors draw on (Sivaramakrishnan 2005). In the case of Scott, these are E.P. Thompson, Clifford Geertz and Eric Wolf, and in particular the concepts of class, hegemony, moral economy, culture and lived experience in these authors. With these, Scott understands resistance as the conflict that emerges from the lived experience of subordination when it is fought for or negotiated with elites to achieve better terms for subordinates and maintain dignity and autonomy. Certeau draws on Bourdieu, Foucault and Freud, but only to turn them upside down. Both Scott and Certeau see themselves as doing an anatomy of the technologies of resistance in the same way that Foucault does of the technologies of power (Certeau 1984: 96; Scott 1990: xv and 20). Foucault, after all, speaks of resistance as a means to conceptualise power. For Foucault, to look at resistance serves 'as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, find out their point of application and the methods used' (2002: 329). And thus, as Banu Bargu states, 'we lack a convincing Foucauldian theory of resistance' (2014: 55).

As has already been stated, an all-encompassing theory of resistance is impossible without losing nuance and insight. What is needed is an account that is able to offer a clear delimitation of what resistance is, who the subjects of resistance are, what their object is and what means they use. It needs to provide understanding about the intentions, motivations, acts and actors that resist in a relation of domination. The everyday framework of resistance does that by establishing the pattern of acts of individuals and collectives in a position of subordination against the everyday experience of domination as defining elements. It is not possible to look at resistance outside power relations. This does not mean that resistance cannot break such relationships; it means that to study resistance implies an analysis of power relations. Moreover, it is not limited to studying this or that act but observes patterns of acts (practices) that take place regularly and are repeated over time. The relationship takes place within actors that are unequal both materially and symbolically, thus, as already examined in the introduction, everyday resistance is located in the actions of subordinate actors. This does not deny that elites are also involved in power relations, but just limits what the framework can account for. This is the result, especially in the Scottian version, of placing a greater emphasis on the relationship between actors and their aims than on the actual acts. However, different practices do not account for what resistance is, nor are they decisive in distinguishing

resistance, rebellion and revolution.<sup>1</sup> Seen as isolated 'acts', slander, denigration, mockery and violence can be dominating strategies too. For these acts to be seen as resistance, they need to be explored as patterns of behaviour in situations of subordination, where their intention is the stopping or the mitigation of material or symbolic claims, whether those be labour, taxes, deference or obedience. In this sense, the intention does not go much further beyond the act itself (evade taxes, mock authority, work less), but the motivation entails a particular understanding of one's own position of subordination. These elements will become clear in the course of this and subsequent chapters.

Yet the everyday framework also has limitations. Certeau's notion of resistance is ambiguous and needs a more concrete explanation of how some elements are to be interpreted (e.g. differentials of privilege among resisters and the relationship between intended and unintended acts). He offers an account of subversive acts, but this subversiveness has to be grasped by the outcomes, once the act has taken place. This is a limitation, considering that the outcomes of resistance are often ambiguous, contrary to what they were trying to achieve, or there are simply no outcomes. Scott's framework provides a definition of resistance that examines common and continuous practices of domination and resistance from a more general angle of class and state–society relations. This book draws more significantly on James Scott than the liberal peace literature has done so far, although making his framework more explicit in connecting patterns, intentions, motivations, acts and actors. Scott's focus on intent is problematic, although Certeau does not entirely resolve the issue. In both cases, a *translation* is required between what is observed and how it is described. Whereas non-intentional acts are difficult to analyse, intent per se is difficult to grasp. Other critiques of the everyday framework that need to be taken into account are the difficulty of distinguishing resistance from egotistic acts and the oversimplification of relations of domination. If resistance can be any act, and power relations are complex and intersected, how is it possible to distinguish an act of resistance from any other act? When is it really motivated by the desire to avoid, tame or challenge domination?

The everyday framework of resistance does not offer a measuring tape to ascertain unambiguously which acts constitute resistance and which ones do not. It offers a framework to understand patterns of actions in a particular relationship. In the next chapter, it will be shown that the case of the Great Lakes region, and the DRC in particular, provides a possibility for examining both generalities and particularities, making it suitable to exploring the framework of everyday resistance in a peacebuilding context. The DRC illustrates how the peacebuilding practice of consolidating and extending state authority reflects practices of state accumulation and violence. Pointing out how these practices are resisted should not be seen as stemming from a conception of the world as structured around a binary of domination and resistance. Any

resistance framework has to embrace the ambiguity of the context and the acts. The DRC also introduces the possibility of exploring the relationship between different categories of practices, including the 'weapons of the weak' (e.g. mockery, slander/denigration and reworked statebuilding vocabulary), guerrilla warfare and survival tactics that largely subvert elite appropriation.

This chapter first explores Scott's framework as the more explicit and concrete account of everyday resistance. It is followed by a discussion of the critiques leveraged against the everyday framework, discussing both Scott's and Certeau's work, and the challenges that a peacebuilding context poses to it. This is done in four subsections that examine, respectively: what is resistance, its subjects, objects and means. Here the notion of claim-regarding acts and self-regarding acts will be explained more extensively. As a guide to the subsequent empirical chapters and in response to a debate that places the complexity of resistance in terms of its existence or not, violence or not, its oppositional nature or not, the last section provides a reworked account of resistance, discussing how some of its elements can be gradated to better grasp its complexities.

### **The art of theorising resistance**

As already mentioned, the turn to resistance in the liberal peace debates has primarily drawn on Michel de Certeau, post-colonial theory and Foucault. This section focuses on James Scott in order to examine closely why his work offers a more concrete framework. James Scott's theory of resistance has developed over 30 years and four major publications: *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*, *Weapons of the Weak*, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* and *The Art of Not Being Governed*.<sup>2</sup> The main line of argument in these works is that resistance is rooted in the daily individual and collective covert acts of opposition and self-help against domination; it does not need recourse to political or labour organisations but, rather, to actions like foot-dragging, mockery and fake compliance. Several other propositions follow from these: that subordinates have their own political agendas which may differ or not from elites' agendas; that, on those bases, they make political choices about their lives and about the daily experience of different forms of power; that relations of domination have material and ideological bases; and that consent is limited. Scott's work is mainly driven by a response to a body of Gramscian literature that saw domination as resting on consent, and to those who defined resistance as an area of formally organised and revolutionary activity (Scott 1985: Ch. 6 and 8; 1990: Ch. 4). According to Scott, this literature assumed that subordinate classes acquiesced, that they were relatively disadvantaged in regard to the transmission and absorption of hegemonic ideas and that they were not directly coerced (1990: 71). That Scott misunderstood or misused Gramsci has been an ongoing critique (Greenhouse 2005; Sivaramakrishnan 2005; Smith 1999). In a special issue of *American Anthropologist*



reviewing Scott's work, Scott provides 'a belated apology to the ghost of Gramsci himself' (2005: 398), acknowledging that all along he would have better spoken of 'domination' and not of 'hegemony'. Still, Scott's critique that resistance was elitist and partial is accurate. He argues that to see resistance only as a collective enterprise with a revolutionary end is to consign millions of actions to the unwritten records of history (1985: 30–6). Rather, Scott argues that modest, covert actions, concerned with immediate gains and self-help, constitute a permanent layer of resistance in which struggle against domination takes place and in which class consciousness and even revolutions may take root. Scott's conclusion in *Weapons of the Weak* summarises these arguments and is worth quoting at length:

Resistance in Sedaka<sup>3</sup> begins as, I suspect, all historical resistance by subordinate classes begins: close to the ground, rooted firmly in the homely but meaningful realities of daily experience. The *enemies* are not impersonal historical forces but real people. That is, they are seen as actors responsible for their own actions and not as bearers of abstractions. The *values* resisters are defending are equally near and familiar. Their point of departure is the practices and norms that have proven effective in the past and appear to offer some promise of reducing or reversing the losses they suffer. The *goals* of resistance are as modest as its values. The poor strive to gain work, land, and income; they are not aiming at large historical abstractions such as socialism, let alone Marxist-Leninism. The *means* typically employed to achieve these ends – barring the rare crisis that might precipitate larger dreams – are both prudent and realistic [...] When flight is available – to the frontier, to the cities – it is seized. When outright confrontation with landlords or the state seems futile, it is avoided. In the enormous zone between these two polar strategies lie all the forms of daily resistance, both symbolic and material, that we have examined. (1985: 348–9, emphases in the original)

Scott does not mean that there is no acquiescence amongst the peasantry, or that peasants are all innate revolutionaries, but that there is no evidence to suggest that even when the dominant ideology is to a certain extent internalised, this limits the possibilities for social conflict (1990: 77). Scott identifies working relations, landownership and moral behaviour as the realm in which to observe the daily experience of domination and resistance. This highlights the material basis of resistance while noting that resistance as well as power operate on world-views, symbols and idealisations. Work, land and even social justice agendas are advanced through an idealisation of the past or a future of salvation. These tend to simultaneously project an idea of a good leader or king, the arrival of god or a liberator.<sup>4</sup> All of these are ways of de-legitimising present arrangements or changes implemented and articulating political alternatives. Although Scott's work on resistance focuses primarily on the peasantry in South East Asia, it has expanded to generalise to other situations of subordination, going from the relatively narrow class relations to state–society relations.<sup>5</sup>



In constructing these arguments, Scott provided a categorisation of two types of resistance: the formally organised and the everyday forms of resistance. At its core, this typology represents Scott's response to the literature on hegemony and false consciousness. In establishing such a distinction, he simultaneously outlined the nature of everyday resistance as prosaic, covert, unstructured, individual or collective, informal and focused on modest demands and immediate gains (Table 2.1).

Although Scott later proved that the peasantry have greater ideological commitments and that they make use of all kinds of available figures (whether gods or kings) to think of emancipation and long-term change, his point was that everyday resistance differed from formally organised resistance in that self-centred and immediate gains did not dislodge the political element in these acts. As he argued: '[t]o insist on such distinctions as a means of comparing forms of resistance and their consequences is one thing, but to use them as the basic criteria to determine what constitutes resistance is to miss the well-springs of peasant politics' (1985: 294). Scott was opening the ground for exploring politics and relations of domination not in the open field of structural and formal politics, but in the everyday relations of the workplace, village life and the home.

Nevertheless, in this transition away from a narrow account of resistance, Scott's version has been seen as stretched (Abbink, Bruijn, and Walraven 2008: 18; Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 534; Vail and Landeg 1986). Sherry Ortner, for instance, wonders: 'When a poor man steals from a rich man, is this resistance or simply a survival strategy?' (1995: 175). Beatrice Hibou defines the 'infrapolitical approach' to the study of relations of domination as the one that sees 'resistance everywhere' (2011a: 18). Underlying these critiques are

*Table 2.1* Characteristics of everyday and formally organised resistance

<b>Everyday</b>	<b>Formally organised</b>
Continuous/prosaic	When possible
Covert	Overt public
Uncoordinated/fragmented	Organised/structured
Individual/collective	Collective
Immediate gains/sustainable	Long-term gains
Informal	Formal/structured

Source: Based on Scott (1985: 33)

questions about how to interpret different practices of resistance, the possibility to grasp intentionality and the complexity of power relations. The debates that the concept of everyday resistance continues to generate demonstrate that this framework is not straightforward. Still, one of the advantages of the Scottian approach is that it provides a clear definition and a framework within which to categorise practices.

### *Defining resistance*

For Scott, resistance is

any act(s) by members(s) of a subordinate class that is or are intended either to mitigate or deny claims (for example, rents, taxes, prestige) made on that class by superordinate classes (for example, landlords, large farmers, the state) or to advance its own claims (for example, work, land, charity, respect) vis-à-vis those superordinate classes. (1985: 290)

In this account, resistance is defined not so much by the particular 'act' used (which could be 'any') but more by its intention, that is, by the conscious use of that act to mitigate, deny or advance an agenda. The advantages of this account, which Scott already notes, are the identification of both material and symbolic underpinnings of class relations and of relations of domination, which are present in both claims of authority and resisters' agendas (Scott 1985: 290–1). Resistance can be both individual and collective, and does not need to be organised or politically minded. The emphasis on intent is to point out that resisters may not be successful in their attempts. However, Scott also acknowledges the 'enormous difficulties' in proving intent (1985: 290). Intentionally mitigating a claim does not mean the existence of a developed class-consciousness; nor does it mean that these acts entail a struggle against capitalism or for socialism in the abstract. As such, intention is gathered from the actual practice of, for example, avoiding tax or increases in land rent (Scott 1985: 296). For Scott, these acts are political and their significance goes beyond not having paid the tax or having avoided rent increases. These practices do not exist in a vacuum, they represent the ways in which everyday mechanisms of domination and resistance operate.

Although *Weapons of the Weak* was written as an account of class relations, Scott later extended this definition to a general theory of resistance, arguing that 'similar structures of domination, other things being equal, tend to provoke responses and forms of resistance that also bear a family resemblance to one another' (1990: 21). The context of gender, racial and state–subject relations would foster similar responses. For Scott, then, a superordinate position, and more generally, domination, entailed a material and symbolic extractive capacity (land, rent, labour and taxes, as well as prestige, honour, deference) as well as a productive capacity delimiting the realm of what is possible (to do, to aim or to

achieve) and not possible (delimit 'the realm of idle dreams [and] wishful thinking') (1985: 326). These are not 'given' categories, nor do they represent a permanent state of being, but are firstly rooted in the historical experience of the actors. For Scott, as for E.P. Thomson, class is not so much a structure as it is a relationship.<sup>6</sup> A fundamental element to understand resistance is to locate it in power relations. It is this element that requires not the disambiguation and homogenisation of actors but the understanding that their resistant actions do not fully define who they are, and that these actions can be contradictory to other sets of actions in similar or different relations. As discussed below, critics see in this account unambiguous categories in a binary of domination and resistance that do not grasp the complexity of everyday life. Nonetheless, Scott's framework is developed with close relationships in mind, allowing for a significant degree of ambiguity.

The political significance of these individual acts of self-help is not due to their capacity to change the structures of domination that they aspire to mitigate or deny, but to their widespread prevalence and their amenability to the largest working class in the world: the peasantry (Scott 2005: 396). These forms are prosaic, and thus '[t]o understand these commonplace forms of resistance is to understand much of what the peasantry has historically done to defend its interests against both conservative and progressive orders' (Scott 1985: xvi). So everyday forms of resistance have a historical and present value for their prevalence, but they also have a future value. Later Scott said that everyday forms of resistance are a pre-history of revolution (1990: 203). They are significant in themselves as the permanent layer of resistance that illustrates the relative success of domination and limited consent.

The problem is that, while opening the ground for an account of commonplace forms of resistance, it simultaneously becomes harder to account for what is not resistance, or as Ortner noted, distinguishing between resistance and simple egotistic acts. In this regard Scott argued:

To ignore the self-interested element in peasant resistance is to ignore the determinate context not only of peasant politics, but of most lower-class politics ... When a peasant hides part of his crop to avoid paying taxes, he is *both* filling his stomach and depriving the state of grain ... When such acts are rare and isolated, they are of little interest; but when they become a consistent pattern (even though uncoordinated, let alone organized) we are dealing with resistance. (Scott 1985: 295–6, emphasis added)

Scott argues that the aims to be achieved are not selfless but, by definition, self-centred. Avoiding a tax, stealing part of the crop, denigrating or slandering authority does not advance a collective agenda of 'the working class' or of 'liberation'; yet they are individual representations of class struggle. Scott's definition, nevertheless, by equating 'agenda advancing' with 'mitigation' and 'denial'

does not sufficiently recognise that pursuing an agenda is not just another aim but a permanent motivation. From Scott's definition, 'agenda advancing' is resistance because it does so at the expense of elite claims. Hence, agenda advancing necessarily mitigates and denies elite claims. This agenda has embedded the values and modest goals that Scott describes, which tend to do with land, work and pre-existing arrangements. Therefore, agenda advancing, which provides an account of motivations, needs to be understood alongside intentions. Ultimately, what is important is that beyond intentionality, these acts are not accidental, at the discretion of one opportunistic individual; they become the individual opportunistic representation of the patterns in which everyday resistance takes place.

### **Critical analysis of the everyday framework**

One of the limitations in the way the hybridity literature has used the everyday framework of resistance is that it has not sufficiently addressed the critiques that the framework has received. Not only are these critiques important to articulate resistance in the context of peacebuilding, they also need to be addressed to assess the suitability of the framework in each particular context. There have been four main critiques, directed primarily to Scott: (1) The category of resistance is too broad, unable to differentiate resistance from coping strategies or whingeing without particular political significance (Geschiere 2000; Haggis et al. 1986; Hibou 2011a: 18). (2) Intentions are ungraspable (Ortner 1995). (3) Scott pays insufficient attention to peasant agendas, providing univocal readings of certain acts as resistance (Bayart 1992: 14; Mbembe 1991b: 106; 2001: 110; Ortner 1995). (4) Scott conceives reality only through a binary of domination and resistance, over-simplifying the dynamics and relations of power (Ferguson 2005; Hibou 2011a: Ch. 1; Mbembe 2001: 103–30).

These critiques overlap with the challenges that emerge from applying this framework to a particular context. The context of the DRC poses three other challenges: how to conceive of violence and the use of different oppositional or non-oppositional practices; how to articulate resistance in a context of plural authorities, where authority is ambiguously represented and where peacebuilding is not a process of social transformation; and how to grasp resistance in a context characterised in much Africanist literature by ambiguity and conviviality. In response to these challenges, as has already been argued, this book proposes that any account of resistance needs to connect those who resist, their intentions and motivations with patterns of social and political interaction around extraction, violence and privilege. This raises many questions about the interpretation that each one of these elements is given within an account of resistance. Rather than examining the critiques one by one (a discussion that has been held over many years), this section analyses how the framework applies

and how these challenges can be addressed in the different elements of the definition of resistance, its subjects, objects and means.

*Binaries, ambiguities and pluralism: what counts as resistance?*

The focus on power relations and the fact that resistance can be any act could imply a reading of the social and political world as a binary of resistance and domination, where resistance can simply be anything that subordinate subjects do in front of authority figures. This critique has been raised particularly against Scott, as Certeau has focused more on transformations from multiple acts. Three issues summarise the critique. Firstly, in order to understand the nature of political power and the post-colonial state, it is necessary to understand the heterogeneity of social and political relationships and how power operates not just from above but also horizontally and from below (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). Secondly, the extent to which any strategy of resistance could position anyone out of the reach of power is questioned, arguing that power relations are ambivalent (Hibou 2011a: 19, 140–6; Mbembe 2001: 110). Thirdly, Scott's framework may not be applicable to a context where the state cannot be conceived in the 'high-modernist' terms of Scott's own account.

Representing these critiques, Béatrice Hibou argues that the exercise of domination is part of the common 'desire of normality' in which the pursuit of a 'constellation of interests' may involve the co-production of domination by dominants and dominated alike (2011a: 16). This echoes Mbembe's arguments about domination operating through people's self-subjectification, and the dynamics characterising the post-colony, as seen in the previous chapter. It is remarkable that from different perspectives all of these critiques translate heterogeneity, ambivalence and ambiguities into a framework of relative acquiescence. 'Conviviality' in the case of Mbembe, 'symbiosis' in the case of Bayart and 'accommodation' in Hibou accentuate the consensual rather than the conflictual elements of the political space (Bayart 2009: Ch. 6 and 8; Hibou 2011a; Mbembe 2001). Even so, if complexity means the denial of resistance, there might be a problem with the methods and frameworks employed. However, to deny the relevance of resistance or claim its ungraspability is a disservice to the heterogeneity that needs to be captured.

Analysing resistance as a political category entails an exercise of simplification, and hence a trivialisation of society. Scott captures the fluidity of social interaction to a certain extent. The context of *Weapons of the Weak* is a small village, Sedaka, which is in many ways a cohabited context. Village politics entails much tacit consent (something that is not far away from Hibou's 'accommodation') not only of 'poor' to 'rich' but of 'rich' to 'poor'. For instance, receiving and giving charity is, for Scott, an exercise of power and resistance. Charity benefits the poor, yet it reproduces their subordinate condition, glorifying the

generosity of the rich. While poor villagers dislike being patronised, if the rich do not give charity they are systematically the targets of a moral attack by the poor, who call them stingy and arrogant (Scott 1985: 197–204). Charity here represents a shared world of moral values which not only does not impede class conflict but also facilitates it through the stretching of its interpretation, subverting the nature of the obligation that such values entail and advancing subordinates' agenda on the basis of these values (Scott 1985: 204–8). Negotiating the conditions of subordination to one's advantage, including avoiding repression or upholding dignity is, for Scott, a signal of everyday resistance. Scott's idea of the 'third realm', or the 'pose', and Certeau's idea of 'trickery' will provide in Chapter 4 the basis for observing the peacebuilding discourse as a platform on which power and resistance operate. Ambiguities are therefore not a reason to deny the existence of resistance, but the space to explore between consent and opposition.

This is particularly useful to bear in mind in a context where the state-making process is not characterised as aiming towards turning citizens into producing and consuming taxpayers. Yet, the ways in which the population are ignored, expelled from their lands, contained and repressed if perceived to be rebellious, or used in order to provide social services, represent continuities and change in exercising domination. This is seen in the militarisation of rural communities; in the indirect discharge enacted by both the government and international actors through the different statebuilding programmes; and in the relative authority exercised by MNCs in some mining sites or in the areas where state revenue and expenditure are focused.<sup>7</sup> Thus, patterns of extraction and violence in building state authority are enacted by myriad of actors, who lay symbolic and material claims on subordinate classes.

In later works, Scott also advanced that both forms of governance by state authorities and forms of resistance could also be seen as a form of 'reticence' (2009: 32). As such, not just engagement but also disengagement, and negotiation as well as imposition, are fundamental to grasping the full picture of state-making and resistance in the DRC. In *Weapons of the Weak*, Scott argued that 'only those survival strategies that deny or mitigate claims from appropriating classes can be called resistance' (1985: 301). In *Seeing Like a State*, high modernism and its failure were also characterised by 'state-initiated social engineering', which was 'transformative', 'muscle-bound', 'coercive' and 'authoritarian' (1998: 4–5). *The Art of Not Being Governed*, although opening with a paragraph in which 'would-be conquering administrators were determined to subdue a recalcitrant landscape and its fugitive, resistant inhabitants', advances a framework not only of mutual reticence but also of mutual dependency (2009: 1). This later work captures better the current DRC context. For Scott, flight, oral history, nomad agriculture and remote settlement were all strategies to 'keep the state at arm's length' (2009: x). This connects with Certeau's 'ways of operating'

by which people trick the state, shaping the environment to their needs (1984: xix).

Self-provision of security and strategies of survival could be seen as bridges towards this end of state evasion. They allow subordinate classes to mitigate poverty, taxes and a militarised environment and also allow avoiding or bypassing the state. The experience of the state as a predator, as partly absent and as another armed group generates a reliance on personal solidarity networks and relations of reciprocity. The family, the clan, the ethnic group, the neighbourhood and INGOs allow for covering certain needs without turning to the state. Yet, survival and armed struggle are determined by an unequal, violent and extractive context as much as by reciprocity and solidarity. Exchanges, especially amongst unequal parties, can involve deceit, scamming, abuse and coercion. But this may in turn generate increasing social conflict. If relations are muddled by an exchange in conditions of 'conviviality', 'horizontality' and 'co-habited space', they may be open to interpretation, but do not rule out resistance (Ferguson 2005; Mbembe 2001). Everyday forms of resistance establish a framework that connects subjects, objects and means as they take place in the regular patterns of behaviour within power relations. That is, it is more a framework to theorise and think about resistance than it is a rigid definition, establishing categories of acts and actors to delimit unambiguously every single act. That said, as will be explained below, the everyday framework offers some limits to treat resistance as a helpful analytical category. Let us first go through the critiques to observe what other limitations and advantages this framework offers.

*Multiple agendas, multiple subjects? Who is the subject of resistance?*

In the liberal peace debates, everyday resistance has been applied to elites and non-elites, as was mentioned in the Introduction. Resistance has been used to observe the transformations and challenges that the liberal peace has experienced. In turn, these debates have not only afforded a hazy account of resistance. As already examined, this is partly the result of drawing primarily on a thin study of Michel de Certeau as well as of seeing resistance through the paradigm of locals against internationals. Taking material and symbolic privileges into account is a necessary step not only to getting out of this binary but also to having a more nuanced understanding of resistance.

Judith Butler criticised certain streams of feminism for having made 'women' the 'subject' of feminism. For her, 'the feminist subject turns out to be discursively constituted by the very political system that is supposed to facilitate its emancipation' (Butler 2006: 2–3). Feminism and the feminist movement were themselves involved in the reproduction of the dominated subject. This critique could apply to the argument that the subjects of everyday resistance are subordinate subjects (they are the subordinated element of class, gender, race, ethnic



and age relations). In this sense, opening up the framework to examine the transformations caused by resistance, regardless of the subjects that undertake it, could be a way to expand the notion of resistance rather than constrain it with the difficulties and contradictions that ascribing subjectivity entails.

Yet, in the case of everyday resistance the 'representation' of subordinates as its subject is not a claim for the emancipation of such subjects, but a critique of precisely the condition that the 'juridical systems of power' have created (cf. Foucault cited in Butler 2006: 2). Narrowing down the account of resistance to subordinate subjects means to be more precise about what their objectives are and the means they have available to challenge their condition. The framework understands that resistance originates in the subjects' reading of their position of subordination and exploitation. This does not imply seeing these subjects in a permanent state of being, nor as 'victims' or as such subjectivity being exclusive of others. Quite the contrary, it is a way to establish these subjects in their temporal and plural contexts. They have multiple subjectivities and they too create their own oppression. *Workers, peasants or women* shall not evoke a universal common identity among those. Contrary to the universal category of 'woman' that Butler criticises, to focus on subordinate subjects is to highlight the intersectional identities and experiences they have according to their class, race, ethnicity, gender, age and other sources of power.

From this point of view too, what becomes fictitious is to examine resistance from the discursive category of 'the local', although, as Butler rightly indicates, being a product of discourse does not foreclose the possibilities for agency (2006: 195). Identifying the ways in which interventions have created a default bulked-up identity of 'locals' can be a pathway to understand the power that such interventions exercise. However making the 'local' the subject of resistance is too broad and vague a signifier from which to establish a study of resistance, let alone derive a framework of resistance more broadly. Resistance needs to be contextualised. This goes for who the subjects of resistance are, as much as for the context they are embedded in. The everyday framework of resistance additionally requires an account of the forms of material and symbolic domination in a disaggregated manner. It requires an examination of the positionality of the subject and how that affects agency. Once again, it is not that subjects at the top of the hierarchy cannot be agents of resistance; it is an imposed limit of the framework to highlight that the positionality of the subject affects power relations and that resistance needs to be contextualised to make better sense of it. Resistance should be a way to observe acts and behaviours of real people, beyond abstract and aggregated categories.

This is important for International Relations as it has a tendency to macro accounts in which actors are generally abstract. As Bleiker states '[t]o get closer to the objective of theorising the practical dimensions of discursive and transversal forms of dissent it is necessary to remove one more layer of



abstraction [...] from mobile subjectivities to the practices through which they turn into vehicles of dissent' (2000: 200). However, while Bleiker states that we have to move beyond the levels of problem analysis, in focusing on 'forms of thought and action that not only transgress, but also challenge political order' he leaves the actors ambiguously defined (2000: 9). They can be individuals, groups, networks, and for him it is not bodies and people that embody such forms of dissent but their discourses: '[I]anguage embod[ies] the relationship between people and their environment' (Bleiker 2000: 218). Lack of attention to the positionality and role of different subjects within the building blocks of state power and international order produces a view of resistance that erases important elements in power relations.

*Connecting intentions and motivations: the object of resistance*

The relation between intentions and motivations needs to be established. Intent may be defined as the aim of denying or mitigating an authority claim or the effects of domination. Motivations are the reasons, justifications and agendas behind those aims. Both have been raised, determinant to establishing what is and what is not resistance. Abbink, Bruijn and Walraven argue that 'resistance must be defined not so much as a set of concrete acts but by the intent of those acts, with the object of defending preexisting sociopolitical situations' (2008: 22). They note how the historiography of African resistance changed from studying nationalist elites in the 1960s to studying unorganised individual resistance, including silences and dreams, in the 1970s.<sup>8</sup> The inclusion of unintended and unconscious acts had broadened the definition of resistance 'too much' (Abbink et al. 2008: 17). In the early debates in anthropology, in the 1980s, for instance, Brian Fegan (1986) already argued that intent was a necessary element of resistance.

Although Scott also defines resistance in terms of intent, he is less categorical. Scott draws attention to the fact that despite these acts failing in their intent more often than not, they are politically significant. These aims may or may not be expressed that way by the actors; the acts themselves are a way to gather intent (Scott 1985: 296). The intent of tax avoidance may be no more than not paying tax, but it denies the state its taxes. The intent of an insult might be denigration or delegitimation, but it denies authority deference and legitimacy. Additionally, cultural and historical elements may be more important than intention. For instance, Homi Bhabha argues that '[r]esistance is not necessarily an oppositional act of political intention' (1994: 110). Scott is close to Bhabha, in that intentionality should be seen not as reflecting an already formulated ideology against power, but as a collective memory and a culture of insubordination to authority.<sup>9</sup> The meaning of 'practice' itself reflects that historical legacy.

However, this also raises a tension that is most distinct in Certeau's analysis. Certeau's notion of consciousness partly originates as a critique to how Foucault and Bourdieu understood power as pervasively present, even in the minuscule aspects of the accent acquired in speech or bodily control in prison. Certeau criticises Bourdieu for painting his subjects as having 'no intention', living in an 'assumed world' and their actions being simply a *habitus*, 'a repetition of the past' (1984: 56).<sup>10</sup> For Certeau, Bourdieu compromised his work, leaving subjects without agency, history or decision-making capacity. He reproaches Foucault for providing little distinction between rationalities, mechanisms, dispositifs and apparatuses, resulting in a set of 'scattered technologies' and creating a false problematic 'dichotomy between "ideologies" and "procedures"' (Certeau 1984: 45). For Certeau, discourse does not require practice and not all discourses are based on practice. However, it is possible for discourse and practice to be the same thing (Certeau 1984: 46, 1988: 147–8). For Certeau it is important to understand what procedures might respond to other logics, outside or even subverting the logic of power. Certeau's concepts of practice and resistance rely on the meaning of tactics. They are a 'calculation', hence conscious, but they are also millenarian and hence ingrained in the subconscious, provoking simultaneously an unconscious use.<sup>11</sup> They are a form of subversion of the logic of power, more than an attack. Walking following one's logic or writing a letter to a friend in 'company time' are conscious activities in the sense that they are done in full knowledge of the agent (Certeau 1984: 50–60). Certeau draws attention to the possibility of seeing resistance as a self-regarding practice, where authority claims may not be directly confronted, but ignored, reappropriated or subverted.

The difficulty of gathering intent and linking with the debates about motivation was the core of the critiques of Scott that were made within anthropology studies in the 1980s. Ortner, a primary representative of these critiques, argues that resistance studies are limited because they lack ethnographic 'stance' – a commitment to grasp the 'thickness' and 'depth' of complex relations (1995: 174). According to Ortner, '[r]esistance studies are thin because they are ethnographically thin: thin on the internal politics of dominated groups, thin on the cultural richness of those groups, thin on the subjectivity – the intentions, desires, fears, projects – of the actors engaged in these dramas' (1995: 190). The critique is that resistance studies simplify reality excessively by not considering the web of relations where subjects are embedded. Following on from this, Ortner argues that scholars disregard how practices and meanings evolve for both resisters and scholars, and thus how ambiguous and subjective these acts are (1995: 175). Ortner ends up with a final objection, to the category of resistance more generally, which resonates with Africanist critiques seen above (Hibou 2011a; Mbembe 2001: Ch. 3; Mbembe in Weaver Shipley 2010: 666). Because resistance, and especially its intentions, is ambiguous, Ortner proposes to

account for the multiple ways in which practices can be 'creative and transformative', yet be the result of contradictory and mixed intentions (1995: 190–1). By this account, intentions may not be central and may provide a richer account of other aspects in everyday human relations, but doing away with intention undermines an account of agency against the experience of domination.

The implications of Ortner's argument are that to claim that a category of resistance is irrelevant because one cannot grasp all desires, hopes, cultural constraints and aims in an individual, let alone in a collective, is to reduce resistance to a psychological category and to empty it of its historical, political and social meaning. Additionally, the existence of a myriad of agendas, and of a self-centred element, do not necessarily point to 'conviviality' or to a lack of conflict in relations of domination. Similarly, the absence of principled motivations does not rule out resistance. It becomes necessary to link intent with motivations, that is, the reasons, agendas and justifications behind those acts. Often, practices have both self-centred and selfless motivations.

*Self-centred and selfless acts*

Self-centred acts may not necessarily entail self-gain, but the prioritisation of one's own agenda in detriment to the fulfilment of authority claims. In Certeau's account, where intent is not present, prioritising one's self suggests 'an alternative socio-political ethic' that antagonises the logic of profit, whether represented in the factory or in patterns of consumption. The examples Certeau discusses (pilfering 'a lathe to make furniture at home' or 'writing to a friend while at work') imply a loss considering the impact that being caught would have (1984: 25). This makes more meaningful the fact that this 'risk' is taken not out of a logic of self-profit but out of solidarity with one's friends and family (1984: 25). Behind this account, and similarly to Scott, is the fact that resistance is not just the realm of public, collective and seemingly selfless agendas but also the realm of quotidian self-help acts.

The problem is that whereas the former seems to be straightforwardly amenable to inferring a political argument, the individual covert, self-centred acts are not. Yet by looking at the interaction between self-centred and selfless motivations as examined in resistance studies, the lines are blurred even in revolutionary organisation. Wolf, for instance, in his studies of peasant revolutions in the twentieth century, argued that peasants ultimately acted for themselves and that they carried a deep sense of injustice (Wolf 1971, 1982). Barrington Moore also argued that battles over land and its uses symbolise battles over power, morals and ideas about how society is best organised (1978). Similarly, Scott thought that peasants tend to be more radical at the level of ideas than at the level of action (1985: 331). Self-serving acts may not go as far as envisioning a new society, but they do not preclude it. They could, rather, be

seen as underlined by an idea of what is legitimate and an interpretation of one's own position of subordination. The presence of an aspiration to change the effects of domination is a marker of resistance.

*Heterogeneity and ambivalence of the practices: violence, hiddenness and subversion as means of resistance*

The fact that resistance should be understood as a practice – a pattern of acts – makes 'acts' central to the account of resistance. Yet 'acts' on their own do not define resistance; in fact, as previously noted, acts are ambivalent – they can serve both the purpose of domination and resistance. What makes an act of resistance is the fact that it is embodied and represents the challenge of a position of subordination. It follows that different types of acts, whether confrontational, violent, subversive, covert or evasive, can account for how resistance takes place.

One of the ways in which Scott's account provides both guidance and flexibility to analyse resistance is the idea that 'any act' can be resistance if fulfilling certain criteria. However, this requires putting both power and resistance in relative terms. With the example of discourses, Scott clarifies that:

Power relations are not, alas, so straightforward that we can call what is said in power-laden contexts false and what is said offstage true. Nor can we simplistically describe the former as a realm of necessity and the latter as a realm of freedom. What is certainly the case, however, is that the hidden transcript is produced for a different audience and under different constraints of power than the public transcript. (1990: 5)

More than the boundaries between these two transcripts, the real conflict takes place in the space in between. Scott premised his central argument on the existence of a 'third realm', a 'pose', where the 'politics of disguise' and 'double meaning' are a hint to understand the ambiguity of resistance (1990: 18–19). Previous applications of this framework to the study of peacebuilding have analysed the dynamics of domination and resistance while representing the levels of ambiguity and complexity of the context. Heathershaw, for instance, deploys a Scottian framework to observe how multiple public transcripts represent multiple selves that create and recreate statebuilding and peace, despite its failures (Heathershaw 2008, see also 2009). These transcripts provide knowledge and shape practices, whose contradiction of the rhetoric is a feature rather than a problem or a deviation of peacebuilding as such (Heathershaw 2008: 331). This is what Heathershaw captures with the idea of peacebuilding as a 'simulation' (Heathershaw 2008: 346). The high-modernist rhetoric of protection and social change is a pose on which both agendas of state authority and resistance are premised.

*Violence/non-violence*

The relationship between resistance and violence has not been well explained in the liberal peace debates. For scholars such as Mac Ginty, Mitchell and Kelly, resistance can imply violence (Kelly and Mitchell 2012; Mac Ginty 2011; Mitchell 2011a). Richmond, by contrast, has equated everyday resistance with non-violent practices. Richmond's account of resistance as hidden and disguised leads to identifying what he calls emancipatory forms of critical agency with non-violent forms of resistance. Like Scott, Richmond does not argue that everyday resistance is literally invisible (2011a: 89, 94). He sees resistance as covert discourses and non-confrontational activities against the standardised, locally unaware promises of the international community (2011a: Ch. 3). Case studies include local NGOs which refuse to be compliant with the dictates of the peacebuilding vision of civil society and are marginalised as a result in their lobbying efforts towards reform and welfare demands (Richmond 2011a: Ch. 3). These often non-violent forms of resistance, as they are developed in Richmond's work, resemble more the politics of organised movements than the infrapolitics of the weak that Scott developed (2011a: 117). For Scott, who has analysed the possibility of violent resistance more than Certeau, hidden acts and the politics of disguise, or the 'pose', have to do with the politics of repression and the relation that resisters have to power, not to an ethic of non-violent resistance.

Nothing captures better the meaning of hiddenness and the infrapolitical than the Ethiopian proverb with which Scott opens his *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. It reads as follows: 'When the great lord passes the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts' (Scott 1990: v). That before authority those in a subordinate position may act as showing respect to such authority should not be mistaken for acquiescence or consent. Rather, the scripted roles in which authority and subordination are enacted in front of each other should be contrasted with the ways in which actors behave when they are among their equals. These acts are visible, even public, but not confrontational. Yet, taking violence out of resistance provides a Manichean analysis. Richmond's political agenda ends up creating a good and bad peacebuilding and a good and bad form of resistance. However, this does a disservice to the analysis, for not only can resistance not be sanitised, as violence is a central aspect of the constitution of state authority, but violence cannot be excluded from either power or resistance in this context.

The Brechtian or Schweikian forms of resistance Scott identifies are those generally available to the ordinary peasant: 'foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on' (1985: xvi). They are covert, latent and unorganised, using informal channels and avoiding direct confrontation with authorities, but that does not necessarily mean non-violent.

Everyday resistance needs to be read in a continuum of different practices of resistance, which reflect the larger political context in which they are embedded. It is therefore problematic to equate everydayness with non-violence. While Scott was writing from a pacific context of South East Asia, he did not mean to outline a framework of pacific resistance. He noted that 'low-grade, hit-and-run, guerrilla action' was not unusual in everyday resistance (1985: 241), and also made clear that peasants were ready to oppose landowners and employers, violently if necessary, to stop changes in property law, salary losses, social arrangements and living standards (Scott 1985: 98, 254–9). In later work, Scott explored the ways in which peasants engaged in armed rebellions, violent actions, banditry and crime as a form of resistance (Scott 2009: 146–50). Similarly, analysing violence as amenable to the practice of resistance does not necessarily equate or reduce 'violence' to dynamics of power and resistance.<sup>12</sup>

The choice of acts deployed for resistance is determined by the possibilities available to political action. Everyday resistance is ultimately carried out in the safety of anonymity and at the lowest risk of repression. Selbin, who has examined the relationship between resistance, rebellion and revolution, argues that the covert – 'I obey but I do not comply' – type of acts 'often form the basis of resistance' (Rowe and Schelling cited in Selbin 2009: 11). For Selbin, whereas revolution is rare, resistance is commonplace, integrating acts that defy authority, mostly in covert ways. However, as in the debates around intent, lack of confrontation has generated doubt as to whether these acts can be seen as opposing domination, and, indeed, as resistance. On the contrary, emphasis on the hidden, latent and covert nature of everyday resistance has created a tension between the everyday framework and more confrontational, even violent practices.

Still, this raises the question of the extent to which resistance should necessarily be an act of opposition in the form of a direct attack, or whether it can also be grasped in its subversive capacity. Subversion may be understood as a form of aikido, meaning 'self-defence [or self-help] using the strength of the dominant group' (Bigo 2011: 233). Seen from the differences between Scottian 'acts' and Certeau's 'tactics', different practices may have different referents. For Certeau, resistance tactics are 'innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production' (1984: xiv). Resistance is not so much an attack against and a confrontation of power as a transformative force that produces its own outcomes. For Scott, 'acts' are intended to mitigate or deny domination.

This means that whether the primary referent of an act is 'opposing' a claim, or whether the primary referent is one's self (individual or collective), they can be seen both as ways of denying or mitigating those claims and as the effects of domination. The condition of relative statelessness of the population in the high plateaux of South East Asia, described in *The Art of Not Being Governed*, was



due to their long historical patterns of escaping state power (Scott 2009). Here, residents have managed to preserve a way of life that is relatively protected from state interference by using tactics including escapism, agricultural nomadism, oral history and, when necessary, armed resistance. It follows that resistance does not always need to be an attack, let alone in a violent form, but, rather, an 'act' upon one's position of subordination. Yet, as context and availability of means are determinant, everyday resistance is not necessarily always covert, especially in militarised contexts.

Three important consequences follow in order to develop a framework of everyday resistance in peacebuilding. First, putting together Certeau and Scott's framework provides a good foundation, although with a critical analysis. As previously noted, any framework needs to connect patterns, intentions, motivations, acts and actors. This does not mean to pre-empt a particular account, but it requires justification for its core elements. A final consequence is that resistance cannot be conceptualised in terms of all or nothing. As will be explored in the next section, some elements of resistance such as intentionality, the intensity and exposure of its acts, and how directly authority claims are targeted can be gradated in order to provide a rich account that captures the complexity and ambiguities of resistance.

#### **A reworked account of resistance: gradients of intentionality, intensity, exposure and engagement**

Bearing the above in mind, the account of resistance that I propose in this book is as follows: 'Resistance is the pattern of acts undertaken by individuals or collectives in a subordinated position to mitigate or deny elite claims and the effects of domination, while advancing their own agenda.' This definition establishes resistance as a practice (a pattern of acts). It follows Scott in identifying both individuals and collectives in a position of subordination as the bearers of this practice, thus presenting it as part of a relation of domination. This means that, similar to Scott, those acts are directed towards elite claims and the experience of domination, and it adds an explicit link between intent (denial or mitigation) and motivations (agenda advancing). It does not represent any kind of permanent position that individuals are in, nor does it claim to capture all daily interactions that take place in a complex environment like peacebuilding in the DRC. However, it represents resistance as an analytical and political category.

The definition also sets some limits to what counts as resistance. Resistance is not an effect; it is a patterned practice, and unintended acts sit at the edges of its scope. This is different from accounting for the fact that self-regarding actions may have a less clear intent. What it means is that, for instance, forgetting to pay one's taxes could hardly be seen as resistance. Similarly, random acts that do not target authority claims or the effects of domination do not qualify as

resistance. However, as mentioned above, the discussion is rather unhelpful if couched in terms of the actual existence or absence of resistance. This definition is not intended to provide an all-or-nothing measure of resistance; rather, it identifies the core elements of an account, some of which can be gradated.

Hollander and Einwohner propose not to become trapped in futile definitions and to account for resistance directly through a typology. The one they provide follows what they consider to be the pith of cross-disciplinary debates on resistance: intention and recognition. In their typology, they combine resisters' intentions and the recognition of resistance by resisters, targets and observers. Hollander and Einwohner categorise seven activities according to whether the resister intended there to be resistance, and how this is recognised by the targets and the observer (Table 2.2).

One of the greatest achievements of this typology is to represent 'the fact that the concept of resistance is socially constructed [...] and that resisters, targets, and observers all participate in this construction' (Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 548). Nevertheless, the typology reflects more the relationship between the practices and the literature than the nature of resistance. Hollander and Einwohner see resistance as concerning primarily action and opposition,

*Table 2.2* Hollander and Einwohner's types of resistance

<b>Types of resistance</b>			
	<b>Is act intended as resistance by actor?</b>	<b>Is act recognised as resistance by</b>	
		<b>Target?</b>	<b>Observer?</b>
Overt resistance	Yes	Yes	Yes
Covert resistance	Yes	No	Yes
Unwitting resistance	No	Yes	Yes
Target-defined resistance	No	Yes	No
Externally defined resistance	No	No	Yes
Missed resistance	Yes	Yes	No
Attempted resistance	Yes	No	No
Not resistance	No	No	No

Source: Hollander and Einwohner (2004: 544)



and fundamentally as a relational concept. As they argue, ‘the interactional nature of resistance also highlights the central role of power, which is itself an interactional relationship, not a characteristic of individuals or groups’ (Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 548). It is precisely this interactional nature that categories should attempt to grasp. Despite the basic conceptual framework provided, based on ‘action and opposition’, Hollander and Einwohner’s typology does not reflect this, nor does it show what makes each actor or the observer recognise the act as resistance. There is still a need to provide an account for the ‘acts’ themselves; however, Hollander and Einwohner’s proposal of categorising acts according to different aspects of resistance and levels of intent can set the basis for a typology that encapsulates both the conceptual framework and these different aspects.

Taking stock of the core arguments advanced in this chapter, and as an introduction to how different practices of resistance will be discussed in the following chapters, Table 2.3 categorises the different elements of resistance and their gradients. Whereas all the elements (patterns, intentions, motivations, acts and actors) need to be present, these can be categorised and display different gradients (clarity of intentionality, intensity of acts and how directly claims have been opposed). Categories in the table respond to the now familiar arguments: elite claims and resistance can be symbolic and material; resistance practices may attempt to deny the claims entirely or mitigate them partially; resistance can be individual and collective, and use different acts. Gradients reflect both Scott’s and Certeau’s accounts; they can affect intentionality, appearing to the observer in a visible or less visible form. Acts can have different gradients of intensity, as they confront authority ‘face to face’, in an overt manner, or even violently. The different ways in which Scott and Certeau understood resistance as a practice of engaging against authority claims or as a practice that follows self-logics illustrates two different kinds of practices: (1) those that engage against authority claims more directly (claim regarding) and that take the form of a more oppositional form of resistance and even of attack; and (2) those that mitigate or deny claims by a self-serving action or in the form of ‘aikido’, actually using the claim to one’s advantage and generally taking the form of subversion (self-regarding).

Table 2.3 illustrates how these different categories and gradients relate to the practices discussed in the empirical chapters. Although, as stated, outcomes are not relevant to an account of resistance because acts may have no impact or may result in the opposite of what was intended, the table offers a category of possible outcomes, which also reflects the relationship between claims and resistance practices as discussed in the next chapters. These do not exhaust other practices that may be more prevalent in other peacebuilding contexts.

These examples and the way they are interpreted above are not meant to be read in absolute terms, implying for example, that in all situations an

*Table 2.3* Overview of the everyday framework of resistance applied to current practices in the DRC

Act	Nature and object of claim	Nature of practice					Actors involved	Possible outcome
		Nature of intent		Nature of confrontation				
		Type of intent	Is the intent visible?	Has there been 'face to face' confrontation?	How directly has the claim been opposed?	How intense is the practice?		
Insult/slander/denigration	Symbolic – legitimacy/deference	Denial	Yes	No	Directly – claim-regarding	Discursive attack	Individual	Intended
Mockery	Symbolic – legitimacy/deference	Denial	Yes	No	Directly – claim-regarding	Discursive attack	Individual	Intended
Meaning subversion	Symbolic – agenda setting	Mitigation	Less visible	No	Indirectly/'Aikido' self-regarding	Discursive subversion	Individual	None/intended
Mai Mai attacks	Material and symbolic – authority, monopoly of violence	Denial	Yes	Yes	Directly – claim-regarding	Physical attack	Collective	More repression
Use of Mai Mai for security	Material and symbolic – authority, monopoly of violence	Mitigation	Less visible	No – 'users' Yes – militias	Indirectly/'Aikido' self-regarding	Violent subversion	Collective	Intended/random/more repression
Tax evasion	Material – tax levy	Denial	Yes	No	Directly – claim-regarding	Material attack	Individual/collective	Intended/none
Land defence/re-appropriation	Material – extraction	Mitigation	Yes	No	Indirectly/'Aikido' self-regarding	Material subversion	Individual/collective	Intended/random
Military rule negotiation	Material and symbolic – authority	Mitigation	Yes	Yes	Indirectly/'Aikido' self-regarding	Political subversion	Individual/collective	Intended/random
Survival and self-management	Material and symbolic – social and political organisation, extraction	Mitigation	Less visible	No	Indirectly/'Aikido' self-regarding	Political subversion	Individual/collective	Intended/random

'insult' may be more overt than slandering or self-management. Ultimately, as there are no unambiguous acts of resistance, and there are plural intersecting relations of domination, which are changing and contingent, any framework of resistance needs to embrace heterogeneity and ambiguity and to be contextualised.

### **The way forward**

We have come full circle in that, as stated in the Introduction, one of the most problematic aspects of the accounts of resistance in the liberal peace literature was that they provided a series of arguments about its practices, its nature and how it affected peacebuilding, without having fully elaborated what resistance is. Methodologically, it has been stated that while focusing on practices is a rich ground for theorising, generalisations have to be limited. The practice of state-making and resistance is, as seen in Chapter 1, necessarily affected by the political space of which they are a part. This means to acknowledge that practices of resistance in a peacebuilding context are not peculiar to this context, but are the continuation of practices of resistance that were in place before, except that a series of peacebuilding actors are now part of the claimants and the claims tend to be justified as advancing peace, statebuilding, democracy and development. As such, although certain features of resistance may apply generally to all cases and certain practices will be similar, they will recover meaning once they are contextualised.

From the above, there are two important ideas to retain for the empirical chapters. Firstly, an everyday framework of resistance is not necessarily one of non-violent invisible action but, rather, an account of the quotidian practices of subordinate individuals and collectives that deny or mitigate domination. This quotidian element means that these practices aim to be repression-proof and easily applicable without the need for a special political organisation. Despite their self-help character, they represent a political category. They can have different gradients of intensity, exposure, engagement against claims and intentionality.

Secondly, Hollander and Einwohner's point that resistance is ultimately socially constructed needs to be borne in mind. Having a conceptual framework becomes imperative for any account of resistance. Only through the discussion of how the observer sees patterns, intentions, motivations, acts and actors as interrelating, necessary, prevalent or gradated can one account for resistance and be able to respond to the different challenges that theorising and researching everyday life generate. Despite the complexities and ambiguities that theorising resistance entails, it is a necessary category in order to understand social relations in any political process, and particularly during peacebuilding and the reconstruction of state authority.

NOTES

- 1 E.g. Eric Selbin argues that what distinguishes resistance from rebellion and revolution is its less-threatening character in relation to power, and its actions' being linked to long-term processes and to societies' memories of social struggle. Rebellion, by contrast, is 'a type of insurgency or uprising which rarely seeks to change the entire system' but manages to threaten it generally with violence. Revolution is a 'dramatic upheaval involving a group of united people overthrowing their government' (Selbin 2009: 11, 12 and 13).
- 2 In *Seeing Like a State*, Scott (1998) outlines a theory of 'practical knowledge' about state-making, where resistance is present but is not the central focus.
- 3 The name given to the small village in Malaysia where *Weapons of the Weak's* fieldwork takes place.
- 4 Especially developed in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* and in the *Art of Not Being Governed*.
- 5 From the exclusive, narrow focus on Malay and Burmese peasantry in *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* and *Weapons of the Weak*, to an overall argument about subordination in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. State–society relations are explored most notably in the *Art of Not Being Governed* and in *Seeing like a State*.
- 6 Scott asserts, to 'subscribe wholeheartedly to the judgment reached by E. P. Thompson', that class struggle precedes class and class-consciousness (1985: 296).
- 7 E.g. at the peak of Africa's World War, 80 per cent of the DRC's revenue was put towards the war effort (ICG 2000: 41).
- 8 With reference, respectively, to Donald Crummey and Achille Mbembe (Abbink, Bruijn, and Walraven 2008: 17).
- 9 Similar formulations can be seen in: Browdy de Hernandez et al. (2010); Selbin (2009: Ch. 3).
- 10 I am simplifying here Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* and Certeau's critique of it. The essence of the critique is that Bourdieu has stripped the individual of consciousness, decision-making and transformative agency.
- 11 Underlying Certeau's use of the unconscious is Sigmund Freud (Certeau 1984: 2–6).
- 12 Das (2007: 78) argues that violence is part of everyday life experience and that this daily experience has surpassed a narrow framework of power and resistance. This is the framework adopted by Mitchell (2011a, 2011b).

## *The history and present of 'Africa's World War'*

### The 'failure' of the DRC and the militarisation of peace

Speaking in 2010 of the International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS) for the DRC, a MONUSCO officer argued that the escalation of violence in the Kivus over the last few years was caused by the DRC state being 'inexistent' (MONUSCO – ISSSS/STAREC liaison officer 2010). For this MONUSCO representative, some functions of the state did not work properly. So the task of international actors was to operationalise the state towards making 'the police, police, the judiciary, judge ... get the software ... the public servants, pay them!' The image of the DRC as a failed state looms large over policy-making, but also over academic research. This is added to by activist media campaigns that portray the DRC as a place of desperation, war, neglect and tragedy: 'the world's worst country to live in' (War Child 2011), 'a Zaire-shaped hole in the middle of Africa' (The Economist cited in Reno 1998a: 14) and 'the world's largest failed state' (Fisher 2009).

The complexities of the multi-state wars that have taken place since 1996, and the ongoing conflict in the eastern provinces, defy a single causal explanation, although these explanations have been the tendency rather than the exception, as the standard recourse to the failed state shows. An analysis of resistance brings out different aspects of the history and present of the conflict. The war that started in 1996 was seen by popular classes as an opportunity to realise their long-awaited dreams of change. In addition to the multi-state wars, coups and internal military revolts, there was a popular uprising. The violence that is experienced today still shows aspects of those several layers of conflict.

The various forms of resistance linked to how conflict and peacebuilding have affected the everyday lives of popular classes predate the conflict. Looking at the coercive and extractive practices of states writ large, resistance shows that it follows patterns in state–society relations. Resistance also shows the particular configuration the that Congolese state has taken as a result of colonisation, decolonisation and the Cold War. For Schatzberg, this configuration made the

Zairian state 'a congeries of organized repositories of administrative, coercive, and ideological power subject to, and engaged in, an ongoing process of power accumulation characterized by uneven ascension and uneven decline' (1991: 142). It also made state power relative, that is, 'weak to international donors intent on implementing reforms, but massive and overwhelming to the citizenry' (Schatzberg 1991: 142). Neither the colonial Bula Matari and its trinity of state, Church and corporation, nor its post-colonial version, used those repositories for the purpose of producing wealth and infrastructure for the enjoyment of the majority of residents in Congo, Zaire or the later DRC (cf. Turner 2007; Young 1994). Modernity has made the DRC a low-income country that exports copper, petrol and ore at low value and imports refined oil, technology, medicines, iron and meat at high prices (Observatory of Economic Complexity 2014). There is an outward flow of resources and debt repayments, and an inward reception of manufactured goods and aid. Similarly, as will become apparent in the next few chapters, the use of coercion is more effective in repressing dissent than in protecting the population.

In this context, both historically and in the present, popular resistance is not only important but constitutive of political order (Maindo Monga Ngonga 2004; Renton et al. 2007; Young 1994: Ch. 1). In the context of the present war, popular classes have been exposed to new demands of the global market, changes in security interests in Africa at the end of the Cold War and the reconfiguration of the global security agenda. So, while the war has transformed the political and economic landscape, thereby directly impacting on livelihoods, significant sections of the popular urban and rural classes have turned the war into an opportunity for revolt. Although identity and belonging have marked the discourses of rural militias, these are underpinned by long-term political aspirations: dignified living through the enjoyment of their own resources and participation in political decision-making on an equal basis.

The peacebuilding strategies of different national and international actors have consolidated a militarised extractive context of plural authorities. Alongside the already militarised environment caused by the wars of 1996 and 1998, both North and South Kivu have been targets of unilateral UN and UN-backed military operations of the DRC and Rwanda against remaining armed groups. This is in addition to continuous proxy wars between the DRC and Rwanda, which both cooperate and antagonise at multiple levels, and a corresponding mushrooming of popular Mai Mai militias. Militarisation has also followed from the tendency to deploy the military as representatives of state authority and as the administrators of certain mines in the eastern territories. Beyond Eastern DRC, the rivalries and alliances between countries seen during the wars have continued, particularly those between Angola, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda. Nyaxo Olympio summarises these dynamics well when saying that

regional politics, reaching from the Great Lakes region to Angola and the Southern cone, have become relations of posturing, antagonisms and vendettas, more so than relations of cooperation and peaceful resolution (2013: 466). Resistance in this context is targeted towards the conditions of living that result from these historical and present issues, and is a continuation of the long-term aspirations of Congolese subordinate classes.

Whereas the next chapters focus on the different resistance strategies, this chapter provides the basis for understanding the context of peacebuilding in the DRC. First, it will analyse the major accounts of the DRC conflict as they have affected peacebuilding policy. Second, it will provide a general background of the Congo wars since 1996 to observe distinctive features that remain today. Third, the chapter analyses the UN strategies used in the DRC since the UN's deployment.

### **The sources of conflict and the role of resistance**

The complexities developed during two decades of war and peacebuilding in the DRC mean that state and non-state actors alike are engaged in processes of authority assertion, war and accumulation. The few accounts on resistance provide detailed and historically grounded analyses but have not theorised resistance itself. Rather, they have captured the responses of Congolese people to the imposition of war conditions and domination from different perspectives: the informal arena as a source of alternative economic and political arrangements (De Goede 2012; Mac Gaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000); the Mai Mai militias in Eastern Congo (Acker and Vlassenroot 2001; Vlassenroot 2002); DIY strategies to provide social services and survival (Trefon 2004b); and the historical perspective, covering from the colonial period until the present (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002; Renton et al. 2007). These analyses provide a sense of the historical and present political activity of Congolese non-elites, illustrating that people's responses to deteriorating living conditions can be seen as patterns of actions that attempt to transform or evade the social order.

The absence of a theorisation of resistance from the peacebuilding context of the DRC does not stem from the lack of resistance but, rather, from the accounts that have been given of the conflict itself. Three of these accounts stand out. On the one hand, focusing on the motivations for war, is the resource wars thesis. On the other hand are two approaches that focus on the actors involved: *localist* and *regionalist*. With the spectre of the failed state underpinning all of them and the absence of a broad political movement, these analyses examine the actions of subordinate groups, both as victims and as co-producers of a context of domination, plunder and violence, thereby undermining important political implications.



*The resource wars thesis*

The resource wars thesis has driven mainstream academic, policy and activist research. Though disputed, the DRC has been one of the paradigmatic cases used to argue that the access and commercialisation of natural resources fuels and protracts conflict.<sup>1</sup> UN strategy in the DRC has, until now, followed this thesis. A series of high-level reports have consistently linked resource exploitation and the continuation of wars (UN Group of Experts 2015b).<sup>2</sup> The thesis has applied to the first period of inter-state war, as its cause, and to the continuation of conflict in Eastern DRC. Although this thesis undermines the political motivations for war, it rightly identifies exploitation and accumulation as important dynamics for conflict. For instance, between 1998 and 2002, US\$5 billion worth of state assets from the mining sector (especially diamonds, cobalt, copper and germanium) were transferred to private companies under Zimbabwean control with no compensation paid to the DRC treasury (UN Panel of Experts 2001: 7). Eighty per cent of Rwanda's military expenses (about US\$320 million) were financed by the Congolese spoils (UN Panel of Experts 2001: 15). Although Uganda does not produce gold, gold exports became its second-largest income source (Clark 2002b: 152). In recent years, mining has become Rwanda's 'largest foreign exchange earner', with up to 30 per cent of these earnings coming from illegal mining in Congo (Stearns 2012a: 57). Groups such as the FDLR and several Mai Mai groups have continued to operate, thanks to resource trafficking and their occupation of mines.

Despite the wide embracement of this thesis, implementation of policy has been slow and inconsistent, especially when applying sanctions and prohibitions on neighbouring countries and large corporations. The Kimberley Process, although a significant step towards eliminating illegal trade of diamonds, has been dubbed 'toothless' and is said to continue to exist 'in name only' (Elving 2012: 10–11; Harvey 2009: para. 4). Instead of the sanctions and embargoes against Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi that the final report of the UN Panel on Illegal Exploitation suggested imposing, the World Bank and the IMF granted Rwanda and Uganda debt-reduction benefits due to their good economic performances (UN Panel of Experts 2001: 38–9).

The resource wars thesis has informed UN policy towards statebuilding, reflecting not only the vision of the DRC as failed but also the influence of neo-liberal understandings of how states and their economies should work. Neo-liberal approaches to statebuilding have called for contradictory approaches. They have pursued a policy of rebuilding the state while deregulating its industries, delinking forms of economic control from the central apparatus of the state and fostering market self-regulation. For example, mining management has been carried out through several attempts to formalise private control

(Kuditshini 2008).<sup>3</sup> The reliance on private actors means that, despite the shaming and finger-pointing contained in these reports, some sensitive material was removed from the final report and few judicial procedures have been started (Johnson and Kayser 2005: 146). Moreover, some of the companies, governments and individuals that these reports accused of fuelling the conflict have continued to work, if not in direct government positions, as forms of subcontracted authorities in parts of the territory.<sup>4</sup>

This lax approach has changed since about 2010, encouraged by activist and policy endorsements (Bafilemba, Lezhnev, and Zingg Wimmer 2012; BBC 2010; Global Witness 2011; The Enough Project Team and Grassroots Reconciliation Group 2009; UN Group of Experts 2010a). The OECD guidelines and the Dodd-Frank Act of the US, whereby companies have to publicly disclose their mining sources, have made an impact on the mining dynamics of the DRC, with ambiguous results (OECD 2012; US Congress 2010). While establishing mechanisms for the tracing of resources, they have also pushed many investors out of the DRC, impacting on thousands who depend on mining for a living (Cuvelier, Van Bockstael et al. 2014). The impact on conflict has been limited as armed groups have other sources of funding such as taxation, robbery, support from the civilian population and contributions from the diaspora.<sup>5</sup>

While the resource wars thesis unearths important dynamics of conflict in the DRC, it portrays practices of accumulation as a criminal rather than a political undertaking. It taps into the image of the DRC as a neopatrimonial failed state, immersed in a Hobbesian state of nature, where armed actors do not have political motivations or values (Autesserre 2010: 72–3; Wai 2014: 144–5). Something that the resource wars thesis does not point out is that, as Johnson and Kayser note, informal exchanges and trafficking are part of a longer trend of bypassing state regulations, of confronting poverty and of building local influence (2005: 169). Many have noted that merchant elites who are part of larger networks succeed in providing the community with much-needed resources outside of state channels (Kabamba 2011; Mac Gaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000; Raeymaekers et al. 2008; Titeca and De Herdt 2011; Tull 2003). These practices may have fuelled the continuation of war and may not have fostered industry. However, they have made the DRC and other neighbouring countries' economies grow (Bayart 1998; Straus and Waldorf 2011). Additionally, as the *localists* and *regionalists* have argued, the resource wars thesis neglects important identity, political and security concerns that go hand in hand with economic motivations. These criticisms have resonated strongly in the most recent policy strategies, to the point of embracing them (Day and Ayet Puigarnau 2013; Framework Agreement 2013; ISSSS 2013; UN Security Council 2015). Yet, as seen below, this has not helped substantially in leading to a political solution to the conflict.

*Localists*

Localists argue that sources of conflict are rooted in local dynamics regarding belonging and access to power and land, which long predate the conflict itself. There is a broad spectrum between those who see violence in Congo as a pre-colonial issue (Bøås 2010) and those who see historical and localised dynamics to be disrupting national and regional ones (Autesserre 2010; Lemarchand 2003; Reyntjens 2009). Séverine Autesserre (2010) is a primary representative arguing that violence in the Kivus is the consequence of issues of migration, claims of citizenship and belonging and land disputes since the 1930s. The problem with the peacebuilding strategies is that they have been aimed only at national and regional levels, ignoring the local dimensions.

Autesserre rightly warns against the depoliticisation of villagers, chiefs and local administrators and seeing them as simple followers manipulated by national or regional elites. She offers a detailed account of political and ethnic agendas that operate autonomously and that end up causing or fuelling conflicts at national and regional levels. She also highlights the importance of historical events in shaping the present DRC. Yet, in so doing her account reveals several other limitations. Autesserre evades history by tracing an unchanging continuous line between the 1930s and today. The 'locals' and 'the local level' become, in her account, a homogenous sphere of individuals whose only differentiation is their ethnic identity. This way of defining the local not only sees 'ethnic' identities as rigid and prominent when they are not, it also ignores the enormous complexity of identities and relations based on class, gender and age.

From here, several important aspects of the causes of conflict and the historicity of the DRC are undermined. The period between 1914 and the 1930s was characterised initially by World War I and later by an economic crisis that affected most colonial powers. Tax extraction increased 400 per cent between 1917 and 1924, and an increasing number of peasants were forced into cotton cultivation (Bézy, Peemans, and Wautelet 1981: 35–45; Davidson, Isaacman, and Péliesser 1985: 690). Some of the most famous peasant revolts and religious-political movements took place during this period, including that of Simon Kimbangu. In rural areas of the Kivus, the Kitawala movement had taken root, threatening to kill Europeans and African allies (loyalist chiefs in particular) in its quest for an 'Africa for the Africans' and 'equality of races' (Davidson et al. 1985: 692). The economic crisis endured as most parts of the world were at war just over a decade later. This crisis again produced revolts in the colonies against the increase of taxes and conscription. The DRC saw, for instance, the Manono and Masisi revolts and the Luluaborg mutiny in 1944 (Emoungu 1986: 168; Mazrui 1993: 195).

The dual system of accessing land, based on administrative and customary law, has remained in place until the present time, not just until the 1990s

(Autesserre 2010: 130). If property is in question, whoever has the land title is recognised as the owner. Mere belonging to an ethnic community is not a guarantee of access to land: the chief needs to grant access, and for this to happen personal and village politics come into play. When Belgium took control of the Congo from Leopold II, the political and economic basis of authority in the DRC changed from a slavery system to one of waged labour (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1985: 356–8). Subsistence farming has existed in parallel with cash-crops ever since as a marginal low-income activity, increasingly dependent on farmers being able to rent rather than own land. This is a feature not just of the way the Belgian colonial administration dealt with the distribution of wealth and rights, but also of the particular value of exchanges in the global market.

The violence of the 1960s, 1980s and 1990s analysed by Autesserre needs to be understood beyond the scope of ethnicity. In the 1960s, revolts in Kwilu, South Kivu and Northern Katanga took place as a result of the assassination of Lumumba and the secession of Katanga (Renton et al. 2007: 116). The Mulele rebellion in 1964 lasted about a year and took control of 40 per cent of the territory, with Bunia and Fizi being two of the last territories to resist the advance of the army (De Witte 2001: 163). According to Ludo De Witte, conservative estimates of the number of people killed in the rebellion and the subsequent repression were 'about 300 whites and more than 200,000 Congolese' (Marlair cited in De Witte 2001: 164). For the next 30 years or more this movement was continued by Mulele allies such as Laurent Desirée Kabila, resulting in considerable violence by Kabila's Parti Revolutionnaire du Peuple (PRP) and the Government.

The 1980s were marked by continuous violent opposition to Mobutu, violent repression of dissent and an incipient organisation of non-violent opposition with Etienne Tshisekedi (Ndaywel è Nziem 2011: 253–62; Schatzberg 1991: 58). These dynamics continued into the early 1990s, a period of time also characterised by the effects of the dismantling of state and economy as carried out by Mobutu and the SAPs. In addition to the kleptocratic enterprise of Mobutu, who went into exile with a US\$5 billion fortune but left the country bankrupt, the SAPs made all aid and debt rescheduling conditional on state withdrawal from public services and investments, the elimination of subsidies and the liberalisation of trade (Devarajan, Dollar, and Holmgren 2001; Moyo 2009: 48). The result was exacerbated poverty. In Zaire, the 1991 pillages extended throughout the country. Rank and file soldiers, who were paid US\$1 per month, started looting and a revolt ensued. They were joined by others in the population, many of whom had just been scammed after putting their savings into financial pyramid schemes as last attempts to access money (Marriage 2013: 22). The looters destroyed public and private property and infrastructure throughout the country, and the pillages dilapidated an already damaged economy. "There was an estimated US\$1 billion worth of damage in

the first 72 hours' (Ransdell cited in Marriage 2013: 23). Zaire's GDP fell by 30 per cent, unemployment went up to 80 per cent, companies like Gecamines fell in their GDP contribution to 0 per cent by 1992 and public sector workers went on strike (Human Rights Watch 1993: "Zaire" para. 4; Marriage 2013: 25). This violence, and that of mid-1996, was exacerbated by the fact that much leftover stock from the Cold War went to Zaire (Hartung and Moix 2000). For Marriage, the pillages represent a *conflict between the leadership and the population*, which 'crystallised' identity conflicts (2013: 28). This does not mean that the conflicts over land, power and citizenship started here, but that analyses of conflicts over land, power and citizenship need to take these other factors into account.

Ethnic identities are not rigid, nor are they historically unchanged.<sup>6</sup> Willame argues that identity, in the way that it has played out in the Kivus, is something from the democratisation period (1997: 62–8). For Kankwenda, although the institutionalisation of ethnic identities arrived with the Belgians, the post-colonial period amplified it (2005: 279). As ethnic groups became more entrenched, they became a way to access political and economic goods and a strategic form of defence, resistance and refuge, but not the only one (Kankwenda 2005: 288). The system of predation in the DRC includes an ethnic dimension alongside two other elements. Socially, it is also sustained by the *intelligentsia congolaise*, that is, an informal social body that seals the system with a rubber stamp of technical knowledge, moral authority, notoriety and social prestige. It is also sustained by the alliances made externally between individuals, institutions, corporations and groups (Kankwenda 2005: 280).

The ethnic aspect is a receptacle for multiple political, economic and social identities that primarily worked to simplify the administration of the colony (Vansina 1966). Hutus and Tutsis, for instance, were not originally ethnic identities but designated socio-economic classes (Vansina 2004: 134–9). The ethnic divisions created by the Belgians were imposed, generating resistance and conflict not only towards the Belgians but also towards those seen as their allies (Kankwenda 2005: 282–4). Pre-existing identities were not fixed. They had as much to do with parental ties and birth locations as with different social networks such as religious, mystical, political and economic. These changed simultaneously, depending on whether or not they had been subjected to a kingdom or an empire (e.g., Rwanda and Buganda kingdoms or the Kongo, Luba and Lunda empires) and whether or not they were subjected to a tribute or slavery system (Kankwenda 2005: 283–5; Muiu and Martin 2009: Ch. 6; Vansina 1966: 118–19). Importantly, not all of these identities had to do with access to land and power; they also had to do with norms, customs and roles within different groups and were not all territorially linked. Additionally, it would be wrong to see ethnic divisions only in terms of animosities or as clear cut. The

long history of the DRC, including the pre-colonial period, is defined by cohabitation (Vansina 1966).

Lastly, the separation of the local from the national and regional is an artificial device that resembles the resource war thesis from the bottom up. The politics of villagers in the localist version seem to be confined to the access of land and political power. From this view, the history of revolt for social change and the constraints imposed by the global economy are out of the picture. Yet land and power are inextricably linked to the global market and to notions of social justice.

Localists ultimately portray the image of a violent inside that disrupts a more pacified outside, remaining within a framework in which the right kind of interveners with the right kind of sensitivity could apply policies that would build the right kind of state. But, as seen in previous chapters, and as will be observed in later ones, any state is the outcome of the *entanglement* between the global and the local. This is visible once again in the present peacebuilding process. At the local level, it is possible to find actors as disparate as the UN, the military, a corporation or an externally backed armed group playing state-like roles in the absence of an administrative state-based authority. These actors contribute either directly or indirectly to practices of coercion and extraction, and only very limitedly to the realisation of the liberal state of peacebuilding policies. Armed militias may be linked to particular ethnic groups, but this does not reduce the conflict to land or to an ethnic conflict. The fluidity of other identities, the diversity of power relations, the history of the struggle for better conditions of living and the dynamics of the global economy impinge on the local context and are necessary elements for understanding the conflict.

### *Regionalists*

It is this greater set of elements that regionalists capture. Most regionalists do not disregard the local features intervening in the continuation of conflict. What they argue is that the dynamics in the DRC are linked to the dynamics of the Great Lakes region. In this view, it is not just state actors like Rwanda and Uganda who have affected the development of events, but also their interconnections with their corresponding diasporas in each country, their common and conflicting commercial interests, their links to non-state actors, including armed groups, as well as their common security threats. Regionalists also consider other factors that have to do with global politics, the global economy and social hierarchies (Ndaywel è Nziem 1998; Prunier 2009; Raeymaekers 2014; Vlasenroot and Raeymaekers 2004a).

A vivid example of the differences between regionalists and localists has been exposed by Jason Stearns's criticism of an article published by Séverine



Autesserre in the *New York Times*. The journal piece summarises the arguments Autesserre has made over the last 10 years:

The international community has failed to help Congo achieve peace and security because it fundamentally misunderstands the causes of the violence [–] distinctively local conflicts over land, grassroots power, status and resources, like cattle, charcoal, timber, drugs and fees levied at checkpoints. Most of the violence in Congo is not coordinated on a large scale. It is the product of conflicts among fragmented local militias, each trying to advance its own agenda at the village or district level. Those then percolate and expand. (2012b: para. 7)

Jason Stearns responded with the following:

While [Autesserre] is right to emphasize the local dynamics of conflict, her argument is flawed. She falls victim of her own critique: she, too, ends up being overly reductive, failing to account for the different kinds of armed actors, each with its unique underlying dynamic, in the Eastern Congo. In fact, reading her op-ed, one might think that the reason for the uptick in violence in the Kivus this year is due to land conflicts and struggles for power at the village level. But the main protagonists since the beginning of the transition in 2003 have not been fragmented local militia with parochial concerns, but rather armed groups that are tightly linked to regional political and business elites, such as the CNDP, PARECO, and, most recently, the M-23. (2012c: para. 4)

In developing his response, Stearns gives a brief background of the CNDP, which, as he notes, was formed 'by senior members of the RCD [Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie] military, in coordination with officials in Kigali and Goma' to safeguard their interests (2012c: para. 6; see also: Stearns 2008; UN Group of Experts 2012b: para. 103–7). Even when local grievances about land are at the root of certain armed groups, Stearns argues that they 'have since become integrated into regional business and political networks' (Stearns 2012c: para. 9; see also: Sylla 2010). Regionalists provide a moderate argument that includes regional transborder dynamics, the impact of donor policies and internal dynamics, without considering them solely as a Congolese transhistorical affair (Stearns 2013a). There are important differences amongst regionalists, depending on whether the emphasis is put on the role of external countries, even if from the region, or on the internal factors of the DRC as a failed state.<sup>7</sup> For instance, Nzongola Ntalaja speaks of factors of instability in the region, of which state weakness is paramount (2002: 214). Turner affirms that both the 1996 and 1998 wars were the work of Rwanda, with involvement of different regional and continental actors, but the underlying factors of the war are a combination of state failure, cultural and socio-economic issues and the political economy of the DRC (2007: 17–19). The regionalist account highlights the need to problematise local–global relations and societal divides among elites and non-elites. The regionalist account suffers, however, from maintaining the paradigm of the



neopatrimonial failed state and from not linking the dynamics of the region with the general patterns of state behaviour and with the constraints of the global economic order.

An exploration of resistance precisely takes this complexity into account, considering the different levels on which actors operate and seeing local and global, present and history as co-constituted. The analyses explored above also underline that a lack of more organised movements is seen as an absence of resistance; instead, state failure, ethnic alliances, patronage and self-seeking individuals are seen as the main causes of conflict. Yet, neither patronage nor the figure of the failed state illustrates how political authority is exercised. Ethnicity is just one element among many identities and factors that impact on conflict. Additionally, as will be shown in the next chapters, these factors impact on resistance but they do not define it.

### **Landmarks of a multi-layered conflict**

In spite of the complex dynamics of conflict and the long history of structural and physical violence in the DRC, it is helpful to retain a basic chronology of the actual conflict. This can be divided into three phases. First, a period of large-scale war from 1996 until 2003; second, a period of transition between 2003 and 2006, ending with the first democratic elections since independence; and third, a decade of cyclical conflict localised mainly in the eastern part of the territory. Every time conflict has erupted during this last decade there has been a similar response: a process of negotiation, mainly based on reintegration and disarmament – but not followed by either party – and a military response generally involving the FARDC, the UN and the Rwandan army. DRC–Rwandan relations have also marked this last period as they have engaged in mutual instrumentalisations and confrontations through proxy wars, which have carried the mark of both countries' statebuilding projects. Although Jason Stearns and Christopher Vogel argue that since the M-23 defeat and later changes in the FARDC Rwanda has lost most of its military allies and there has been a decline in the regional dimension of the conflict, these dynamics are likely to continue (2015: 5).

#### *Multi-state war and revolt in the first large confrontations (1996–2003)*

The immediate context of war, resistance, state-making and peacebuilding in the DRC has been marked by four events: the ousting of Mobutu, which suffocated an important democratic movement; the Rwandan genocide; the AFDL (l'Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo) war of 1996–97; and the RCD rebellion, which turned into 'Africa's First World War' (1998–2003). These four events have created a militarised extractive context of

plural authorities, which explains why resistance generally takes both a covert and a militarised form.

The first event was the ‘elbowing’ out of Mobutu (Erlanger 1997: 15). The choice of a military solution was underpinned by a series of factors related to the end of the Cold War, a serious crisis in Zaire and the Rwandan genocide (Young 2002). The Rwandan-initiated military campaign in 1996 gathered regional and international support, but suffocated a democratic movement (Pomfret 1997). The efforts of thousands of civil society organisations, dissident parliamentarians and political parties long opposed to Mobutu culminated in the 1992 Conference for National Sovereignty (CNS) (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002: 171). This was a conference of over 2,000 delegates representing opposition parties and a plethora of civil society organisations, which managed to appoint a new government.<sup>8</sup> However, Mobutu’s coup three months later and the 1996 international campaign against him meant the ushering in of a new authoritarian regime and the loss of the more vocal and formally organised resistance.

The second event was the spilling-over of the Rwandan genocide into the DRC. The Rwandan genocide needs to be understood in two stages: the first, in which the Hutu Interahamwe killed up to 800,000 Tutsis, Twa and moderate Hutus in Rwanda and the Congolese aftermath; and a second, in which the Tutsi-led AFDL along with the APR (Armée Patriotique Rwandaise) killed 300,000 Hutu refugees, militias and civilians during the 1996–97 military campaign in the DRC (Young 2002: 13–14). As such, its effects were regional, not only as an ignition factor for the Congo Wars, but also as an impact on how politics and war in the Great Lakes region began to be determined by a pro-anti-Kagame—Tutsi division (Prunier 2009: xxxi; Stearns 2011: 8). Since then, the genocide has marked Rwanda’s need for security in Eastern DRC, in addition to its economic agendas. For Rwanda, the fulfilment of these security and economic agendas largely depends on intervening in the DRC. Yet the two wars that Rwanda has led in the DRC have both bolstered and endangered Rwanda’s interests.

The third and fourth events were the two complex, multi-state wars of 1996 (AFDL/APR war) and 1998 (RCD War) or war of liberation and war of aggression, as Ndaywel è Nziem prefers to call them (2011: 268–72). The full-blown militarisation that these two conflicts provoked was due not just to the circumstances of inter-state war, but also to the fact that civilians were extensively targeted and engaged in the war effort. The AFDL campaign was aimed at: (1) dismantling the refugee camps where Interahamwe genocidaires from Rwanda were living, to prevent them reorganising; and (2) ousting Mobutu, who had become a source of insecurity in the region.<sup>9</sup> The campaign had US support, but also crucial to its success were the interventions of Angola and France and the mobilisation of Mai Mai militias and factions of the Congolese military.

The RCD war began as a US-backed Rwandan–Ugandan–Burundian effort to oust Laurent Desirée Kabila, allied to an internal movement called the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD). It then encountered the response of the Angolan, Namibian, Chad, Zimbabwean armies and Mai Mai militias. These militias sided with Laurent Desirée Kabila because they had a historical and ideological connection with him as a revolutionary figure.<sup>10</sup> They also responded out of nationalist sentiment to what they saw as an invasion. The Map 3.1 provides an orientation to the complex system of alliances in the region.

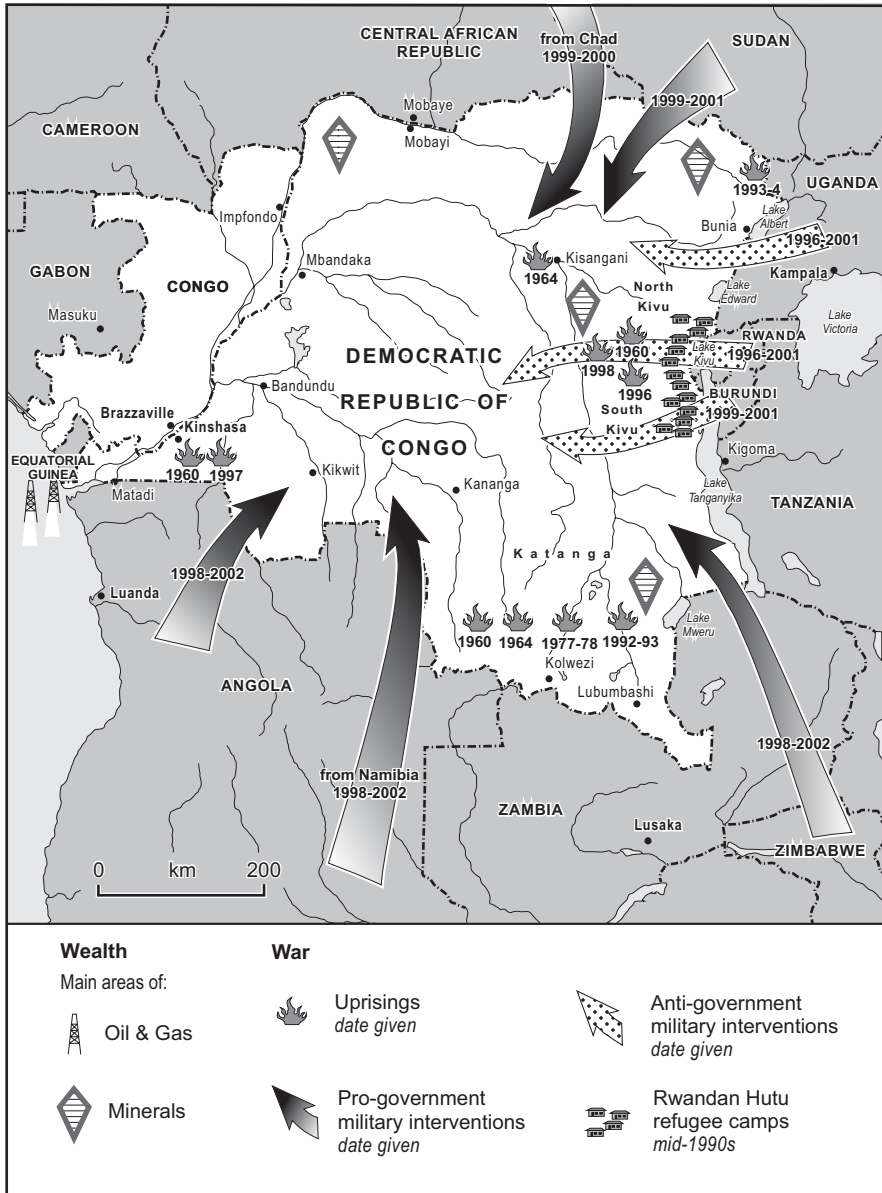
This map does not include the broader international alliances. Aside from the already mentioned US support of the Rwandan-led coalition, Chad and the CAR supported Kabila with the help of France, Namibia and Sudan and with Libyan aid (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002: 240; Scherrer 2002: 255). In the east, it was the Mai Mai militias, mainly those of General Dunia and General Padiri, which were able to contain the actions of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. Despite this, Mai Mai representation was subsequently undermined in the peace negotiations. This has created resentment amongst those who fought for Kabila, and after various failed DDR (Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration of national armed groups) attempts many have rejoined the Mai Mai militias.

The dynamics of foreign occupation, the involvement of popular classes in the conflict and different conflict management solutions have created what Ndaywel calls a 'giant octopus' (2011: 282). The significance of these four events goes beyond a dynamic of war and state-making. They combine genocide, the toppling of Mobutu's dictatorship and two multi-state wars, with one of the highest civilian death tolls since World War II.<sup>11</sup> A common pattern has been the conquest of territory, typically through raids, and the usual response of civilians has been flight (Pillay 2010: Ch. 2; Redress 2006: 20–2).<sup>12</sup> However, this has also been a main reason for people to engage in war, making civilians rely on their own devices for protection. Additionally, the AFDL and the RCD wars, which were brought under the rubric of national liberation, first against Mobutu and then against Laurent Desirée Kabila, have also been factors in funnelling political aspirations through the participation in war.

#### *Violent transition (2003–6)*

The transition brought significant hope, especially around the ratification of the new constitution and, in 2006, the first democratic elections since independence. But it also consolidated the positions of the strongest actors and was marred by violent episodes. The more meaningful peace agreement was achieved in Sun City (South Africa) in 2002. Earlier, the Lusaka peace agreement of 1999, signed at the instance of the AU, Zambia and South Africa in particular, and of the UN Secretary General, from which the UN authorised MONUC, just

*Everyday resistance, peacebuilding and state-making*



*Map 3.1* Regional alliances and interventions in the DRC wars of 1996 and 1998  
Source: Smith (2003: 91)

'froze the armies in their positions, but did not stop the fighting' (ICG 2000: iii). It was not until the assassination of Laurent Kabila in January 2001, when his son Joseph Kabila took his place, that the different warring parties felt a renewed stimulus for negotiation.<sup>13</sup> Shortly after, Joseph Kabila met Rwandan president Kagame in Washington and, within days, Rwanda, Uganda and some rebel groups agreed to a UN-backed withdrawal.

The Sun City peace agreement managed to reunite the country, establish a transitional government, expel most foreign parties and pacify the western part of the country. It was also the first agreement to see the realisation of an Inter-Congolese Dialogue. However, despite the fact that from this agreement onwards the DRC was officially dubbed a 'post-conflict context', conflict has continued, leaving a situation of 'formal peace and informal war' (Marriage 2013). The transitional government formula of 1+4 placed Joseph Kabila as president, supported by four vice-presidents, each representing one of the warring parties: RCD, Mouvement de Libération du Congo (MLC), the Government and the opposition.<sup>14</sup> The main hierarchy of the newly created FARDC was also made up of representatives of these parties. As Ahamed notes, the UN and EU's strategy of peace from very early on was one of sustaining warlords (2006: 288). Despite the participation of over 360 organisations and historical opposition parties in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, the agreement was largely a settlement amongst armed men, leaving the civil society as a passive spectator (Hoebeke 2006).

During the transition, other significant conflicts took place. In the Ituri district, violence between the Hema and Lendu communities had begun in 1999, and by 2003 fears of a possible genocide prompted the first ever EU-led peacekeeping operation outside Europe (European Union 2003; Fahey 2011; Veit 2008; Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2004b). Between 2006 and 2007 post-electoral violence took the lives of 300 people (MONUC Human Rights Division and OCHA 2007). Some significant events were the clashes between Kabila's Republican Guard and MLC supporters in Kinshasa in August 2006 and March 2007 and the shooting of Bundu dia Kongo followers in several towns of Bas-Congo. Additionally, the formation of the CNDP and the FDLR signalled that the main political stakes in the conflict were still largely unresolved.

#### *Cyclical conflict and repetitive responses (2006–16)*

The decade following the 2006 elections has been marked by three dynamics feeding back into cyclical conflicts. The protagonists have been Rwandan-backed armed groups (CNDP/M-23); the Mai Mai militias, which mushroomed around the failure of the first significant demobilisation process in 2007; the FDLR; the Government; and the FARDC. The first dynamic is the confrontation/

instrumentalisation between the DRC and Rwanda, which has fuelled the creation and maintenance of armed groups fighting proxy wars for economic, political and security gains. The second and third dynamics go together as they form the pattern of responses addressing the conflicts. One is the repeated shallow and uncommitted negotiations; the other is a reliance on military means. The post-transition period, which needed to consolidate state authority and peace, has, rather, pluralised state authority, and in the eastern provinces has seen an increasingly militarised environment. In order to better understand this complex decade, this section examines the three dynamics separately.

*DRC–Rwanda instrumentalisations and confrontations*

One source of the sour relations between Rwanda and the DRC has been the FDLR. Ever since the AFDL war in 1996 Rwanda has claimed that a weak DRC is a threat to its security, providing refuge to dissident FDLR-Interahamwe (Braeckman 2012; Clark 2002a; Pomfret 1997). The FDLR is a group created in 2000 from Rwanda's ex-army officials, members of the Habyarimana Government and the old Rwandan Hutu-dominated Interahamwe militias that crossed the border into Zaire at the time of the Rwandan genocide. Although it states its ultimate aim to be the ousting of Kagame and the re-establishment of a plural and social government in Rwanda, its presence and evolution in the DRC relates to a series of complex factors. Despite its fears of being tried in Rwanda for crimes of genocide, during its almost 20 years in the DRC it has managed to establish rule in many areas, formed families and created a series of military and commercial networks with the DRC Government, the FARDC and some Mai Mai militias (Group Jeremie Representative 2 2010; Hege 2009). In several locations in North and South Kivu it has been in symbiosis with the FARDC to exploit mines (UN Group of Experts 2005: para.158–169; Global Witness 2010a). For the populations of South Kivu and Shabunda in particular, the fact that a self-defence group (Raïa Mutomboki) has been able to expel the FDLR is evidence that neither the DRC, nor Rwanda, nor the diplomatic community present in the DRC has a real commitment to stopping it.

In its 20 years in the DRC, the FDLR has not only consolidated its standing as a destabilising factor, accused of committing atrocities against the civilian population, but has also consolidated its standing as an exchange currency in the DRC–Rwanda relations. The DRC has used it to confront and maintain leverage against Rwanda. Observers note that the problem of the FDLR may be overstated, facilitating a justification for intervening politically and militarily in the DRC in pursuit of other agendas (Autesserre 2006: 6–7; Lemarchand 2009: 275–6; Prunier 2009: 322; UN Group of Experts 2002: para. 69). Although this group once claimed to represent the legitimate Rwandan Government and numbered 20,000 troops, today the threat that it represents to Rwanda is more political than military, as it has only about 1,500 members (ICG 2003: 5; UN



Group of Experts 2015a: para.47). The presence of the FDLR has underpinned the justifications for the two main revolts of the post-transition period, supported by Rwanda (UN Group of Experts 2004: paras 65–7; 2005: paras 185–6; Stearns 2012a; UN Group of Experts 2012a, 2012b). One was led by the CNDP and the other by the M-23, taking place in the two post-electoral periods of 2007 and 2012, respectively.

The CNDP was created in 2006 by General Nkunda and several other renegades after a failed reintegration process.<sup>15</sup> It claimed the need to protect the Tutsi population against the FDLR and to guarantee their access to land and political participation. General Nkunda, who had already fought under the APR and RCD in 1996 and 1998, became the perfect solution for Rwanda to maintain a political, military and economic influence in the Kivus, and Rwanda's support afforded him the capacity to rise as a defender of the Tutsi community (Prunier 2009: 322). As a charismatic, university-educated evangelical pastor and military leader with a national discourse for the defence of minorities, Nkunda gathered as much popular as elite support, especially from within his Tutsi community of Rutshuru and Masisi (Mazanza Kindulu and Nlandu Tsasa 2009: 200; Prunier 2009: 323). This support and Nkunda's own personality reflect that he was no pawn operating within anyone else's agenda. Additionally, portions of the DRC Government have also supported Nkunda. For instance, Vice-President Ruberwa and Governor Serufuli supplied arms (Stearns 2008: 248; US Ambassador Haykin 2009). Public support in Masisi and Rutshuru, linked to the network of elite alliances that go as far as Kigali, made Nkunda both a threat and a necessary ally for the DRC Government.

Nkunda had been operating a parallel administration in Masisi, Rutshuru and Nyirangongo (three territories of the North Kivu province) since 2004. This entailed a parallel decision-making structure, parallel police, a parallel army and different regimes of labour and taxation. The formal launch of the CNDP comprised several thousand troops. This strength was seen in the violent attacks they were able to carry out. In 2004, General Nkunda and General Mutebusi attacked Bukavu, the capital of South Kivu, which was host to one of the largest MONUC deployments in DRC. Claiming to stop the genocide against the Banyamulengue, they subjected Bukavu's residents to systematic crimes against humanity for a week (Zeebroek 2008: 9). The most destabilising of these attacks came in the post-election period between 2006 and 2007, when a series of clashes between the CNDP, the FDLR, Mai Mai militias and the Government threatened to tear apart the transition. As observed below, the agreements reached in order for this violence to cease were the cause, six years later, of the CNDP transforming into the M-23 and of one of the most severe crises in the post-transition period.

The second CNDP uprising, under the name of M-23, followed a similar path. After elections in 2012, Bosco Ntaganda (instead of General Nkunda), led



a movement of desertion within the army, taking command in several territories in North Kivu (Masisi and Rutshuru) and seizing the town of Goma in November 2012.<sup>16</sup> The responses to this uprising were familiar. Rwanda and Uganda denied any involvement, while UN and Human Rights Watch reports argued the opposite (Human Rights Watch 2012; Rwandan Foreign Affairs Ministry 2012; UN Group of Experts 2012a). The DRC Government entered into discussions with Angola to secure support in case of a full-on invasion by these governments (Radio Okapi 2009). Up to 650,000 people were displaced, war crimes were reported and Kabila called on the population to attend to the 'obligation to resist the imposition of war [and] for everyone to participate in the defence of the national sovereignty'.<sup>17</sup> Several armed groups were formed as a popular response to this uprising. Some of these were attached to the DRC and neighbouring governments, others were part of the ongoing popular response to the constant instability of the preceding decade. The official responses from the DRC Government and the UN, aiming for the reintegration of troops, have been claimed to be 'dead-ends' precisely because the old reintegration strategies have weakened the army, incentivised the taking up of arms and ultimately increased militarisation and reproduced violence (Eriksson Baaz and Verweijen 2012).

The DRC response to these two uprisings has been contradictory. On the one hand, encouraged by the UN and the diplomatic community, there have been a series of programmes to integrate Nkunda's troops in the FARDC. On the other hand, the DRC Government has supported the FDLR and Mai Mai groups, especially PARECO and the Alliance des Patriotes pour un Congo Libre et Souverain against Nkunda and Ntaganda, respectively, in an attempt to confront Rwanda's hegemony (UN Group of Experts 2008b: para. 18). As discussed below, this enters into the logic of giving primacy to military means and the assertion of state authority over political negotiations.

#### *Negotiations without commitment*<sup>18</sup>

The second dynamic characterising the 2006–16 decade is flawed political agreements. Negotiations have been sought by all parties, including the diplomatic community, but they have lacked commitment. Particularly notable are the 2007 agreement with the CNDP, the Goma Accords of 2008, the 23 March agreements and the 2013 Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF). Their focus on demobilisation and the reintegration of armed groups in the FARDC has created a lose-lose scenario. When successful, these agreements have contributed to the mosaic of armed groups which comprise the FARDC and have offered warring parties a privileged standpoint from which to continue pursuing their agendas; when they have been unsuccessful, conflict has erupted again. Additionally, as seen below, negotiations have almost always implied an agreement to use military means, which has increased instability.

In the 2007 negotiations between the DRC government and the CNDP, it was agreed to reintegrate CNDP members into the army under the name of *mixage*,<sup>19</sup> but the outcome was the following:

Nkunda's commanders continued to respond to their own chain of command, meeting regularly in Nkunda's headquarters and launching operations independently [...]. Most importantly, they were put back on the army payroll. With 3,500 declared soldiers at the beginning of *mixage*, Nkunda benefited from over US\$70,000 each month in salaries. (Stearns 2008: 253)<sup>20</sup>

Thus, CNDP consolidated its positions, especially along the border with Rwanda, and caused further violence (Stearns 2008: 254). Two subsequent referent agreements were agreed to as a result. First, the Goma Accords of January 2008 were a comprehensive strategy for reintegration of all armed groups including CNDP, PARECO and several Mai Mai militias. They established the Amani Leo programme in which the Programme de Stabilisation et de Reconstruction des Zones sortant des Conflits Armés (STAREC) came to light, and a series of military operations in which the DRC and Rwanda and the DRC with MONUC/MONUSCO targeted the FDLR and Mai Mai militias. Despite the initial hype about the value of these agreements, by August 2008 the CNDP had withdrawn from the Goma Accords and was threatening to take over Goma. A second agreement was reached on 23 March (the 23 March agreement) as a bilateral agreement between the CNDP and the DRC Government. Similar to the *mixage* process, the 23 March agreement established that CNDP troops would integrate with the FARDC but would not be deployed outside the Kivus, essentially provoking a change of uniforms only (MONUSCO – ISSSS/STAREC liaison Officer 2010; MONUSCO Political Affairs Officer (no. 149) 2010). For Rwanda this meant the fulfilment of important security and economic agendas; for the DRC it was a compromise, encouraged by the diplomatic community, to reinforce state presence in the area.

As already seen in Chapter 1, it was not just the military positions CNDP members were granted; they were also granted oversight over refugees returning to the region. Through the Amani Leo programme, the Permanent Local Committees for Reconciliation were set up to ensure the peaceful return and accommodation of refugees in North and South Kivu. The need for a negotiated approach was due to the fact that the land holdings and even the houses of these refugees may have been redistributed by the customary chief, occupied by the military or the police, sold or taken by an authority (Batenda 2010; UN Habitat representative 2011; Université Catholique de Bukavu Professor 2009). Particularly in North Kivu, negotiations at the grassroots level turned into a geopolitical exercise. This was due to the fact that identification and nomination of refugees is made through the UNHCR/DRC/Rwanda Tripartite Agreement, but is enacted locally. So nominations were largely done by the

CNDP on behalf of the DRC Government. As such, many so-called autochthonous residents of Masisi, as well as of Walikale and Rutshuru, have argued that it is a tactic for settling Rwandan populations in Congo (President of Civil Society Masisi Centre 2011).

Interestingly, residents are not the only ones to have this perception. According to a UNHCR officer, Rwanda is using this strategy to such effect:

The people that want to come into Walikale and Lubero are not Congolese; it is Kigali that dictates that. There is not a lot of population there, so those who live there feel really threatened. There is a lot of space. The strategy is that they allow for those new settlers to come in and compensate them with development projects. We need to do that very slowly. People in Walikale are the people from the hills, with provincial characters, we need to convince them. We need to reduce the dependence of people on the customary chief. We need to give a land title to each of them and create the conditions so that investors can come to bring development. But for that we need to train the customary chief and give him an alternative also. It is a political but also a humanitarian project. It is the only way, otherwise we risk that there is war again. We can put pressure on Rwanda in regards to the FDLR but their policy of establishing themselves in Congo is not possible, they receive 50 per cent of their budget from overseas, but if the West stops their aid, they can always go to China. Rwanda has a de facto occupation of Rutshuru and Masisi, and it is now trying to take Walikale and Lubero because there are a lot of minerals there, we can only try that this is done in a calm and peaceful way. (UNHCR Officer 2010)

Shared authority is fundamental to the practice of deploying state authority. Yet it externalises violent consequences onto the population. The M-23 uprising was a wake-up call to many that a serious peace agreement was needed for the political issues underlying the conflict to be addressed. The failed state thesis and the turn to the local sources of conflict have continued a trend in which Congolese endogenous factors of conflict are the ultimate target of policies. In February 2013, the PSCF was signed by eleven countries (DRC, Angola, Republic of Congo, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Central African Republic (CAR), Burundi, Rwanda, South Sudan and Zambia) with UN, AU, Southern African Development Community and International Conference on the Great Lakes Region representatives as witnesses (Framework Agreement 2013). This agreement recognised the need for greater commitment to peace on the part of the DRC, countries of the broader region and donors. It placed particular responsibilities on each party: the DRC to undertake security sector reform, to consolidate state authority, reforms, development and democratisation; the countries of the region to stop meddling in each other's affairs and stop supporting armed groups; the donors to renew their commitment. This agreement triggered several developments. Significant international pressure from donors was applied on Rwanda to stop financing armed groups in the DRC. Ntaganda surrendered at the US embassy in March 2013 and is currently being tried by the International Criminal Court

(ICC 2015). This was a step forward in comparison to the case of Nkunda, who, despite the indictment the DRC has against him, has lived under house arrest in Rwanda since January 2009. However, there has been limited progress on several fronts. Armed groups continue to operate, an increasing number of ex-M-23 members have been granted amnesty and the democratisation process is currently threatened by an uncertain third round of elections.

A common feature of these agreements, from the Goma Accords to the PSCE, is their reliance on military means. Looked at from the perspective of the challenges the political path has faced, it seems that military means have gathered greater commitment. Yet military operations have created greater insecurity, and armed groups have not been neutralised (Human Rights Watch 2015; UNSG 2015). Agreements have achieved greater militarisation while fuelling conflict.

### *Peace through military means*

The third and final dynamic of the decade after the 2006 elections has been the reliance on military means. For rural populations, military operations and the continuation of armed groups have added to the perception that self-defence militias are the only recourse to achieve security. The continued existence of these militias has justified the need to increase military intervention. Further, political compromises through the negotiations seen above and the lack of means to deploy state administrators have also entailed the deployment of the military (at times ex-armed groups) as a representation of authority. This has increased the reliance on self-defence militias for the purpose of protection both against the military and against other armed groups.

The 2008 Goma Conference formalised a rapprochement between the DRC and Rwanda, encouraging a series of formal military operations against the FDLR backed by MONUC, and giving the operations special powers, funding and immunities. The fact that a military operation was prioritised illustrates a strengthening of statebuilding, but through sharing means of coercion and extraction and informalised governance formulas based on scattering the army across the territory of North and South Kivu.

Between January 2009 and April 2012 three military operations were launched: Umoja Wetu, Kimya II and Amani Leo (Radio Okapi 2012a) (Table 3.1). These operations provoked an outcry. Although they managed to dismantle certain FDLR chains of command and camps, as well as dislodging them from the mine sites they had occupied, they did so with a big toll on civilians (Oxfam International 2009). The FDLR retaliated against the population in areas where the FDLR had set up a parallel administration. The FARDC and the RDE, for their part, engaged in severe human rights abuses in the course of their military action. Several NGOs, local and international, called for their suspension, and some for the demilitarisation of villages (Radio Okapi 2010). The

**Table 3.1** Features and achievements of the 2009–11 Goma Accords operations

Name of operation	Dates	Duration	Area of operation	Troops	Success
Umoja Wetu (Our unity)	January 2009	35 days	Meridional North Kivu	FARDC–RDF	500 FDLR dislodged, then relocated
Kimya II (Silence)	March 2009	3 months	South Kivu	FARDC/ MONUC	Mai Mai and FDLR attacked
Amani Leo (Peace Today)	January 2010	15 months	STAREC areas	FARDC/ MONUC	FDLR substantially touched, leadership in judicial process. Several groups relocated and still operating as allies with Mai Mai militias

Source: ICG (2009, 2010)

popular rejection of these operations led the Government to introduce operation Amani Leo. In the eyes of a commander deployed in South Kivu, the problem with the previous operations was that the population was not involved or consulted (FARDC Colonel (no. 129) 2010).

Nevertheless, with or without popular support, these operations represented one of the backbones of the restoration of state authority. An Amani Leo FARDC operations officer defined the strategy as follows:

It is not about exterminating all FDLR like saying – there is no one FDLR member that breathes – no, that is not possible; what we mean is that in one or two months we can eradicate the FDLR phenomenon, as a military organisation here in our country, with all its capacity to operate, to set up barriers on the roads and get taxes, to continue exploiting the minerals like they want, to have the political control of certain localities. Once eradicated, we can restore state authority all across the country. (Amani Leo Operations Officer 2010)

MONUSCO's founding mandate supports this vision with its goals, including the termination of military groups, support for the Government to better protect the population and support for the restoration of state authority in areas held by armed groups (UN Security Council 2010: 3). The question is whether state authority has indeed been restored or, as seen in Chapter 1, shared or delegated, with coercive and extractive effects externalised onto residents.

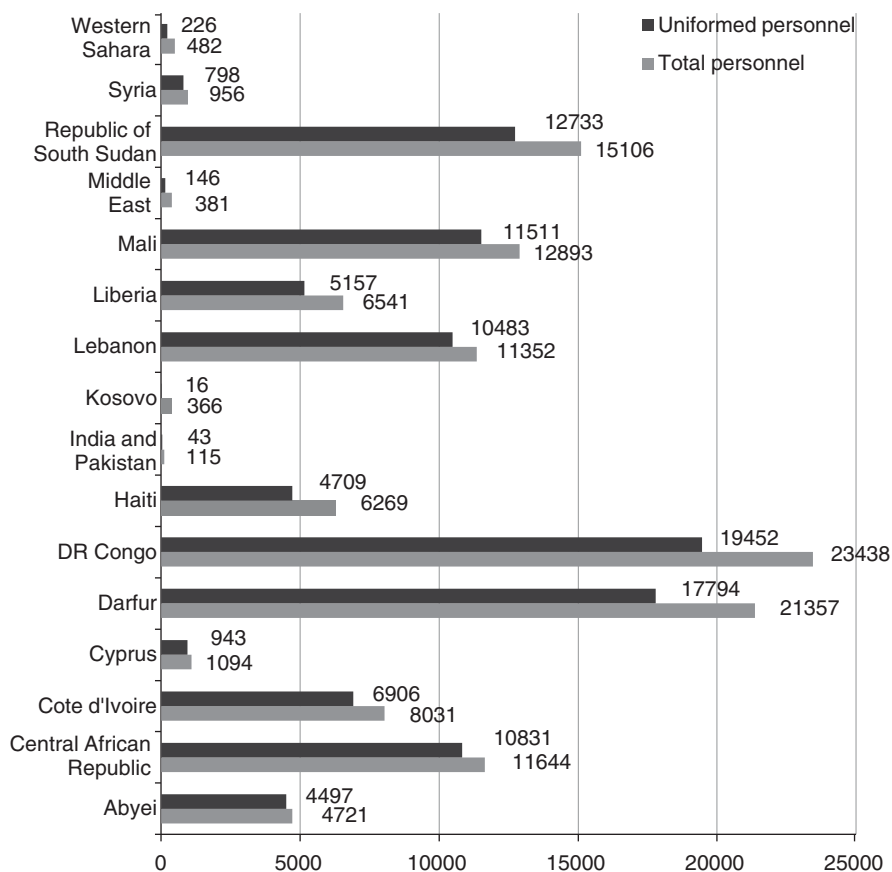
During the last few years, and especially since the M-23 uprising, new rounds of operations have been approved, signalling a 'clean slate' policy in regional and international approaches to the DRC conflict. Aside from the political commitments discussed above, the UN Security Council has given the green light on unilateral offensive operations. To this was added the presence of Martin Kobler as the representative of the UN Secretary General in the DRC between 2013 and 2015. A German politician who understands the military means à la Clausewitz, as an extension of the political, Kobler recognised the mechanisms that give way to conflicts of citizenship, identity and land, but firmly believed in the military neutralisation of armed groups. The deployment of over 3,000 troops from South Africa, Malawi and Tanzania managed to clear out the M-23 with the Intervention Brigade (IB). The initial hype created with this first round of operations clashes with the overall picture of instability (Vogel 2014b).

The conclusion that is derived from the over 20 years of conflict is that a truly engaged political process has yet to be seen. Without it, conflict keeps erupting and military means are prevalent. After the last major crisis, different national, regional and international actors seem to have renewed their commitment to more serious solutions, tackling the conflict on several levels. Yet the everyday life of the rural classes has not changed substantially. The proxy wars between the DRC and Rwanda, their mutual instrumentalisation, the reliance on the military to assert state authority in a political context that has an important democratic and development deficit have only entrenched the conflict. Peacebuilding strategies, however, have not been external to these processes.

### **The UN and the contradictions of peacebuilding**

The UN's peacebuilding strategies in the DRC are more reflective of the evolution of frameworks for conflict resolution than of the actual evolution of the conflict. Having been reluctant to intervene for a number of years, the UN turned the DRC into one of the first 'laboratories' for *post-conflict* statebuilding (Zeebroek 2008). After the more significant deployment of UN peacekeeping forces in 2001, the two missions – MONUC (until 2010) and MONUSCO (from 2010) – have been the epicentres of international peacebuilding in the DRC. Although the UN declared the DRC a threat to international peace and security in order to justify its intervention, a late and controversial arms embargo and a lack of response to a war of aggression against a member state were evidence that the image of Zaire/DRC as a failed state had become the guidance for action (UN Security Council 1996; 1999; 2003).<sup>21</sup> The UN's actions have been contradictory. Its main priorities of civilian protection and the reconstruction of state authority have been compromised by improvised and experimental approaches. Further, its role has been instrumentalised and 'marginalised' by member states in the pursuit of side agendas.<sup>22</sup>

The priorities of civilian protection and reconstitution of state authority are seen in both MONUC and MONUSCO landmark resolutions (UN Security Council 1999, 2000, 2010). The weight and responsibilities of MONUC/MONUSCO have consistently grown, making it one of the largest missions in UN history. Its tasks include civil administration reform, democracy promotion, civil society capacity-building, demobilisation (DDR(RR)) and SSR. MONUC helped to maintain the integrity of the DRC and was a major actor behind the democratic elections of 2006. MONUC/MONUSCO has been, in many instances, the sole guardian of peace and security in parts of the Kivus. However, its impact remains limited. The graphs in figures 3.1–3.4 illustrate how the DRC ranks highly on the list of UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) deployments in terms of

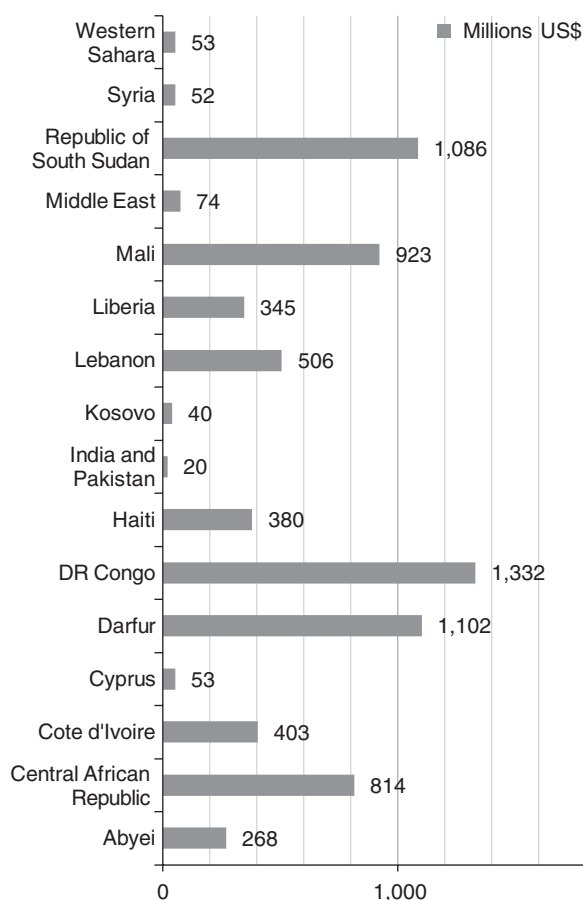


*Figure 3.1* DPKO uniformed and total personnel



personnel, military deployment and budget. Yet, when taking other aspects into account and, in comparison to other missions, the patchy, contradictory and multidimensional character of peacebuilding is revealed.

Englebert and Tull's figures represent a period in which the war was coming to an end. Yet, when compared with other missions, they continue to show a relative commitment. In 2016 the UN spent an average of \$17.9 per year per capita in the DRC in comparison to \$22.23 in Kosovo, \$91.15 in South Sudan and \$111.3 in Lebanon.<sup>23</sup> Even at the peak of the conflict, between 1998 and 2003, the DRC did not rank highly in the amount garnered by the Office for the



*Figure 3.2* DPKO budget by mission  
Source: DPKO (2016)

Everyday resistance, peacebuilding and state-making

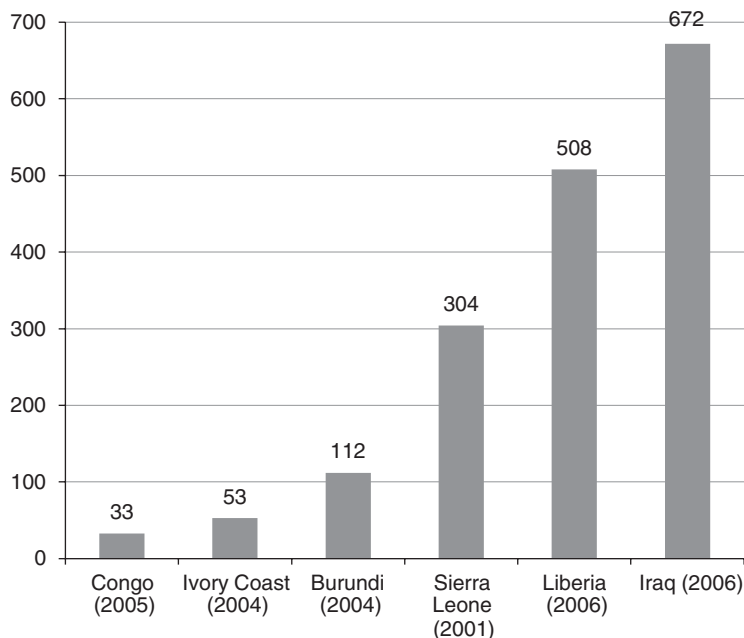


Figure 3.3 Peacekeepers/100,000 people  
Source: Englebert and Tull (2008: 130–1)

Table 3.2 Comparison of private contributions to OCHA appeals

DRC	Great Lakes	SE Europe	East Timor	Afghanistan	Iraq
January 1999–June 2003 (millions of US dollars)					
1.4	0.5	77.2	2.7	65.4	10.3
Total humanitarian assistance, January 1999–June 2003 (millions of US dollars)					
349	574	1,493	180	1,741	1,044

Source: Hawkins (2004)

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) appeals for humanitarian assistance (Table 3.2).

The disparities between needs, goals and actual funding reflect the political nature of aid.<sup>24</sup> What is relevant is that the agenda of social and political transformation stemming from the definition of the DRC state as *non-existent*, where statebuilders start ‘from scratch’, is contradictory to some donor agendas (MONUC Political Affairs Officer (no. 7) 2009). A complex political environment and long-term objectives also largely exceed the resources at hand. This has

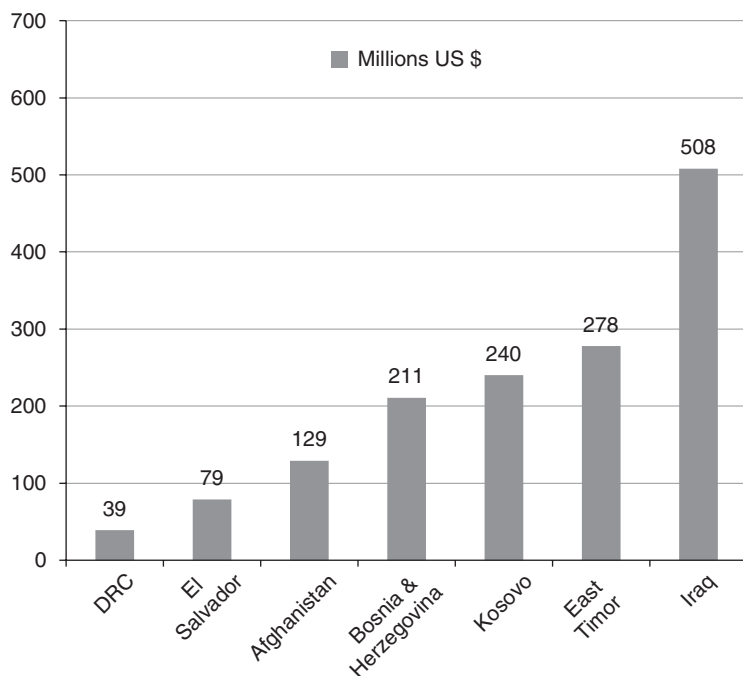


Figure 3.4 Reconstruction budget 2004  
Source: Englebort and Tull (2008: 130)

been noted in the shortcomings of civilian protection and state authority reconstruction. Despite the large deployment of peacekeepers and despite being authorised to use force, MONUC/MONUSCO only started military operations in conjunction with the FARDC in 2005. Until the authorisation of the IB in 2013, it only once launched an operation autonomously, in September 2010 (UN Security Council 2013; Zeebroek 2008: 9).<sup>25</sup> Although the DRC Government has the primary responsibility for providing security to its citizens, there have been particular situations where MONUC/MONUSCO has been seen as directly responsible for failing to provide civilian protection. In 2004, MONUC failed to stop the aforementioned attacks in Bukavu, which lasted for one week. In 2008, the Kiwanja massacre entailed the killing of 67 people 3 km away from the MONUC military camp (UN Joint Human Rights Office 2009: 3). For several weeks in 2010, at a location just over 32 km from the MONUSCO base, a coalition of Mai Mai Cheka and FDLR combatants committed 387 rapes, mostly of women but also of men, girls and boys, in addition to other forms of torture and abuse (UN Joint Human Rights Office 2011: 4). In 2014, a massacre in

Mutarule, in South Kivu, resulting in the deaths of 34 people and injuries to 25 more, was ignored until two days later, 'despite repeated requests for assistance' (Human Rights Watch 2014; UN Group of Experts 2015a; para. 140). The fact that peacekeepers obey their own countries' rules of engagement makes them subject to the risk that each country wants to expose its soldiers to (Amani Leo Operations Officer 2010; FARDC General (no. 146) 2010; Informal Conversation with Pakistani Battalion Blue Helmet, Bukavu 2010; MONUSCO Political Affairs Officer (no. 63) 2010). Even so, failure to respond in these situations is linked to the UN's strategy of not engaging except when in support of the DRC Government or against specific armed groups.

The aim of reconstructing state authority has seen the UN and donors entering the same logic of informal politics that they were trying to tackle. Ever since its first deployment, MONUC has prioritised strategies which are conducive to the formation of government and the restructuring of the security sector. This has relied on power-sharing agreements between the warring parties, which has not only given an incentive to take up arms but also created a contradiction to the aims of fostering peace and promoting democracy (Barrios and Ahamed 2010; Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2009: 474). As declared by the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General Heile Menkeros: 'MONUC [is] buying peace' (cited in Alden, Thakur, and Arnold 2011: 125). This is not just a matter of asserting trade-offs in a difficult political process, but one of articulating the contradictory relationship that state-making has with peace. The UN has been instrumental in providing legitimacy and, to some extent, logistics to articulate patchy formulas of informal and shared authority with neighbouring states and through the military. The result has been the creation of new sources of violence. From different positions, Verhogen, Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers illustrate how peacebuilding has relied on forms of privatised governance, which have been constitutive of structural violence dynamics, ultimately producing and reproducing sources of insecurity (Verhoeven 2009: 406; Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2009: 484). For Trefon this is due to peacebuilding in the DRC being a strategy of 'mismanagement, hypocrisy, powerlessness and sabotage' (2011: ix). Reform and aid strategies, both intentionally and unintentionally, either fail or reproduce the problems they were trying to solve (Trefon 2011: 9). This is facilitated by a culture of secrecy and impunity and a climate of mutual instrumentalisation and competition between national and international actors (Trefon 2011: 14–18).

State-making and peacebuilding as seen in the actions of MONUC/MONUSCO are contradictory: there is a disconnect between aims and funding and the conflicting agendas of member states. This has been further challenged by the fact that processes and certain policies for building state authority have themselves been contradictory to other priorities such as civilian protection and peacebuilding. The fact that the main sources of legitimate authority for

intervention rely on these priorities, yet are also its main shortcomings, points to deeper incoherencies in the nature of the processes.

### **Militarisation, plural authority and extraction: the context of resistance**

Africa's World War could be seen as a series of violent conflicts that started with a coup against Mobutu orchestrated by a multi-state coalition and joined by a popular revolt. What followed was an even greater multi-state war which has continued, after a violent peace transition, with a series of cyclical conflicts until today. These latter conflicts are the result of the continuous desire by popular classes for change; of changes and continuities in the security, political and economic interests of different countries in the region and their allies; and of the specific local dynamics around land, resources, political participation and commercial networks that were in place before the war but which have been exacerbated and crystallised through the war. During these periods, war and state-making have been determinants for the militarisation of the environment. This explains that the nature of resistance has been violent as well as covert. The plurality of new authorities, elites and alliances that has been forged across ideological and ethnic lines has fragmented both rule and resistance. The context has been marked by the use of violence in the pursuit of state security and economic agendas, even if through proxy armed groups. Resistance, as we will see, is not an anti-state or an anti-war movement but, rather, a negotiation, or at least a mitigation, of the everyday context of domination. Analyses of the sources of conflict tend to see the conflict as stemming from the particular dynamics of the DRC. This not only detaches the DRC from its history, it evades the interconnection of global political and economic dynamics. These are particularly important in understanding the conflict in its full political scope.

Throughout the whole period, multiple actors, including the UN, have fostered governance arrangements that have not always led to the creation of state authority or provided civilian protection. Although the UN has at times played a secondary role to donor countries' agendas, an examination of its policies illustrates that having statebuilding as a primary peacebuilding strategy has not only missed important dynamics of conflict but has also fostered violence inherent in the state-making process. An increasing reliance on military means, despite political agreements, has undermined these agreements, fuelled militarised resistance and exacerbated the dynamics of authoritarian militarised state power that is at the root of many current problems. An important implication of these multiple periods of conflict is that alongside multiple wars there are multiple statebuilding agendas. These have been mutually reinforcing, but also mutually undermining. In the DRC, war does not necessarily make the state, nor is the state the only actor in war; war has been seen as a useful and effective tool to pursue certain state agendas. Rather than centralising state

power and military power, wars have acted primarily against the population. They have left, at times, a scattered presence of military authority and have forced state and non-state actors to form contingent alliances. Although this is part of a continuing process, the dynamic of fostering informal governance arrangements has generated a cohabited context of citizens and military, exposing the inextricable relationships between war, state-making and resistance.

#### NOTES

- 1 For an overview of academic debates see: (Autesserre 2012a; Cuvelier, Vlassenroot, and Olin 2014; Turner 2007 Ch. 1).
- 2 Its latest mandate was extended until August 2016 (UN Security Council 2015).
- 3 A more general overview can be found in Pugh (2005); Williams (2008); World Bank (1997; 2007; 2012a).
- 4 E.g., ex-Minister Katumba Mwanke and Banro (UN Panel of Experts 2001: Annex II, p. 2 and Annex III, p. 7).
- 5 See, for instance, other sources for the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Mai Mai Yakutumba and Raïa Mutomboki in Stearns et al. (2013: 40–41); UN Group of Experts (2015a: para. 15; p. 25–38, 115).
- 6 See the debate about the rigidity of ethnic identities in Appiah (2001); Chandra (2006); Horowitz (2000).
- 7 An emphasis on regional actors is seen in Braeckman (2003). An emphasis on internal factors is seen in Lemarchand (2003); Prunier (2009); Turner (2007).
- 8 Etienne Tshisekedi of the UDPS was elected prime minister, though overthrown by Mobutu three months later (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002: 195).
- 9 Lanotte notes how, by the mid-1990s, rebel groups from Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola and, to lesser extent, the CAR and Zimbabwe had refuge in or directly fought in the DRC, e.g., UNITA against Angola; the ADF, the Lord's Resistance Army and the West Bank Nile Front against Museveni; and Sudan was raiding John Garang's rebel posts from northern Zaire (Lanotte 2003: 36).
- 10 Kabila, a historical nationalist leader who fought at the time of independence, formed part of Lumumba's cabinet and joined Pierre Mulele in one of the most serious uprisings against Mobutu (M'Bokolo 1980: 157).
- 11 See battle deaths in Roberts (2001: 159). For the debate on war-related deaths see: Coghlan et al. (2007); Human Security Research Group (2009, esp. Ch. 7); Stewart (2009). For the debate on the figures see: Human Security Research Group (2010); IRC and Burnet Institute (2010).
- 12 The DRC has one of the largest numbers of IDPs and refugees in the world (UNHCR – Democratic Republic of the Congo 2012a).
- 13 Kabila was shot by Rachidi Kasereka, one of his bodyguards. However, the real hand behind this murder is still discussed, not least because Kabila had created many enemies. Some strong theses point to the murder being attributable to Angola, some others point to more direct involvement of the US, inaugurating a period of more intense Western intervention.
- 14 Commission politique (RCD); Commission économique et financière (MLC); Commission pour la reconstruction et le développement (Gouvernement); Commission sociale et culturelle (Opposition and some Mai Mai groups) (Sun City Agreement 2002: Art. 1.c).

## *History and present of 'Africa's World War'*

- 15 Unless noted, general information in this and subsequent paragraphs in this section relies on Stearns (2008, 2012a); UN Group of Experts (2010b; 2012a; 2012b).
- 16 There has been debate as to whether they were the same movement or not. However, all official communiqués are signed as CNDP–M-23 (M23 2012). Jason Stearns argues that their leadership, funding and positions, especially in Masisi and Rutshuru, make them the same, with the M-23 having less social support than the CNDP in its heyday (Stearns 2012a: 48).
- 17 The UNHCR noted that there had been 650,000 new displaced since the beginning of 2012 and that its partners had reported extra-judicial killings and pillage (UNHCR – Democratic Republic of the Congo 2012b). Kabila's statement: Digital Congo (2012).
- 18 For the background and text of the agreements this section relies on Minani Bihuzo (2008).
- 19 *Mixage* is a process of demobilisation and reintegration in the army without redeployment. Troops are allowed to remain in their area but are mixed up with FARDC.
- 20 It is noteworthy that Jason Stearns was the coordinator of the Group of Experts on the Arms Embargo at the time.
- 21 Calls for action were based on the nature of Zaire as a failed state and not on the nature of the conflict (Kiwanuka 1996). Herman Cohen, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs at the time, stated that 'To say that [Congo-Kinshasa] has a government today would be a gross exaggeration' (cited in Young 2002: 24).
- 22 Trefon (2011) speaks of mutual instrumentalisations of national and international actors. Stearns (2012a: 63) argues that the UN has been 'politically marginalised' since 2006.
- 23 Calculations were made from the following: budget figures (DPKO 2016); total population per country, except for Kosovo (World Bank 2016); for Kosovo (UN Population Fund 2013).
- 24 These disparities reflect the intersecting political agendas of interveners and the challenges of coordination between different UN agencies, donors and aid agencies. These are widely researched issues. In relation to the DRC see: Pouligny (2006); Trefon (2011). Some of these issues have been addressed by MONUC/MONUSCO with its status as an integrated mission, which means 'to have a clear chain of command and central decision-making authority from which all UN country-activities can be coordinated' (Hänggi and Scherrer 2008: 8).
- 25 In September 2010 MONUSCO launched a unitary operation called Shop Window against the FDLR for the first time (OCHA information meeting, Kinshasa 2010).



## *Claims to legitimate authority and discursive attacks*

We don't believe in the authorities anymore. When you say ... 'there, that's the new administrator, everyone may clap but with a certain mockery ...' Him also, what is he going to do? (Peasant Union Member (no. 151) 2010)

We could wonder about the role of that whispered language within the political system of unanimity. It is, to my mind, a way of softening the overwhelming and restrictive official language in order to make it more bearable; it is an antidote. Irony and humour are the weapons of the powerless in the face of arbitrary ruling ... We can also see in it a runaway reaction ... But I think that it is more just to consider derision as a consciousness-raising exercise, and as a consequence, a way of social contestation. (Toulabor 2008: 112)

[I]t is in fact more plausible to contend that so far as the realm of ideology is concerned, no social order seems inevitable ... the imaginative capacity of subordinate groups to reverse and/or negate dominant ideologies is so widespread – if not universal – that it might be considered part and parcel of their standard cultural and religious equipment. (Scott 1985: 331)

### **Statebuilders and state-recipients, a pose**

**A**uthority is generally claimed with an underlying morality. Peacebuilding, and the reconstruction of state authority, is deployed as the *best* solution to the problems of war, authoritarianism and poverty (Chandler 2010a: 1). In Eastern DRC this authority claim has materialised as a discourse of protection and social change. Against this discursive construction, mockery, denigration and slandering operate as an intentional mechanism to deny the legitimacy and authority of peacebuilding. Resistance is not necessarily against the ideals of the good state, democracy, development and peace, but to the fact that neither protection nor social change is being delivered. By using the same language of peacebuilding, referring to the state, democracy, peace and development, the discourse is used as a platform for advancing alternative agendas. Peacebuilding discourse is not only resisted, but also subverted.

The three quotes above capture three ways in which discursive resistance takes place in the DRC. First, the union representative articulates what Scott calls the 'pose' (the roles that the powerless and the powerful adopt towards each other). The act of not clapping at a politician in a parade would be an act of denial of his/her share of pomp and deference, and with that, a delegitimisation of his/her authority. What Scott and this union representative convey is that resistance does not often operate as a direct defiance in front of authority. Generally, one may clap at the parade, but express reticence and discontent somewhere else. Secondly, resistance is to be found in how Congolese non-elites judge authorities from their lived experience, even if this is shown only in the 'whispered language' far from the hype of a politician's parade. Thirdly, discursive resistance illustrates that criticism is a form of resistance to the unanimity that peacebuilding claims, subverting the official discourse and revealing dissent.

Ideals constitute a platform on which both power and resistance operate. The claims to construct the good state, bring democracy, development and peace, become long-term claims on which peacebuilders and state-makers legitimise their interventions and demand consent. They are also discursive formulas to justify 'failure'. As John Heathershaw argues, the 'survival' of peacebuilding is due to the resilience of its discourse. Seen from the goals of transforming society through the construction of a positive peace, democracy and state–society relations, peacebuilding 'fails', and becomes a 'simulacra' of its own discourse (Heathershaw 2008). This captures the situation in the DRC, where, despite the continuation of war, the increasing authoritarianism and the deterioration of living conditions, peacebuilding survives on its discourse as a long-term claim to rearrange society under a particular worldview.<sup>1</sup> Simultaneously, these ideals become a way to hold statebuilders to account, to voice discontent and elaborate a vision of *how things should be*.

In Scotian terms, these ideals correspond to the battleground on which elite and non-elites' public and hidden transcripts are enacted. Although, as Heathershaw (2008) argues, peacebuilding contexts generate multiple transcripts, these two serve as a standpoint to observe how authority claims are laid out and how they are denied or mitigated. The dynamics of claiming authority while justifying and externalising failure turn peacebuilding's public transcript into what Barrington Moore calls the *moral authority of suffering* (1978: Ch. 2). Peacebuilding's discourse is projected with a sense of inevitability and unanimity, demanding consent, despite continuous armed conflict and deteriorating living conditions. These conditions, however, generate criticisms and political alternatives.

Although the hidden transcript cannot be simplistically seen as an arena of freedom, it provides a safer audience among relative equals.<sup>2</sup> The public transcript has several functions, including: concealment (hiding the nasty aspects

of power and elites' disagreement), unanimity (giving a sense of agreement between elites and non-elites and denying dissent), euphemism and stigma (beautifying power and uglifying dissent) and public parade (dramatising the grandeur of power) (Scott 1990: 45–66). These functions are visible in that peacebuilding's claim to authority is done by projecting an image of unanimity and grandeur. It also operates as concealment and stigma, as a way of externalising blame for failure and as a way to stigmatise dissent. They create a *pose*, illustrating that authority claims generate mutual constraints of behaviour on both authorities and subordinate classes and that consent is not 'the whole story' (Scott 1990: 2). In the DRC, although counter-discourses are part of the public domain, they are constructed in the safety of anonymity.

The chapter will proceed as follows. Firstly, it analyses peacebuilding's public transcript and its construction of a moral authority. Secondly, it analyses non-elites' hidden transcript. This latter part will be done in two sections, the first of which analyses mockery, denigration and slandering as ways of negating legitimacy and demanding accountability. These are illustrative of a more direct engagement with an authority claim and represent claim-regarding acts. The second analyses the redefinition of standard peacebuilding vocabulary, such as the 'state', 'democracy', 'peace' and 'development', where the creation of alternative political agendas is particularly visible. These are illustrative of self-regarding acts in so far as they subvert peacebuilding goals by simultaneously voicing how they are not being achieved and advancing alternative political agendas. Taking these factors together offers non-elites what Certeau sees as the 'opportunity' of transforming "belief" into "mistrust", into "suspicion", and indeed "denunciation" [...] to manipulate politically what serves as circular and objectless credibility for political life itself' (1984: 189).

### **Elite claims and the moral authority of suffering**

For Moore, authority implied obedience to the social arrangements by which 'some human beings extract an economic surplus from other human beings and turn them into culture' (1978: 17). In turn, 'pain and suffering [become] to a degree morally desirable [...] unavoidable or even inevitable' (Moore 1978: 80). Although Moore theorised this moral authority as the basis for obedience to some of the most tyrannical systems, in the DRC this moral authority enables elites to demand obedience and justify the continuation of war on the basis that they can provide the goods of peacebuilding, even if not right now.

The discordance between discourse and practice gives peacebuilding the moral justification to exercise its agenda and its power. The sense of inevitability

and necessity with which statebuilding is deployed serves two main functions: as a discourse of legitimacy and a justification for failure. Firstly, it has the capacity to create a shared vocabulary and meaning on which to justify authority. Subsequent claims attached to the position of authority (i.e. extracting taxes, negotiating international agreements, allowing foreign investments or articulating military operations) are premised on peacebuilding actors delivering the good state, democracy, development and peace. Secondly, the public transcript functions as a projection of state-making as necessary and inevitable in order to demand consent. Its failures, which are explained in previous chapters, relate to the continuation of conflict, worsening of living conditions, a militarisation of social and political life and increasing authoritarianism, and are externalised in a dramatisation of power doing all it can against an extremely adverse context. This section examines these two functions of authority claims and the justification of failure found in two main actors: the MONUC/MONUSCO and the Government.

#### *MONUC/MONUSCO*

MONUC was set up with the legalistic wording of the UN Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, but this was in the spirit of addressing the 'well-being and security of the population' as well as the 'adverse impact of the conflict on the human rights situation' (UN Security Council 1999: 2). Similarly, Resolution 1925, which changed MONUC to MONUSCO, established its priorities as: civilian protection, peace stabilisation and consolidation, and restoration of state authority (UN Security Council 2010). More than ever before, Resolution 1925 put the responsibility for peace and order on the Congolese Government, while defining the UN mission as an external supportive actor, primarily concerned with civilian protection and political oversight.

The success in civilian protection nevertheless remains limited. As seen in the previous chapter, the same peace agreements that have brought about a relative truce have legitimised armed actors and armed struggle as a vehicle for political power. Many of these agreements are at the basis of an almost blanket impunity operating in the DRC. Peacebuilding provides, in this case, the capacity to claim authority while externalising responsibility. One of the most criticised cases of neglect was the massacre in Kiwanja in 2008. The CNDP attacked the town, killing approximately 150 people 'half a mile' from the MONUC's base, hosting 138 peacekeepers (Human Rights Watch 2008: 1). The population protested against these events and the failure to protect them by throwing stones and Molotov cocktails at the UN compound in Goma (BBC 2008; CNN 2008; MONUC Civil Affairs Officer (no. 14) 2009; OCHA – MONUC 2008). For MONUC Civil Affairs, easing the intensity and persistence of these protests and criticisms

is about the population understanding what the UN mandate is about and its limits. As an officer in Kinshasa stated:

This is what we try to do now because there was lots of criticism towards MONUC from civil society on protection issues. Hopefully that is why we also have the logistic part as one of our pillars. We try to take them [civil society organisations] with us as much as we can on the ground, so that they see the situation on the ground and they can also inform the population and see how we can better protect people. We do that with the Government, so that they take responsibility and they don't just sit and criticise. (MONUC Civil Affairs Officer (no. 1) 2009)

The fact that protection depends on Congolese actors understanding 'the situation on the ground' and providing solutions reveals the dynamics of a discourse of legitimacy in the face of failure. But, contrary to the overall aim stated in the quote, criticism has not gone away.

In fact, a substantial review took place at the end of 2012, just after the crisis of the M-23 movement. A new 'robust mandate' was put in place, authorising the use of force for the purpose of attacking armed groups, together with a new political strategy aimed at addressing conflicts over land, corruption and impunity. This was due not only to pressures in the UN Security Council, whose 'P-3 were pushing for a quick exit strategy' (MONUSCO Officer (no. 166) 2014), but also to a realisation of previous mistakes in which, as a MONUSCO officer acknowledged, 'MONUSCO had been supporting a predatory state' (MONUSCO Officer (no. 166) 2014; MONUSCO Officer (no. 190) 2014). This illustrates the capacity for self-criticism and that reviews are done towards improvement. But the fact that responsibility for the continuation of war and statebuilding is placed on the Government allows for the portrayal of MONUSCO as a neutral third party mediating between political and military authorities and the civilian population, while establishing a rationale for its presence and command. The factual veracity of these claims is not as important as what they represent for the capacity to define the problem and the solution. For instance, speaking of the success of the IB that was authorised by the UN Security Council in response to the M-23, a MONUSCO officer indicated that: 'The UN is claiming that we won, but it is the FARDC that did most of the fighting, the IB was only supporting. The M-23 was defeated because it didn't have Rwandan support, Western FARDC commanders were brought in and the Eastern ones were taken back to Kinshasa, troops were well supplied' (MONUSCO Officer (no. 166) 2014). Still the public discourse is that lack of a proper army is the major obstacle for peace and one main reason for the UN presence.

Similarly, the new International Support Strategy for Security and Stabilisation, drafted in 2013, is based on errors committed by MONUC and MONUSCO in previous years (ISSSS 2013). Whereas this strategy had been operating as

counter-insurgency (clearing roads and points where armed groups operated, implanting socio-economic recovery and building state infrastructure), it is now focused on organising local community dialogues to make authorities more accountable (MONUSCO Officer (no. 163) 2014). The ultimate aim of this strategy is to build relations between state and society on trust, transparency and due process. Failed strategies constitute in themselves an argument to reproduce a discourse of authority and external blame.

The need to reconstruct how society works highlights the hidden transcript of the UN in the DRC and its underlying image of the DRC as dysfunctional. This dysfunctionality is seen in statements like ‘elections are still tribal here’ (MONUSCO Political Affairs Officer (no. 45) 2010); ‘the Government does not even have figures of its own population’ (MONUSCO Civil Affairs Officer (no. 158) 2011); ‘there is no sense of progress’ (MONUSCO Electoral Division Officer 2010; MONUSCO Political Affairs Officer (no. 45) 2010; MONUSCO Political Affairs Officer (no. 46) 2010); ‘here, there are no political parties or real civil society’ (MONUC Political Affairs Officer (no. 7) 2009).<sup>3</sup> In several informal conversations with UN officials, UN agency members and other international representatives there is a commonly held view that civil society is a collection of individuals who attempt to access international money by acquiring the vocabulary that funding bodies and international organisations want.<sup>4</sup> In a similar way that popular classes negate the existence of the state, creating an image of what the state should be, elites’ negation of civil society is a way to de-legitimise ‘civil society’. This works as a hidden transcript, redressing international actors and demonising those who, in the public transcript, were the heroes of government and peacebuilding policies. Furthermore, underlying this criticism there is an assumption about the Congolese being corrupt, not really interested in undertaking such noble aims as ‘democracy’ and ‘good governance’, but instead using the vocabulary to access international funding.

A MONUC officer, for instance, affirmed:

We are dealing with people who are helpless ... The mass of the people in this country are illiterate ... there are no real political parties here, we are trying to build this country from scratch, there is no real civil society ... it is in a state of infancy. (MONUC Political Affairs Officer (no. 7) 2009)

Portraying the Congolese as helpless only justifies the strategies of the intervention. Other common tags used by MONUC/MONUSCO and diplomatic officials in interviews and informal conversations were ‘corrupt’, ‘lazy’, ‘opportunistic’, ‘selfish’ and ‘backward’. This implies that it is the fault of the Congolese, both elites and non-elites, for being in the situation they are in. As previously noted, whether these analyses are accurate or not does not reveal their primary

function, which is to reaffirm the *rightness* of the strategies, and the difficulty of the task.

### *Government*

The vocabulary of the state as an engine and receptacle of peace, democracy and development is deployed in a similar manner by the Government. Peacebuilding, with its state-making ethos, provides a model to mirror the Government's public image and justify action. Electoral campaigns have illustrated peacebuilding vocabulary very clearly. The programme of each political party has revolved around its capacity to restore state authority and bring peace, democracy and development. For instance, Joseph Kabila based his 2006 campaign on the 'five pledges' (*cinq chantiers*) referring to development (Nzazi Mabidi 2006). This was pushed forward in the 2011 elections with the 'Revolution of modernity' (Na Raïs 2011). The programme is based on the promise of development, to make the DRC an emergent country by 2030 and a world power to join the BRICS countries by 2060 (Na Raïs 2011: 2).

Kabila's media platforms also revolve around the cohesiveness of state authority. Kabila TV, which is linked to the presidential website and his own private media platform, DigitalCongo, which includes a TV channel and a news website, both display a focus on developmental projects and on the official and solemn acts of Kabila as president (Kabila TV 2012; Multimedia Congo s.p.r.l. 2012). State unity, development and peace have been Kabila's discourse drivers. Not only do these resonate with people's political aspirations, they have also been presented as arguments to ask the UN to leave. In December 2009, in a conference broadcast by the Congolese National Radio and Television (RTNC), Kabila emphasised 'the good relationship between the UN and the Congolese Government' but stated that there should be 'a plan of progressive UN retreat and disengagement' based 'on the net improvement of the security situation in the Eastern part of the country' (RTNC 2009). The unnecessary presence of the UN has been a regular argument of the Government, up until the point where Kabila rejected the support of MONUSCO in its 2015 attacks against the FDLR (Anon 2015; Radio Okapi 2015). The image that the Government projects reflects the broad foundations of peacebuilding discourse. These include the cohesiveness of state authority in being able to maintain its territory, to secure its population, to be the democratically elected representatives and to have an economic development and modernisation plan. For the DRC Government, peace, democracy and development operate as a shared vocabulary on which to premise legitimate state authority.

The responsibility for not achieving these goals is a matter of blame exchange. For instance, when the complaints heard from MONUC/MONUSCO officials and those of the population were put to a few Government



representatives, the response was usually to blame the ‘international community’. Speaking about the M-23 rebellion, an MP and customary chief stated:

The occupation of Goma was done by the RPF [Rwandan Patriotic Front], not the M-23, they have entered through the Great Barrier [formal border] with no issues, under the visible sight of the UN. What are they [UN/Internationals] doing if not allowing that Congo is maintained as a subordinate of Rwanda and their allies? (Masisi MP 2 [2014](#))

Speaking more broadly, another representative stated:

The DRC needs social democracy but it is not possible because of lack of investment and lack of financial means. The DRC is asphyxiated because the policy from the big powers is ‘you pay us first before we give you the money’ ... also everyone is having a piece of the cake here. The US and France take the petrol, the US and Belgium take the cobalt, Germany operates in the Katanga mining, the gold is taken by Canada and the UK and a bit by the US, diamonds are taken by Israel, Holland and South Africa. I have no problem with investment in resources, but in the context of a neo-colonial model, there is no hope for the Congolese. (Government Representative (no. 31) [2009](#))

The narrative is not simply one of political elites absolving themselves of responsibility, but of pointing out the constraints they suffer to fulfil their promises to their electorate. Similarly, for a member of the North Kivu National Assembly, the DRC was a place for everyone to get rich through programmes of development and peacebuilding. He complained that MONUC’s vehicles always seemed to be parked and that they were not travelling to the interior of the country. He added:

We don’t understand MONUC’s politics. After 2005, they are there, we see them patrolling with the helicopters during the night, if the enemy is in the skies, we don’t know ... they come for example to support elections, or giving some bureaucratic support to the Government, but regarding security, in comparison with the arsenal they have, the weapons ... if we had such capacity all the problems will be finished by now. (North Kivu Provincial Assembly representative [2010](#))

The image this representative presents is of the Congolese being victimised while not having the necessary capacity to face the problem. Peacebuilding’s discourse is enacted as a public transcript that serves as a tool to legitimise action and inaction and to externalise blame. A common vocabulary is created around idealised versions of the state, democracy, development and peace that serve as a platform for authority claims. In the view of Congolese officials this is not an appropriation of “international” vocabulary but represents their own aspirations. Thus ‘democracy’, ‘decentralisation’ and many strategies for reform are the initiative of the Congolese Government, and not of the ‘international community’ (Beni MP [2010](#); DRC Government Advisor [2013](#); Masisi MP 2 [2014](#); Ministry of Planning Representative [2010](#); STAREC Representative 2 [2014](#);

Uvira MP 2011). Yet, as long as they remain a discourse, these are better seen as claims which have embedded symbolic and material demands on Congolese subordinate classes. There is a demand for recognition, consent and legitimisation, in spite of the reality of hardship. The creation of ideals, the justification of power on moral grounds and the normative commitments deployed with the peacebuilding process are part of the tools that authority uses. Conversely, these are turned into weapons of de-legitimation and into a platform from which to advance alternative agendas.

### **The denial of legitimacy**

If peacebuilding operates as a claim to legitimacy and consent, and resistance is defined by the denial of these claims, what follows is that de-legitimation and disobedience should be seen as primary areas of resistance. For Scott, it is here that the hidden transcript develops. Mocking, denigrating and slandering authority, in the claims both of MONUC/MONUSCO and of the Government, are widely used tools. Although these discourses take place in the open, they are done through the safety of privacy or anonymity of the crowd. They are not necessarily hidden, so much as they are non-confrontational.

Toulabor's quote above argues that humour and derision are often used as methods for confronting the established social order and, as such, should be seen within a sphere of social contestation. Mockery, denigration and slander constitute a form of resistance in that they configure a pattern of action that denies the legitimacy of power, turning its claims to authority into an exercise of domination. That is, if power is justified by its capacity to create *the good state* that can deliver peace, democracy and development, resistance denies this claim by pointing to the hypocrisy of power, to other possible agendas and to the lack of commitment to peacebuilding's own discourse. Mockery, denigration and slandering are hidden transcripts. They run beneath official proclamations, challenging, or at least contrasting with, the image of unanimity that authorities wish to project in regard to their actions.

### *Mockery*

Mockery reflects a critique in which politicians, MONUC/MONUSCO and authorities in general are pictured as lazy and corrupt. This practice constitutes a pattern. Any visitor to the DRC can identify how the MONUC/MONUSCO is mocked, almost to the extent of arguing that it is thanks to the Congolese people that UN officers have a job. For example, at the peak of violence by renegade soldier Nkunda a popular saying against MONUC was: 'no Nkunda, no job' (Ex-MONUC Officer (no. 2) 2010; Group Jeremie Representative 1 2009; Group Jeremie Representative 2 2010; MONUC Civil Affairs Officer (no. 1) 2009;

MONUC Civil Affairs Officer (no. 14) 2009).<sup>5</sup> This inferred that MONUC needed seemingly artificial justifications for being in the country. It was not that the threat from Nkunda was not real, but that people saw the emergence of the likes of Nkunda as a consequence of MONUC's not doing its job properly, thus perpetuating the need for the mission to be there.

This was already the case with the initial deployment of MONUC. The authorisation of MONUC as an observation mission<sup>6</sup> prompted people to state: 'its name says everything, they are just here to observe how we are killed' (AFEPADÉ 2010; Bukavu Resident 2010; COJESKI 2010; Masudi 2009). The 'they do nothing' criticism has not stopped, and it is not uncommon to hear people complaining 'they just run up and down [in] their cars' or inquiring 'what do they do?'<sup>7</sup> The criticism is made from lived experience, illustrating how the popular classes see themselves as bearing the suffering that arises from the shortcomings of the decisions and strategies of power. From this criticism it is possible to observe an articulation of 'what should be happening', or 'what MONUC should be doing'. In Kinshasa, the same day that MONUC changed to MONUSCO, with a change of mandate, the mission was renamed 'MONUSKOL' (as in the beer Skol, portraying a vision of UN workers as more interested in alcohol and night-life than in peace) (MONUSCO Electoral Division Officer 2010).<sup>8</sup> In Bunyakiri and Bukavu, MONUC or MONUSCO were said to be abbreviations for 'Milice Onusienne au Congo' (UN Militia in Congo) (Bukavu Resident 2010; Demobilised Mai Mai Padiri Combatant 2 2010; Femmes Père Saint-Simon Representative 2010; Focus Group Young People Bunyakiri 2010; Group Jeremie Representative 1 2009). This not only refers to the multiplicity of armed groups that the UN and the government cannot stop, but also to a common criticism levelled at the UN that it is not there to make peace.

Criticism not only follows an international/local divide, but represents several imaginaries of authorities and subordinates. The president and the Government are not exempt from mockery. Joseph Kabila is called 'Kinyago' (marionette) or 'Kanambe', implying that he has 'Rwandese origins'.<sup>9</sup> Portraying Kabila as manipulated to serve external agendas or denying his Congolese nationality is a direct challenge to his legitimacy. A flipside of nicknames is the technique of refusing to say Kabila's name. Kabila becomes 'that one', 'him' or 'the one you know'. Although this could represent voting preferences, it is striking that this is consistently observable in Kinshasa, the two Kivus and Equateur.<sup>10</sup> This silence seems to be both a protest and a defence, which simultaneously deny and mitigate authority.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to nicknames and silences, jokes are a common way to mock the Government. For instance, very soon after the Government committed to its 'five pledges', people renamed them the 'five songs', effectively portraying the Government as not being serious in their realisation.<sup>12</sup> In Goma, a common joke asks 'what has changed?' and people respond, 'well, BunaZa [Zaire's beer] is now

BunaCo [Congo's beer] and the market CadeZa now it is called CadeCo'. The joke implies that nothing substantial has changed and people continue to experience hardship.

Justice is one of the domains in which there have been fewer improvements (EU PAG Representative; Trefon 2011: 14; UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon 2012: paras 57 and 81; UN Security Council 2012: paras 8–9 and 12; Vircoulon 2009: 87–102). It is also a site of mockery and critique.<sup>13</sup> An evaluation study of UN Development Programme activities in 2006 asserts that 'the justice system is [...] distrusted and reputed to be corrupt' (Faubert 2006: 9). In the study, 'most respondents stated that they would rather put their trust in institutions such as churches and human rights organizations or proximity community leaders' (Faubert 2006: 9).<sup>14</sup> During the 2006 election campaign Kabila promised to reform the justice sector through the slogan 'the doors of prison are big' (Kayembe 2006). For Kabila this statement conveyed his Government's commitment to 'zero tolerance' against corruption and to prosecuting crimes, no matter who was responsible. As corruption is seen as one of the biggest obstacles to conflict resolution and access to justice, people added a simple sentence to the slogan to change its meaning. The slogan then read: 'the doors of the prison are big, to take all the big thieves out'.<sup>15</sup> The expression was a critique of the lack of justice, in particular of the impunity of those who commit the major crimes (UPDI Representative 2010; Participant Observation III 2009). This slogan was reflected in many forms and shapes in Bukavu, and in other cities and territories. A Group Jeremie representative complained that 'one could go to prison for stealing a chicken while big thieves are out' (Group Jeremie Representative 1 2009). In Bunyakiri, where a prison had just been built next to an almost-ruined hospital, one of the doctors complained that the prison would be just for 'the poor', while the real thieves enjoyed 'the benefit of power' (Informal Conversation Bunyakiri Hospital Doctor 2010).

This mockery expresses in humour what otherwise is a violent experience. As seen in the previous chapter, the military strategies that have taken place under the programmes of Umoja Wetu, Kimya II and Amani Leo have succeeded to a certain extent in demobilising thousands of combatants. But this has come at a high price for the civilian population. People in local villages not only have to host and feed soldiers with special privileges under these operations, but also to take care of the daily needs of demobilised soldiers deployed in the villages without resources for their reintegration into civil life. Those combatants that join the army or the national police are also likely to keep settling ethnic rivalries while living off the population, not least because of a lack of salary payment (Global Witness 2009: 16–17). Further, issues of land, housing and ethnic rivalries brought by the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are left for the villagers to deal with. As such, when people on the ground mock the programme 'Amani Leo' (Peace Today), calling it 'Amani Kesho' (Peace

Tomorrow), this reflects an underlying reality of armed conflict, poverty and impunity.

*Denigration, slandering and 'radio trottoir'*<sup>16</sup>

A less humorous way to de-legitimise and criticise the actions of both the Government and MONUC/MONUSCO is through rumours and insults. Whether about particular politicians, blue helmets or, in general, MONUC/MONUSCO and the Government, rumours portray them as purposely continuing the conflict or trafficking with resources. In Bunyakiri, for example, many residents believed that MONUSCO was giving food and clothes to the FDLR.<sup>17</sup> The story was developed in more detail in a focus group held with young people of the town. One of the participants stated: 'Not long ago one FARDC shot a FDLR, and when they were going to recuperate the body, he was dressed with the MONUC uniform and had biscuits and even the shoes of MONUC' (Focus Group Young People Bunyakiri 2010). When this story was put to a MONUSCO official, she responded by acknowledging that such rumours are commonplace and that the problem is that 'there is not good public information' (MONUSCO Civil Affairs Officer (no. 145) 2010). These rumours are, for MONUC/MONUSCO officers, evidence of the manipulation of politicians;<sup>18</sup> yet what they show is that people are not willing to see MONUSCO in a positive light. Rumour resonates with a deeper political agenda. Whether these stories are true or not, whether they originate from a specific politician's agenda or even FARDC, they are used to discredit MONUSCO.<sup>19</sup> They are a symbol of social conflict and dissent.

The Government and opposition leaders are not absent in this. As seen above, Kabila is accused of working for Rwanda's benefit. In Baraka, some Fizi deputies are accused of arming Yakutumba both from an ideological perspective and also as a way to access mineral resources.<sup>20</sup> It is striking that in a stretch of about 800 km between Fizi and Beni and of over 3,000 km between these locations and Kinshasa, in a country with hardly any communications and road network, and consistently over five years of field research, the same rumours are found word for word: 'The FDLR is an invention to continue the war', or 'UN's soldiers traffic with coltan'.<sup>21</sup> Some of these rumours have become part of the mainstream discourse: 'the UN is there to serve Rwandan interests' or 'UK, US and Rwanda want the balkanization of Congo' (Monsa Iyaka 2009; Radio Okapi 2006, 2012b). In Bunyakiri, Fizi and Masisi, for example, a similar rumour circulated: MONUSCO provided FDLR elements with uniforms, weapons and food to sustain a war in Congo in order to keep Congo weak and easily exploitable. It is remarkable that inquiries about these rumours demonstrate that they rarely come from first-hand experiences and that acquiring details highlights contradictions in the facts. Rumour is used to deny the *benign* purpose of peace and state-builders, their authority and rhetoric.

Although rumours are widely known, they remain something to be commented on in the quiet. Denigration through insults also takes place this way. The words of the union representative that open this chapter were followed by a more direct statement: 'yes, you can do the parade and the show and everyone might give you a big round of applause, but it is to mock you, inside they are saying "so, yes, you come again to piss us off"' (Peasant Union Representative (no. 151) 2010). The catalogue of insults is extensive. It tags politicians and international agents as 'traffickers', 'murderers', 'thieves', 'lazy' and 'liars', amongst others.<sup>22</sup> As Scott noted, insults should be seen as a more direct act of resistance, even if they do not confront authorities face to face and remain as part of the hidden transcript.

Portraying international and national political actors as incapable, greedy, hypocritical and anti-democratic is a form of discursive resistance that denies the claim of legitimacy and consent. It is a form of de-legitimation, and hence of more intentional (claim-regarding) resistance, even if people would not necessarily label these acts as such. What this means is that the intent of mocking and slandering authorities is, precisely, mocking and slandering authorities. The intent, in other words, cannot be inferred beyond the act. It is reasonable to assume from here that actors are aware of the fact that they are, at least to a certain extent, targeting the deference, credibility, respectability and reputation of authority. These forms of discursive resistance have embedded a political critique of peacebuilding strategies and agenda advancement. In mocking or portraying a negative image of the state of current affairs, these forms of resistance carry out an idea of how reality should be.

### **Ideals and the articulation of social justice as agenda advancing**

Going back to how claims of authority are justified on the basis of long-term idealised promises, this final section analyses how these promises become a platform from which to launch a critique of authority, hold it to account and articulate aspirations for social justice. This is done by rearticulating the official peacebuilding discourse. Although everyday resistance is not always underpinned by these ideas and may be motivated by more banal and immediate goals, these redefinitions are an important insight into prevalent political aspirations and underpin many other practices that will be explored in the next chapters.

#### *The good state*

The state is a primary example of the dynamics of denial and subversion. Against the critique and discourses seen above, the state becomes rearticulated as something like a 'good king'. For a Caritas representative, 'the state doesn't exist, it doesn't protect people, its services are taken over by NGOs and its role must be



that of distributing wealth' (Caritas Representative, Justice and Peace Commission, Goma 2009).<sup>23</sup> A Union Paysanne pour le Développement Integral (UPDI) representative believed that the state should be there to guarantee a good standard of living for the peasants and provide the same protection to agriculture as in Europe (UPDI Representative 2010). The so-called 'government of national unity' brought in by the 2002 Sun City agreements, was renamed '1+4=0'. As in the most idealised versions of what the state can and should do, seen in the World Bank and OECD reports in earlier chapters, or what Chandler calls the 'silver bullet', the state is redefined also in non-elite discourses as the engine for development, peace, well-being and public service. The creation of an ideal picture of the state as something like a 'good king' or a 'prophet' is a form of resistance against the lived reality.

In the DRC, idealising the state as a saviour is not new. However, as Englebert notes:

Congolese identity, the imagination of Congo and of the Congolese nation, serve as ideological foundation for the reproduction of the state, denying legitimacy to alternative scenarios and confining political action to factionalism for control of the state itself, or to the non-threatening realm of 'civil society'. (2002: 592)

Englebert notes that the co-idealisation of the Congolese nation both as resistance against domination and as its reproduction is a discursive battleground in which elites finally take the upper hand. Yet the significance of the critique, which operates as a way to hold decision-makers to account, and the political aspirations it simultaneously projects are not to be disregarded. An image of a good chief is projected onto the state, resulting in an inversion of terms, where state authority is legitimised in so far as it serves the most vulnerable. Similarly, the image constructed of what the state should be becomes a mirror of what subordinate groups wish the state would provide for them. As such, what Congolese subordinate classes seem to be waiting for is an ideal that does not exist in any country in the world. They paint a picture of leaders that are caring and honest, delivering the services the population needs, respecting the law and protecting citizens.<sup>24</sup> The idealised state as a public service and providing social well-being is counterposed to an experience of the state as dominating, coercive and extractive. Agendas of political participation, development and peace are inextricably attached to it.

### *Democracy or 'démon-cracry'*<sup>25</sup>

Against a practice of democracy that is almost exclusively premised on the organisation of presidential and national elections, democracy for non-elites is premised on direct participation in decision-making processes. In a workshop for secondary school students on 'participatory governance' organised by the



Group Jeremie in Bukavu, it became clear that even if 'participatory governance' sounded as if it had just been taken from any policy report from the UN Department of Political Affairs, it had been appropriated to mean that people should participate directly in the decision-making processes of the country (Participant Observation III 2009). This included a vision in which people had a say in the management of the country's resources and their distribution. An NGO representative made this point clearly:

The state lives now on the shoulders of people, their agents do not get paid ... the problem here in the DRC is that democracy is also badly distributed. We should have started by local elections ... but we have started by the presidential elections, legislatives, then provincial, and they have stopped there, and from there they take what they need, they share power amongst themselves, they take whatever land they need, without taking care of their real responsibilities (ADDF Representative 2010).<sup>26</sup>

This representative is arguing that having started with local elections rather than national would have provided greater accountability and political control, and would have solved the institutional problems linked to problems of development. While there is a critique of how democracy works at the moment, democracy is being redefined as actual participation by the citizenry.

These criticisms are prevalent and have been present at different landmarks in the transition after the wars. At the time of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (2002) the demand to participate in negotiations for peace meant that peace and democracy had to involve all sectors of society. However, many groups participating in this event argued that, in the end, the process only facilitated a dialogue between the Government and the MLC (Irin News 2002). As such, at the time of the 23 March Agreement in 2009, which put an end to the uprising of CNDP (Nkundanda) and other armed groups such as PARECO, people complained that what was being created was an incentive to take up arms, raid the population and then partake in government (Femmes Père Saint-Simon Representative 2010; Ngemulo 2010). The negotiations included that these groups would become political parties and would have the opportunity to partake in power (Programme Amani Leo 2009). Notwithstanding the complexity and challenges of ending armed conflict, these discourses are challenging the legitimacy of the actors who partake in government and redefining this version of 'peace' as a truce of warlords.

### *Development*

Participation is also a prominent theme in the critique of how development (and extraction and exploitation) takes place. As such, alongside the criticism that wealth stays 'in the pockets of the politicians' and that the real wealth of the country goes elsewhere, there is the idea that development aid does not arrive

and that for development to be properly carried out, and not just from aid agencies, people in the lowest ranks of society have to be involved. This was articulated most forcefully by a representative of a peasant cooperative in Bukavu.<sup>27</sup> Since the mid-1990s the co-operative had felt the logic of development was marginalising and disempowering them, something that they continue to see presently. The representative stated:

We realised that those organisations hadn't changed much, they are within a logic of experts, so much a logic of experts that they have forgotten to engage the beneficiaries of their projects. So our members did not see themselves in those projects, they do them for us, without us? ... that's against us! So we wondered, would it not be possible to express and do things by ourselves? (Peasant Union Member (no. 151) 2010).

The logic behind the creation of their organisation was a belief in the need to engage more fully in the processes of development in order for development to be effective. This has been a constant in the way development projects are read. A women's NGO representative in Butembo also regretted the approach of certain INGOs (that she did not wish to cite), affirming that 'instead of supporting us, they replaced us ... They execute projects, without engaging the population or the local NGOs' (ADDF Representative 2010).<sup>28</sup> This participation is a way of expressing that development has to contain a democratic element. Democratising resources means that they are equally distributed amongst the population and that there is direct control over the distribution and use of these resources (Kajemba 2009).

### *Peace*

Peace, the final element of the statebuilding discourse is one of the most ambiguous and multifaceted. Whether it is used to criticise the shortcomings of peacebuilding strategies or to argue that they have succeeded, peace is defined in multiple ways – with each meaning signalling a different political agenda. Autesserre (2009), for instance, has demonstrated how international actors, including international organisations, diplomatic missions and INGOs view Congo as innately violent. This assumption has resulted in *peace* being seen as a return to *normality*, where violence was still present (Autesserre 2009: 251). However, this is not only an issue for international elites. For Programme Amani, 'peace is a very long process' (Programme Amani Leo 2009: 2); and they are clear that 'the war is over' (STAREC – Amani Leo Representative 2009). This long process is, however, settled at the top and experienced at the bottom. The vision of non-war/peacebuilding resonates with non-elites' critique of the peacebuilding strategies, in which peace is about the signature of a 'peace agreement' and 'power-sharing'. Defining peace therefore sets the priorities and

strategies to be undertaken. For those who are still confronting armed groups, violence, poverty, repression and absence of basic services, speaking of peace is simultaneously a critique and the voicing of what could be seen as an articulation of social justice. Peace is redefined as being both a process and a product of political participation, development and personal and collective well-being. What to do about it and how to set priorities is a matter of putting non-elite agendas at the forefront and of having access to decision-making processes. In this spirit, a Group Jeremie representative stated:

We must start from the proposals that are made at the grassroots. What we want and what the international community wants is diametrically opposed. I am from Kinshasa, here in Kinshasa things don't go, people suffer. Peace has multiple dimensions: social, environmental, economic ... We are oppressed, exterminated, our women are raped, the children abducted by the military ... The peace in Congo is a global thing, we need a global approach and not a sectored approach like the MONUC does. It reforms the justice sector here, it does democracy promotion there ... Peace here is less important than money. The Congolese context is unique ... But you, the internationals, you come here with laboratory theories, preconceived models and try to impose them on the Congo. No, that is not peace. (Group Jeremie Representative 1 2009)

The 'diametrical opposition' that this interviewee is referring to seems to point fundamentally to how peacebuilding is undertaken. Most likely the 'international community', as he states, would agree that peace has all of those dimensions. What he is pointing out is that the strategies enacted are not conducive to addressing all of those dimensions, and that, contrary to the discourses of peace, 'money' is the underlying real motivation. This is representative of similar responses gathered. As an indication, the representatives of all 31 non-internationally funded NGOs who were interviewed denied living in a 'post-conflict' or non-war context, linking 'real peace' to well-being and political participation. Additionally and simultaneously, an alternative agenda is being drafted that redefines peace as social justice with multiple dimensions.

### *Subverting discourses*

Shared vocabulary does not mean shared meanings. The fact that authority claims are made as idealised promises offers a fertile ground on which to hold authority to account. As Scott notes:

Perhaps the greatest problem with the concept of hegemony is the implicit assumption that the ideological incorporation of subordinate groups will necessarily diminish social conflict. And yet, we know that any ideology which makes a claim to hegemony must, in effect, make promises to subordinate groups by way of explaining why a particular social order is also in their best interests. Once such promises are extended, the way is open to conflict. (1990: 77)

Peacebuilding, and the reconstruction of state authority at the heart of it, is deployed as a moral necessity to which subordinate classes need to consent, wait and suffer the consequences, for this will benefit people in the long run. Yet, the same promises are taken literally, holding power to account, confronting the ideal that peacebuilding paints against the reality on the ground. This is not a new critique. Paul Gilroy, for example, has analysed how black music has provided a way to confront reality and voice aspirations. He argues that:

The politics of fulfilment practised by the descendants of slaves demands that bourgeois civil society lives up to the promises of its own rhetoric and offers a means whereby demands for justice, rational organization of the productive processes, etc, can be expressed. (Gilroy 1993: 134)

These are not necessarily found overtly but, rather, as a hidden transcript. Or, as Gilroy puts it, by 'opaque means':

Created under the nose of the overseer, the utopian desires which fuel the politics of transfiguration must be invoked by other deliberately opaque means. This politics exists on a lower frequency where it is played, danced and acted, as well as sung about. (1993: 134)

The inversion of peacebuilding's vocabulary, as discussed above, illustrates ways in which it is de-legitimised, critiqued, held to account and counter-reacted with the articulation of *how things should be*. The 'subtle' difference in meaning, as Toulabor notes, 'consists, *grosso modo*, in doubling the usual or conventional sense of the words in giving them second semi-hermetic meanings' (2008: 99). The state becomes a 'good king' with the capacity for salvation that effectively works for the poor; democracy means direct participation in the decision-making processes at all levels; development means wealth distribution and access to its management; and peace encompasses a sense of tranquillity, free from threats of violence and linked to a sense of justice. They are a transformation of power's own idealisation of its capacities, together with the political aspirations of subordinate classes. The creation of ideals represents not only the negation of the present order, but also the formulation of an alternative one.

### **Conclusion**

In the DRC there is no social-political movement that resists peacebuilding. Rather, there is a consistent pattern of acts that challenge the actions and inactions of national and international elites and that attempt to mitigate the experience of a predatory violent order. At the discursive level, this entails contrasting lived experience to the promises of the state as rightful authority and service provider. While this image of the state is not being rejected as an ideal, it is rejected in practice. Elite discourses imply a morality that lays a claim to

legitimate authority, while exempting elites from responsibility for failure. For non-elites, discourses are ways of voicing discontent while remaining pragmatic about both possibilities and repression; they are relevant because they are part of a *shared critique*. The fact that these discourses are found everywhere and resonate across a broad construct of 'Congolese identity' and 'Congolese nation' indicates how everyday resistance operates as a covert strategy, attempting to escape repression while mitigating its effects.

What this chapter has illustrated, beyond how the discursive arena is fertile ground for everyday resistance, is the ambivalence of these discourses as platforms on which both domination and resistance operate. In Scottian terms, peacebuilding creates public and hidden transcripts where rhetoric, image and expected behaviour are enacted for different audiences, following a shared vocabulary, including that of state authority, democracy, development and peace. The relationship of different actors to these ideals is enacted as a 'pose'; that is, there is a level of ambiguity in how public images of authority, deference and obedience are exercised. Discourses are significant because state-building strategies are established and justified as a form of inevitable good. The moral authority of the good state and its subsequent delivery of peace, democracy and development facilitate a way to justify a reality of war, poverty and impunity. As such, an obvious starting point from which to look for resistance is the idealism on which promises are made. These powerful promises seem to be enough to request the population to keep waiting, obeying, paying taxes, providing for themselves and facing repression in return for raising concerns.

The implication is that peacebuilding's discourse rests on people's aspirations, and not the other way around. To this extent, peacebuilding is hardly Western or liberal, but is better seen as an example of the discursive practice of authority, and more as a populist discourse. Demands to participate in the decision-making processes, to be protected, to be heard and to enjoy the wealth of their own country are seemingly modest demands. However, these demands are idealised in such a way that they pose a fundamental challenge to peacebuilding practices. In a context of limited capacities for political action, the discursive is a fruitful site of resistance, although not the only one. The following chapters will complement many of the discourses surveyed in this one. The hidden transcript runs through Mai Mai militias, justifications for tax evasion and in the undertaking of a myriad of creative survival strategies. Underlying these tactics is a process of de-legitimisation, of advancing alternative agendas and raising political aspirations. These discourses and the political alternatives embedded within them are realised not just in mechanisms of critique and the voicing of aspirations, but in the processes of denial and mitigation undertaken for navigating a context of violence and poverty.

NOTES

- 1 Applying a similar argument to aid agencies operating in countries in conflict, and the DRC in particular, Zoe Marriage (2006) argues that these agencies justify their actions under a moral authority, which simultaneously allows them to externalise blame onto recipients for the shortcomings of their own activities.
- 2 The example of the quietness in the classroom in comparison to the burst of talking when the teacher leaves illustrates the point (Scott 1990: 25).
- 3 This sentiment was recorded amongst all UN officers interviewed.
- 4 This was explicit in 90 per cent of the interviews with MONUSCO officials between 2009 and 2014.
- 5 Valeria Izzi (2011) argues that this sort of slandering illustrates mistrust and the obstacles for the work of peacebuilders.
- 6 MONUC was placed under Chapter VII by Resolution 1291 in 2000, but not in its original authorisation in 1999. MONUC/MONUSCO has not tended to use force overall. See Chapter 3.
- 7 Although this was raised in many interviews, the sentiment reflected here is something observed as prevalent in all fieldwork locations in ordinary interactions outside interviews.
- 8 This was corroborated in daily outgoings in Kinshasa, and echoed in several interviews and informal conversations elsewhere (Ex-MONUC Officer (no. 2) 2010; Informal Conversation International Alert Research Assistant 2010; MONUSCO Officer (no. 190) 2014).
- 9 Those who assert that Kabila is Rwandese say that his real name is Hipolite Kanambe and not Joseph Kabila Kabange.
- 10 This was observed during fieldwork in Kinshasa, in North and South Kivu and in Equateur as an electoral observer from September to December 2011.
- 11 The use of silence as sabotage is not a new nor an uncommon practice of resistance in Africa (Abbink et al. 2008: 17).
- 12 In French from the 'cinq chantiers' to the 'cinq chansons'. For the programme visit President Joseph Kabila Office (2009).
- 13 Direct mockery of the justice system was recorded in 10 interviews with subordinate groups/civil society representatives. That there is a sentiment of distrust in the justice system in Congolese society was directly raised in all interviews with civil society/ordinary people and four Government officials speaking of a popular sentiment.
- 14 There are several organisations, now funded by INGOs, that do justice settlements as a way to avoid having to go to the courts, e.g. Life and Peace Institute and Alliance pour la Paix et la Concorde.
- 15 This was brought up explicitly in five interviews: Group Jeremie Representative 1 (2009); Group Jeremie Representative 2 (2010); UPDI Representative (2010); Nyiragongo SOCICO Representative (2014); Youth NGO representative (2014). It also resonated in many of the student groups organised to speak of corruption and justice in College Alfajiri, Bukavu (Participant Observation III 2009) and in two focus groups with women in Bunyakiri (2010) and Kamituga (2014). References to double standards in applying the law and to experiences of repression also came up in several interviews (COJESKI 2010; CODHOD Representative 2009; Observatoire des Droits de l'Homme et Contre la Torture 2009; UniKin Student Union Representative, Kinshasa 2009).
- 16 Rumour in French.

- 17 Brought up in the two focus groups held in Bunyakiri. Interviews with four Bunyakiri-based NGOs confirmed that these were common rumours: Alliance pour la Paix et la Concorde, Association de Défense de Droits l'Homme Bunyaki, Voix Sans Voix and Femmes Père Saint Simon. It was also raised by Imam of the Islamic Community in Bunyakiri (Kabambi 2010).
- 18 Half of MONUC/MONUSCO officers interviewed directly made reference to this issue.
- 19 E.g. Bemba's 2006 campaign '100 per cent Congolais' reflected the rumour that Kabila was Rwandese. Also in the latest reports on the 2011 elections both the Carter Centre Electoral observation missions point out that politicians tended to spread hatred discourses and slandering as a political weapon (Carter Center 2012: 71 and 97).
- 20 The veracity of the rumour could not be ascertained but several interviewees confirmed that this was an extended belief in Baraka (Fizi SOCICO Representative 2010; Human Rights NGO Representative (no. 127) 2010).
- 21 For example, similar rumours to those in Bunyakiri were expressed by residents of Masisi who specified that 'In Nyabiondo and Pinga the Indian contingent has profited of mineral resources' (Informal Conversation with Masisi Parish Priest 2010).
- 22 This was gathered most significantly in informal conversations. The words of an airport porter are revealing: 'Here everyone comes, take what they want, the politicians are liars, the state is a thief and the MONUC does nothing, they are accomplices in all this' (Informal Conversation with Airport Worker – Luggage Porter 2009).
- 23 Similar statements were repeated in multiple interviews. For example: 'There is no state here, no roads, no water, no free education [...] Those are the real problems and in order to address them, they need to start identifying the local initiatives that are already in place [but] we are replaced by everyone' (Pole Institute Researcher 2010).
- 24 All interviews with members of civil society and non-elite participants made a link between the state and its responsibility for security.
- 25 A form of mocking of democracy around Kinshasa (Yoka 2009: 250).
- 26 Other similar statements were as follows: 'the resources, minerals, forestry, water, etc. have to be distributed equally amongst the population' (Kajemba 2009); 'The population must participate in how the public economic resources are distributed', from the summary of a group of students in High School Workshop (Participant Observation III 2009); 'Resources must be available for the population to live not for the politicians to enrich themselves' (Focus Group Civil Society Mwenga 2014).
- 27 Other interviewees made the same point (ADDF Representative 2010; Group Jeremie Representative 2 2010; Pole Institute Researcher 2010; SPIP Representative 2011).
- 28 They have accessed International Alert funds.



## *Everyday violence and Mai Mai militias in Eastern DRC*

What would you do if the state was a man? I'll kill him.<sup>1</sup>

### From words to weapons

**A**lthough there were skirmishes, especially throughout the 1990s, Chapter 3 has already exposed how the first phase of the conflict was the defining moment in which the armed mobilisation of subordinate classes took place. The fact that the AFDL war was conducted under the guise of a national liberation movement and led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila succeeded in reviving the Mai Mai historical sentiment of fighting against oppression and colonial conquest (Dunn 2002: 55). As noted in Chapter 3, Kabila had been a member of Lumumba's cabinet and fought with Pierre Mulele, who led one of the biggest revolts against Mobutu and was a driving force for the creation of the Simba and Mai Mai popular militias in the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> During the 1996 and 1998 wars, Mai Mai militias generally fought on the side of the Government to repel the RCD rebellion and the Rwandan, Ugandan and Burundian invasions. However, they remained autonomous from the army, and since the transition most groups have developed an anti-government stand. The Mai Mai militias consider themselves inheritors of a tradition of resistance that dates back to the struggle against colonialism and beyond. In a note from a Mai Mai Padiri combatant, this historical tradition of resistance is explained as follows:

We cannot stop thinking and we cannot stop sending the calls to the mystery that surrounds us everywhere; that is, we cannot stop resisting evil. It is within that approach that the Movement of Mai-Mai resistance was born, which has its distant origins in the domination of man by man [...] Already in 1481, the king Nzinga Panju was opposed to Portuguese occupation in his kingdom; in 1682, the prophet Chimpa Vita resisted against the implantation of foreign power in the kingdom of Kongo, she was burnt alive. In 1942, in the kingdom of the Bahunde, where the Bakumu live, in Masisi, in one of the hunters' villages, in Ntoto, Mandayi told Sindikiza that his brother Yusufu Kitawala in the cultural struggle against foreign

occupation had a formula that protected men against all attacks from bladed or fire weapons by the enemy. In 1951, Simon Kimbangu died in exile, Patrice Lumumba and Pierre Mulele and recently Desire Kabila, killed 16/01/2001 for having brandished and lifted the spirit of a profound love for the homeland. (Unknown Author 2005: 1)

Hence the AFDL rebellion awakened a latent revolt. However, the subsequent militarisation has set peasants on the path to a permanent state of armed conflict (Amuri Misako 2008). This permanent conflict is not because rural classes have since maintained a popular uprising, but because the war has made them primary targets. The RCD rebellion in support of neighbouring countries' invasion of the DRC in 1998–2003, the insecurity provoked by the different CNDP uprisings and the ongoing presence of foreign and national armed groups represent a continuation of the self-defence and liberation agenda. The strategies undertaken for surviving and confronting war are inseparable from the strategy of joining armed militias as a way of 'reacting against their marginalisation and exclusion' (Vlassenroot 2002: 150). The means used are largely conditioned by the historical moment in which actors are embedded.

Nevertheless, there is great variety amongst Mai Mai militias. While some groups abide by a firm code of conduct and are attached to an agenda of liberation and social justice, others have also turned into predators of the population (e.g. Rasta) (UPDI and LPI 2009). The attacks of the Mai Mai Cheka in July–August 2010, mentioned in Chapter 3, are a primary example. They included systematic rape and other crimes in 15 villages in Walikale in alliance with the FDLR. Mai Mai Cheka was born out of a power-struggle for the control of the largest cassiterite mine in the DRC, which had been given to FARDC/CNDP after the 23 March agreements in 2009, to the detriment of the FARDC/ex-Mai Mai brigade of Colonel Samy that had controlled it previously (UN Group of Experts 2010b: para. 34–43). Other militias, as already seen, have been successfully co-opted into state/elite networks to be used for proxy wars between the DRC (e.g. PARECO) and Rwanda (e.g. Mundundu 40 – now defunct) (Hoebeker et al. 2009: 132; UN Group of Experts 2008b: 100–3). The popular character of some militias is therefore challenged by the fact that militias ally with and pursue elite agendas. Yet this is not static; there is an important element of unreliability and contingency, meaning that Mai Mai groups are likely to betray these elites and form new groups.

Despite these complexities, the history and current dynamics in many Mai Mai militias make them representatives of the ways in which rural classes have used or joined these militias as a form of resistance to the effects of domination. The deepening of the statebuilding strategies in the last decade has implied the militarisation of the Kivus, of which Mai Mai militias have been the primary targets. The terms set for Mai Mai demobilisation, the ongoing context of war

and poverty, and the FARDC being deployed as a representation of state authority are all sources of distrust and rejection of state authority. The consolidation of administrative and military positions in the hands of the CNDP, the CNDP and M-23 uprisings, the continuous presence of the FDLR along the Kivus and the military operations by FARDC have fuelled Mai Mai nationalist sentiments. The role of the Mai Mai as militias of self-defence and vehicles of political participation has become even more prevalent. They provide a way to defend and advance agendas of security provision, control of land and local political authority. This last element permeates Mai Mai ideology and represents the long-term aspirations of the Congolese peasantry.

Understanding everyday forms of resistance in the DRC implies acknowledging that the fact that they are based on the lack of direct confrontation and on practices undertaken to attract the minimum amount of repression does not necessarily mean they are without violence. Resistance is shaped by the political context in which it is embedded and practices do not define resistance per se. Three aspects need to be analysed in order to understand the role of violence as a tool of resistance: the context of war, the motivations that popular classes have to support or create armed groups, and how extensive this popular support is. Whereas the context of war was analysed in previous chapters, this one will focus on the other two aspects – motivations and support. These two aspects account for the defining elements of resistance, including the denial/mitigation of claims and the agenda-advancing on the part of popular classes. They also show different gradients in the practices. Attacking the military or other armed groups is a denial of the state's claim on the monopoly of violence and a form of mitigating state-making-related violence. This is a claim-regarding overt practice of resistance. Conversely, using Mai Mai militias to provide security is a self-regarding practice. The violence generated by the context is used and transformed as a self-serving mechanism to counter precisely the effects of violence. In so far as the state is experienced as a form of predation and insecurity, subordinate classes' motivations have at their core the rejection of state authority and state-making agendas. They strive to provide security and protection, while advancing agendas of political participation, representation and land. However, these motivations are not static, nor is the support subordinate classes give to these militias; rather, the support is contingent and changing. Mai Mai militias tend to be formed from specific ethnic groups, or those who are closely related, although not all members of an ethnic group or of a particular area would support the local militia.

Mai Mai militias pose multiple challenges to an account of resistance. In order to address these challenges and to analyse violence as part of the everyday practices of resistance, the chapter first discusses the motivations then the support for these militias. The focus of this chapter is on Fizi, where Mai Mai Yakotumba operates, and on Bunyakiri, with ex-Simba Mai Mai/MRS and

current Raïa Mutomboki. These cases display an anti-government agenda (having less government interference as a result), as cases that have confronted the effects of state-making and whose relation to their constituencies illustrates the dynamics and motivations for popular support. These militias do not represent a continuous popular uprising or a model for ethical resistance. They are an effect of war; and they are ultimately representative of the heterogeneity in the practices of resistance.

### **Motivations**

The mainstream narrative of Mai Mai militias is that they seek their enrichment or to attack antagonistic ethnic groups, where any discourse of social justice and grievances is just a façade (ADEPAE et al. 2011; Alden et al. 2011).<sup>3</sup> Those who have studied these militias in greater depth observe that their motivations are more complex (Acker and Vlassenroot 2001; Amuri Misako 2007, 2008; Hoffmann 2007; Jourdan 2004; Maindo Monga Ngonga 2007; Vlassenroot 2002).<sup>4</sup> Researchers have identified four categories of violence as anti-government, income-generating, maintaining social control over the group they operate from and symbolic, where targets represent their beliefs or identity.<sup>5</sup> For Verweijen (2015), it is income generation and (re)production and expansion of control over the ethnic community they represent that are most significant. Other studies have identified marginal conditions of living, poverty and general disenfranchisement as the main reasons for combatants to join militias (Lubala Mugisho 2000: 209–10; Vlassenroot 2000: 94–6). Lubala Mugisho adds historical factors as important for the emergence of these militias. Yet others have seen the militias as a form of rural political mobilisation, motivated by a rejection of the status quo, and aspirations for social justice (Acker and Vlassenroot 2001; Amuri Misako 2008; Hoffmann 2007; Vlassenroot 2002).

The formation of Mai Mai militias cannot be delinked from the history of uprisings since colonial times. However, at the present time their presence cannot be separated from the context of war. What Misako calls the ‘militianisation’ of life means that self-management and security provision, in the context of relative state absence, as well as the pursuit of political agendas and aspirations through armed groups is an ‘effect’ of the context of violence (Amuri Misako 2007: 21). Violence becomes a form of political participation where power is asserted through violence. In the war context of the DRC, Acker and Vlassenroot argue, violence is the language through which many young marginalised Congolese demonstrate their distrust of state institutions, resist the conditions in which they live and aim at a more egalitarian order (Acker and Vlassenroot 2001: 104 and 106). Joining an armed group could be generally inscribed in the dynamics of contestation of the state since these conditions of

living tend to be seen as the consequence of an unjust social order in which the state is directly responsible or complicit.

These dynamics of war and state contestation, which, as Prunier argues, come both 'from above and from below', signal that uses of violence can be read as furthering elite or personal agendas (1991: 4). The political meaning granted to these motivations is a defining factor in analysing popular classes as politically minded or as politically manipulated.<sup>6</sup> Following a Scottian framework, self-centred individual and collective motivations come together in the everyday politics of non-elites. These militias represent an arena where patterns of resistance to practices of coercion and extraction unfold. The examples from Fizi and Bunyakiri explored in this section illustrate this point by analysing, firstly, the rejection and distrust of the state, and secondly, how these motivations are linked to community protection and security as important underlying agendas, and to land and political participation as important aspirations.<sup>7</sup>

### *Rejection and distrust*

#### *Fizi: Yakotumba*

Mai Mai Yakotumba was created in 2007 but has a significant rebel history.<sup>8</sup> Its core members fought in the various brigades that were part of the second-biggest Mai Mai structure in South Kivu, led by General Daniel Dunia, during the 1998–2003 war. General Dunia's troops resisted both Kabila's AFDL and the RCD rebellion. Not only were both of these uprisings seen as an invasion, but Dunia's resistance was the only form of protection against the brutal violence with which these uprisings were undertaken. Yakotumba's and the previous Dunia's troops were composed mostly of Babembes, who are the majority ethnic group in the area of Fizi.<sup>9</sup> The Babembe take pride in claiming that they resisted Mobutu for over 25 years, arguing that they 'vehemently hate all dictatorial political systems that violate fundamental human rights' (Unknown author 2010: 16). The same articulation has been seen in the increasing distrust towards the Government throughout the transitional period.

When the transition in 2006 brought in the different plans for Mai Mai demobilisation and reintegration, not all of General's Dunia's troops were successfully disengaged. Refractory elements, especially William Amuri Yakotumba, rejected the demand to redeploy his troops out of Fizi. Several military and political factors were in place for this decision.<sup>10</sup> Militarily, the Banyamulengue Mai Mai group operating in the high plateaus of South Kivu, the FRE, did not reintegrate into the army and pushed for the constitution of the territory of Minembwe in order to have an independent administration from Fizi.<sup>11</sup> The Rwandan-supported CNDP had already rejected reintegration, continuing its military activity. Finally, many Yakotumba members felt disillusioned with the DDR process (Demobilised Combatant from Mai Mai General Dunia 2010; Informal

Conversation with Yakotumba members 2010). Politically, the Mai Mai movement created out of the 1998–2003 war was marginalised from the power distribution of the 1+4 formula. It reproached the Government for not acknowledging that successful resistance against the rebellion and foreign occupation in the East had been due in large part to its actions. Additionally, the electoral results were contested. These military and political concerns went hand in hand with the Mai Mai criticism about the lack of social and economic development. As such, according to a Mai Mai Yakotumba member, they understood that ‘the DRC kept being open to foreign intervention’ and, although this had turned from a military to a political strategy, they had ‘judged it necessary to create the *maquis* and oppose the Government’ (Mai Mai Yakotumba Combatant 1. 2010).

Interpreting the Fizi conflict within patterns of state-making and resistance is not straightforward. The dynamics of conflict in Fizi have been read as those of ethnic conflict, challenging discourses about social justice as being manipulated by local elites. The so-called autochthonous/allochthonous conflict became even more salient in the context of Mobutu’s Zairianisation and Bisengimana’s policies concerning land, political representation and nationality.<sup>12</sup> Currently in Fizi there is an important ethnic element in the connection between, on the one hand, Yakotumba’s perceptions of Kabila as a Rwandese or as a facilitator of Rwandan economic expansionist agendas in Eastern DRC; and, on the other, the fact that the Banyamulengue community are largely of Tutsi origin, having offered support or been supported at crucial times by the CNDP, M-23 and Rwandan officials (FARDC General (no. 146) 2014; UN Group of Experts 2008a: paras 65–6). This is added to the fact that FARDC deployment in the area was ex-CNDP after the 23 March agreement (FARDC Colonel (no. 129) 2010).<sup>13</sup> This discursive connection illustrates a rejection of state and foreign agendas and the hailing of traditional modes of political authority and representation. Even if we were to equate ethnic claims with political ones, or to problematise the boundaries between the categories of ethnic identity and the political,<sup>14</sup> we would still see that discourses of communal identity are simultaneously discourses of resistance and liberation (Hoffmann 2007: 24). This does not mean necessarily an *ethical modus operandi*. This is the challenge that violence brings. Mai Mai Yakotumba have been accused of killing, stealing cattle and hassling Banyamulengue herders (ADEPAE et al. 2011: 62; Banyamulengue Sheep Herder 2010). Violent actions need to be seen as conditioned (not justified) by a broader context of war, where there is a vicious circle of armed conflict, arms trafficking, military operations and several statebuilding projects that fuel the motivations for further violence.

*Bunyakiri: Simba-Mai Mai and Raïa Mutomboki*

A similar dynamic is found in Bunyakiri. It was the headquarters of the ‘biggest’ Mai Mai group in the two inter-state wars under General Padiri (Vlassenroot



2002: 138).<sup>15</sup> Although in the first instance his troops fought the AFDL uprising because it was largely seen as a foreign invasion, this developed into a fragile agreement to later make Padiri Secretary General of the resistance movement, which was attached to the FARDC (Forces Armées Congolaises at the time).<sup>16</sup> Hoffmann points out that Padiri had significant influence, since the Mai Mai had become the de facto government in many rural areas that were under its control (2007: 78). As such, the exclusion of Mai Mai representation from the 1+4 formula had a special impact amongst Padiri's supporters. Many interpreted this as the exclusion of the rural population and as foreign intervention in Congolese affairs. Although Padiri was able to reintegrate, his supporters and those who fought with him see current government politics as a continuation of exploitation with no real development of the economy or peace, and this has been a fundamental factor in the formation of new militias in Bunyakiri.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, there are those who have reintegrated into the army but whose sons continue as members of the Mai Mai militias in their villages (e.g. Colonel Samy operating in the areas of Numbi, Nyawarowa, Katasoko, Busurunki) (APC Representative (no. 114) 2010).

An ex-Mai Mai Padiri combatant expressed the view that, being disappointed by the Government after the transition, his group saw it necessary to renew the group Simba Mai Mai/MRS in 2006 (Simba Mai Mai/MRS Combatant 2010). Not all members broke with the Government immediately, and indeed this officer, served as a STAREC demobilisation officer for 18 months in 2008 and 2009 (May May Simba/MRS – Axe Bunyakiri [Authors anonymised] 2009: 4–5). However, he regretted that at, the time of the interview in August 2010, he had been paid for only three months. Likewise, when his demobilisation team (formed of other ex-Mai Mai combatants) had to go on a demobilisation mission, STAREC gave them a vehicle without petrol and they received no stipends or food for their journey (Simba Mai Mai/MRS Combatant 2010). This combatant has since stopped believing in the programme, questioning whether the Government was really committed to demobilisation, and has become a spearhead for the creation of Raïa Mutomboki in Bunyakiri.<sup>18</sup>

Since the mid-2000s, Raïa Mutomboki has operated on and off in the territory of Shabunda, South Kivu, largely in response to the insecurity created by the presence of the FDLR in the area and the Government's neglect of this region, which is difficult to reach by road. The FDLR had been operating in the area since approximately 1998 and officially deployed under FARDC after it was reintegrated as part of the steps towards the Sun City Agreement in 2002. Feeling betrayed by the Government shortly after, it retaliated with violence against residents in the area (Stearns et al. 2013: 12–14). Raïa Mutomboki raised as a self-defence militia of (literal translation of the name) 'angry citizens'. As a 'franchise' – that is, not as a group that moves from one place to another, but more as an idea that other groups enacted – this group sprang up



in other parts of South Kivu such as Bunyakiri (Stearns et al. 2013). In Bunyakiri, old Mai Mai members helped to organise the movement and taught it tactics and how to operate weapons (Raïa Mutomboki combatant (no. 182) 2014; Simba Mai Mai/MRS Combatant 2010). For one Raïa Mutomboki combatant this was not only a strategy of self-defence, 'it was a defence of our territory and our lives, after we have understood that we were being demobilised to allow others to occupy our lands' (Raïa Mutomboki combatant (no. 182) 2014). Raïa Mutomboki has been largely successful in clearing the area of FDLR, representing a radical rejection and challenge of the state's monopoly of violence and of the peacebuilding strategies in place.

These examples from Fizi and Bunyakiri illustrate that a discursive critique and a denial of state legitimacy can take the form of armed struggle too. These groups represent trends across Mai Mai groups in the Kivus (Demobilised Combatant from Mai Mai General Dunia 2010; Demobilised Mai Mai Padiri Combatant 2 2010). Peacebuilding and the reconstruction of state authority are read largely as an elite affair which maintains the exploitation of rural areas while placing them under military rule. As a form of rejection and mitigation against this, militias become a tool of opposition and a source of security and provision of protection.

#### *Protection and security*

The militarised context pushes the population into a defensive stand. Militias are what Scott calls a 'state effect' – a 'symbiosis' of state expansion, state violence and its rejection (2009: 26). Popular militias are a response to militarised rule, land seizures and insecurity. Security is a constant concern not only for Mai Mai militias but also for the population where the militias belong.<sup>19</sup> Although, as explored below, popular support for Mai Mai militias is not generalised across time and space, and although many times militias have become a menace to residents, whenever this support is granted it responds largely to a concern for protection. Seeking protection through Mai Mai militias is a denial of state authority and of legitimacy to the peacebuilding discourse of protection. It is done as the least-bad option and could be seen as a self-regarding claim (Morvan 2005: 95–8). The denial/mitigation of the violence generated by state-making is not the intention so much as for individual or collective survival. Yet it is undermining of the authority of the state and the peacebuilding actors.

A professor from the Catholic University of Bukavu argued that the war has made popular classes use the Mai Mai militias not only to defend themselves against foreign armed groups but also against the state (Université Catholique de Bukavu Professor 2009). For this professor, this is in the context of the clash between customary and state land policies. The dual customary and administrative land-property system privileges rich owners who can have access to a land

title (Vlassenroot 2006). In these cases popular militias confront the state because 'it behaves as a foreign power and not a power that is at the service of the population' (Université Catholique de Bukavu Professor 2009). The implication is that, in the context of war, Mai Mai militias are also used to protect the population from land expropriation.

### *Fizi*

For Fizi residents, the major threat they face is the FARDC, even if Mai Mai Yakotumba has also committed abuses against them.<sup>20</sup> Interviewees in Baraka criticised Yakotumba, but they felt closer to them than to state administrators or the FARDC.<sup>21</sup> This was exemplified by the way a member from a NGO articulated her complaint about the negative effects of the war on women. She stated:

We continue with all those armed groups ... here, there are the regular army, the Government and the militias that are in the forest, they continue to make violence. The women, they go from Baraka to Kafolo for example to get provisions, and they [the mentioned armed groups] continue the violence. They all put a problem for us, the FDLR, the FRF, the Mai Mai and the army ... The Amani Leo came here to get the FDLR that are located 250 km away. But instead of going there, they have stayed here. They have started in Makobola towards Fizi centre, there were no FDLR there! Yesterday the FDLR attacked the post of FARDC in Nyange, in the border between Fizi and Kalembe ... now, the Amani Leo have come to do what?... They should go. (FEDI Representative 2010)

Another NGO worker stated that the solution to the ongoing insecurity in the area was for all militias to demobilise or reintegrate into the army. However, he recognised that for the ordinary people it was the army and not the militias that created the main problem. He stated: 'if you ask the population, what do you want to be done here? They are going to say: that the Amani Leo go. The militarisation of the area is a problem' (Human Rights NGO Representative (no. 127) 2010). He then continued to argue that the reason for the militarisation was the resistance found in the area:

There is a lot of resistance, there are a lot of weapons that do not come from the Government and that do not submit to the orders of the Government. Yes the presence of Amani Leo is a problem for the population, even more than the Mai Mai, but I think the problem of the continuation of the Mai Mai is an ideological and ethnic problem. (Human Rights NGO Representative (no. 127) 2010)

These words summarise many of the arguments that have so far been put forward in this chapter. The reliance on popular militias to provide security, added to a sentiment that sees the state either as directly responsible for the situation or as not doing anything about it, illustrates the patterns in which resistance takes place. Even if this is seen, as the interviewee sees it, from the perspective of ideology and ethnic confrontation, the reflection illustrates the popular

perception that the FARDC is a menace, whereas the Mai Mai militias are the least-bad option. Those who are not engaged directly in the militias regret the militarisation of daily life. However, they generally feel more threatened by the FARDC and protected by the Mai Mai, with whom they have a more equal relationship. After all, Mai Mai combatants could be members of their families, including husbands and sons.

### *Bunyakiri*

In Bunyakiri, residents have been threatened by both the FDLR and the FARDC. In August 2010 (during fieldwork) the FARDC brigade stationed there had been able to reduce the abuses committed against the population by the previous brigade. However, population were still threatened by the special operations at the time, the Amani Leo. The cycle of FDLR activity linked to the Amani Leo presence had a direct impact on displacement from areas of cultivation and hence on impoverishment. Bunyakiri had turned into a sort of 'island of refugees' because the FDLR had the area almost completely surrounded. There were often incursions into the town and many residents had been displaced or could not access cultivated lands (Action Pour la Paix et la Concorde 2009).

Speaking in Maibano, the Secretary General from the Chefferie of Buloho pointed out several local conflicts related to land and to customary leadership. However, for him, the existence of local armed groups was a direct consequence of the persistence of the FDLR in the region (Buloho Chiefdom Secretary General 2010).<sup>22</sup> A local human rights organisation stated that the local Mai Mai groups had their own interests, but they were combating the FDLR and they were not there to abuse the civilian population (Voix de sans Voix Representative 2010). Similarly, a representative from an NGO of women survivors of rape stated the situation of threat that women faced, generated by all armed groups. However, she regretted that: 'We have to live with the Amani Leo and we never know with which intentions they are coming' (AFIP Representative 2010). The sentiment she conveyed was that whereas they had an opportunity to react against the Mai Mai and the FDLR, even if minimal, in front of the army they felt defenceless.<sup>23</sup>

The solution against the FDLR that was brought by the Government and supported by MONUC/MONUSCO was for Bunyakiri residents, as for many in other Eastern regions of the DRC, more of a curse than a blessing. The Secretary General of the Buloho chiefdom spoke against the FARDC strategies to fight the FDLR: 'Kimya II has been a disaster, they were there to hunt the residents, their fields and their crops, they pillage, they destroy everything ... Then they brought Amani Leo, which has done exactly the same, the population does not have any hope anymore' (Buloho Chiefdom Secretary General 2010). This administrator summarised a widespread sentiment amongst residents in Bunyakiri, Bulambika

and Maibano.<sup>24</sup> Most political representatives, whether administrative or customary, expressed their regret regarding an army that was ‘a disorder’, while pointing out that ‘we cannot speak about it’ (Notables at Maibano 2010; Voix de sans Voix Representative 2010).

The situation had a direct impact on the perception residents had of MONUC/MONUSCO. Residents kept wondering what the role of MONUC/MONUSCO was if the FDLR’s positions were known and yet not targeted. Not surprisingly, rumours of UN collaboration with the FDLR, as seen in the previous chapter, spread easily amongst residents. In a focus group with the youth of Bunyakiri, most participants stated that they could not understand why the FDLR was 4 km away from the village without the UN doing anything, a situation that had already been like that for approximately 15 years. ‘Today’, one of them said, ‘we cannot go to Bukavu as we used to without feeling threatened; our parents long ago stopped cultivating their lands because they have been occupied by the Interahamwe’ (Focus Group Young People Bunyakiri 2010). As such, they said, ‘this situation has made people furious and as a result, some have taken up machetes, others rifles, in order to constitute themselves as militias of popular defence’ (Focus Group Young People Bunyakiri 2010; JMAC Officer 3 2012; see also: Zounmenou and Kok 2012). As a matter of fact, by March 2012 Raïa Mutomboki had expelled the FDLR from Bunyakiri. And although their subsequent activity has remained ambiguous, as a source of self-defence, of violent pursuit of particular village interests, and as the meddling of provincial and national actors, most residents still see them as a force of their own, as a source of protection and security. This was captured in several interviews. For instance, for a civil society representative ‘all the population has been united around them [Raïa Mutomboki]’ (Civil Society Representative 2014). For the Burogoya Civil society delegate, ‘Raïa Mutomboki are a force organised by the people and for the people’ (Buroyoga civil society delegate 2014). This motivation to protect residents from the FDLR goes hand in hand with the need to cultivate the land and get on with their life. In this situation, the desire for normality, to put it in Hibou’s terms (2011a; 2011b), is not to ‘accommodate’ to the situation of insecurity and army rule, but to act upon it, even if by violent means.

Overall, the search for protection and security is a pattern in all Mai Mai groups. What it shows is that the need for protection is not generated by a lack of state authority, but from the ways in which state authority is asserted. Although some Mai Mai groups illustrate the engagement of the civilian population in forms of state violence, the cases seen above, especially through the provision of protection and security to the civilian population, represent patterns of resistance in a context where state-making and peacebuilding agendas neglect civilian protection. This becomes more clearly visible when explored alongside the aspirations embedded in Mai Mai ideology.

*Aspirations and agenda advancing*

Rejection of, and protection from, government agendas, war and state-making do not stand alone; rather, they are embedded in a broader system of ideology, religious beliefs and political aspirations. These include the reaffirmation of forms of local political authority, political participation and land distribution. Although these refer explicitly to the current context, they resonate with broader historical, religious and cultural understandings in Congolese rural areas. The Mai Mai militias and their leaders, as previously noted, contextualise themselves in the specific traditions of resistance against domination that have taken place in the DRC since colonisation. Thus, these agendas are better seen as aspirations, which simultaneously overlap with and reinforce elements of rejection and protection.

Mai Mai militias articulate their agendas around a 'nationalist ideology', aiming for the development of the DRC. It is based on a common reference across the DRC where a 'patriotic mentality' means acting for the well-being of all Congolese. Although vague, it reflects the construction of ideas of social justice that were explored in the last chapter. The articulation of specific political agendas comes with a religious armour that links cultural understandings of justice with historical traditions of oppression and liberation.<sup>25</sup> In an analysis of the Mai Mai groups of the Uvira-Fizi region, the underlying prophetic and religious element of these groups is noted:

Fizi also has numerous mistico-religious movements, where the leaders present themselves as local 'gods', porters of messages about the liberation and emancipation of the population. At the heart of that society, security-wise in crisis, that messianism of war and self-liberation is alive within the 'armed groups' where the core of their prayers devote themselves to prophecies of victory. Those links with the 'armed groups' make of those religious movements spaces of popular mobilisation. (ADEPAE et al. 2011: 85)

This study illustrates that popular aspirations for liberation are expressed through religious and mystical discourses, sifting through Mai Mai ideology and practice. Important to Mai Mai ideology is the discourse of 'hatred' against the 'foreigners'. As noted in previous studies of Mai Mai militias, this needs to be understood not as ethnically based but, rather, as a construction of the 'unpatriotic element' as a symbol of oppression (Lubala Mugisho 2000: 214–16; Vlassenroot 2002: 130–3). The resurgence of militia activity in the Kivus and elsewhere maintains these ideas.<sup>26</sup> For instance, a representative of Mai Mai Yakotumba notes:

We were convinced by our brothers in the Government that it was a nationalist government, but in reality, we have realised after the transition that it is a government that just wants to capitulate the Congo, they are the thieves that want to leave the country in the mess it is now, only to keep pillaging ... it has come in by the

window, it is not even a legitimate government. (Mai Mai Yakotumba Combatant 1. 2010)

Against this, the Mai Mai's discourse of emancipation is simultaneously created by critiquing the Government for pursuing foreign agendas while locating themselves in a historical tradition of resistance: 'We want sustainable peace, not a peace that goes in three seconds ... not a peace in servitude, a peace of subjection ... that, we will never allow ... our kids here are resisters by birth.'<sup>27</sup> The Government represents for Yakotumba members this 'fragile peace' understood as an order of submission. They are hence convinced that 'sustainable peace' is only achievable through 'conquest and not through dialogue'. The exercise of conquest is not only aimed at Baraka or Fizi, but is national in scope. 'We want a responsible government for the Congo that respects human rights, brings a prosperous society, where we do not speak of war any more, where there is no discrimination, with the aid of god.' As this interviewee continued to elaborate, the 'national' ideal is formulated not as a project of expelling the foreigners, but as eradicating oppression and implementing development and political participation.

In a similar way, the actions of ex-Mai Mai Simba/MRS and the formation of Raïa Mutomboki were justified as a critique against the Government for being 'foreign' and as a need to realise the population's aspirations:

Kabila is not Congolese, they say he is from Hewabora, but we know he is not ... he does everything opposite of what people want ... the teachers are not paid, the army is not paid, the public servants are not paid ... there is social injustice ... our politicians are liars, thieves, corrupt politicians that go against the constitution.<sup>28</sup>

The constitution encapsulated popular aspirations to a certain extent, which explains the popular support it received: 'People voted "yes" to the constitution, their aspirations are seen there, they want justice, schools, good public services ...' These aspirations are well captured by what this combatant called 'the movement': 'We aim to establish a government that is based on the ideals of socialism, which promotes civic and moral education and endogenous political and economic development for the restoration of Congolese dignity.' So, although Mai Mai militias have a local attachment and an ethnic component, their ideals go beyond these identities. Yet, despite this, the way in which they speak of liberation and a national agenda has been interpreted as a façade to justify criminal activity.

### *Social justice as a façade?*

Some scholars, policy-makers and NGO researchers have argued that these motivations are just a façade. For example, Alden, Thakur and Arnold argue that the continuation of militias in the DRC follows an impulse for personal enrichment where Mai Mai's discourses of social justice are a masquerade without



substance (Alden et al. 2011: 15). Others argue that the real drivers for these militias are historical conflicts over land and customary leadership (Autesserre 2006; 2012a). Some Mai Mai themselves have criticised the mushrooming of militias as an opportunistic, self-serving activity devoid of political significance.<sup>29</sup> They criticise this as 'hillism',<sup>30</sup> articulated as a mockery of those who defend their own 'hill' and do not have a broader political programme for the 'nation'. It is also in this vein that the 'true' and 'false' Mai Mai, the 'warrior' against the 'adventurer'<sup>31</sup> comes in. The difference is articulated between those who 'truly' protect the population under a patriotic agenda and those who do not.

These aspirations illuminate the patterns in which resistance unfolds. Although existing land and ethnic-based conflicts could have caused tensions and even violence at earlier times, this was far from the devastating war that has been taking place since 1996. Additionally, as advanced in the first two chapters, one of the distinct characteristics of the DRC conflict is the challenge to the notion of *the local* as a distinctive sphere from national and international. Rather, it is their co-constitution that unearths how different agendas are intertwined in a fluid, changing context. At times they are the most reliable security provider, even against the FARDC, yet at other times they are predatory and impose authoritarian rule. They also represent the militarised masculine version of a struggle for social justice. Amidst this, it is not possible to ignore that many combatants blame state agendas for the militarised context and the subsequent political, social and economic underdevelopment. Despite these fluid boundaries, the motivations underpinning Mai Mai militias and their support illustrate that resistance is defined by a context of domination. Even so, examining more carefully to what extent popular militias have a popular membership is imperative to analysing them as tools of everyday resistance in a peacebuilding context.

### **The popular element in the Mai Mai militias**

This book has been arguing that everyday resistance is better conceived as an activity of subordinate groups. Not only is this a closer application of the everyday framework, but it also allows for narrowing the scope of the concept. Additionally, the practices of statebuilding generate violence and extraction, reproducing conditions of domination, war and poverty. Nevertheless, if Mai Mai militias have been used as proxies by different governments, elite factions and MNCs for their own agendas, it is imperative to elucidate the extent to which Mai Mai militias are tools for popular classes' resistance and the extent to which this popular element is represented in their membership.

Additionally, when popular support is granted, it is neither unconditional nor generalised in any one village. It is more accurate to speak of a tendency to rely on these militias to confront the army, other armed groups and advance security, land and political participation agendas. The fact that some of these



militias represent another source of violence and domination against the population makes this popular support contingent. Violence remains a minority response in comparison with discourses and survival. Yet it is another tool in a broader catalogue by which subordinate classes confront everyday forms of domination. This section gives a brief account of popular support through membership and goods provisioning. It then provides a more extensive discussion through the analysis of government and UN strategies to break the solidarity between civilians and militias.

### *Membership*

In 2002 the UN estimated the number of Mai Mai combatants active in the two Kivus to be between 20,000 and 30,000 (UN Secretary General Kofi Annan 2002: 13). In 2009, a report by Human Rights Watch calculated that there remained around 22 Mai Mai groups with up to 12,000 combatants (Human Rights Watch 2009: 4). However, as stated in an unpublished report, a UN DDR action in 2010 was expecting to demobilise 28,375 Mai Mai troops only from South Kivu (MONUC DDR Unpublished Report cited in ADEPAE et al. 2011: 69).<sup>32</sup> Although voluntary membership is contested due to practices of abduction, their members are largely young men, coming from the rural, unemployed, and unschooled sectors of the population, living with few economic resources.<sup>33</sup>

Additionally, although many Mai Mai militias' leaders and original instigators are the more educated, military and notables of particular villages, these are hardly representative of the elite.<sup>34</sup> There are exceptions, and there are also those groups who, like Mai Mai Yakotumba, have operated for a long time and through different dynamics, engaging with state representatives at different levels (Stearns 2013b).<sup>35</sup> But generally, like Yakotumba himself or Jean Musumbu, a local healer and spiritual leader who led the formation of the first Raia Mutomboki, these leaders do not represent state-based authority or large landowners (Vogel 2014a: 310). Rather, they should be seen as what Scott calls 'translators' or 'vehicles', whose more educated position enables them to play as representatives (2009: 296 and 309). In a study focused on the militias of the Maniema province, Amuri Misako argues that 'the resurgence of Mai Mai responds to a reinforcement of influential ethnic groups and their elites rather than their replacement or insertion of subordinated ones' (2008: 13). However, for Misako this did not affect the fact that Mai Mai militias were a 'mode of political participation of rural masses' (2008: 3). Misako also points out that the upsurge of popular militias corresponds to a reorganisation of the rural political space (2008: 13). As seen in the works of Wolf and also of Scott, peasants' political struggles and political aspirations need to be analysed in light of their reliance on their own authorities and their reticence towards outsiders, whether

they are foreigners or nationals (cf. Wolf 1971; Scott 1985). The overwhelming perception gathered in interviews from representatives of subordinate groups, civil society, the Government, the army and UN officials is that there is substantial overlap between the civilian population and Mai Mai militias.<sup>36</sup> This idea, it must be stressed, is expressed throughout the militias' non-elite membership. However, it is also a fact that the non-military active population provide key support for the continuation of these militias.

*Provisioning: weapons, food, protection and information*

Another area where popular support is visible is in the provision of different goods and services for the militias to operate and survive. Although militias may receive incentives from deputies in Kinshasa, the bulk of their support in terms of weapons, ammunition, protection and information comes from the popular classes.<sup>37</sup> Many of these militias have also settled around mining areas and are now part of networks of resource plundering and parallel exploitation.<sup>38</sup> However, this is further evidence of the overlap between the civilian population and popular militias. At times resources are exchanged or services are paid, fostering relations of mutual support and reciprocity. These networks of support and exchange represent a great challenge not only to the authority of peacebuilding but also to the DDR(RR) programmes that are at the heart of it (UN Security Council 2000 and subsequent mandates).<sup>39</sup>

*Weapons*

Significant funding has been put towards a programme of disarmament by which for every weapon the Government pays US\$100 in Kinshasa and US\$50 everywhere else.<sup>40</sup> However, these incentives have been subverted by the availability of weapons. Many interviewees and informal interlocutors declared how easy it was to buy a Kalashnikov for US\$30.<sup>41</sup> The same is true of the programmes of demobilisation, which find it very difficult to persuade combatants to leave the armed groups, even with substantial economic benefits (Comité de Paix Representative 2010; Demobilised Combatant from Mai Mai General Dunia 2010; Marriage 2007). The problem that resistance to disarmament poses to DDR programmes is that authorities believe their weapons can be handed over to Mai Mai combatants (Assistant Administrator to Baraka's Civil Authority Representative 2010; Human Rights NGO Representative (no. 127) 2010; DDRRR Officer, Uvira 2010). Mai Mai Yakotumba members narrated how they make use of solidarity kin and religious-based networks to access the weapons held by villagers (Informal Conversation with Yakotumba members 2010). Other Mai Mai combatants also recognised their use of family and kin networks to take advantage of trafficking in conventional weapons and to gather bamboo and gunpowder to fabricate their own guns (Demobilised Combatant from Mai

Mai General Dunia 2010; Demobilised Mai Mai Padiri Combatant 2 2010; Mai Mai Yakotumba Combatant 1 2010).

The Mai Mai do not only rely on these networks to gain access to weapons. They also steal them from the army and even from the UN blue helmets. As a Raia Mutomboki combatant explains:

we have combat them [blue helmets] in Kamananga with machetes and hunting weapons calibre 12 and then we have found that in their hideouts they had ammunitions and weapons from FARDC, which we have taken. Then we have carried out another attack against the FARDC, we combat with the weapons of our enemies. (Raia Mutomboki combatant (no. 187) 2014)

They claim to use magic formulas that protect them from dying, which enable them to attack the army to collect their arms. A traditional formula, giving the Mai Mai their name (Mai or Mayi means water in Swahili and Lingala), is based on the combatants bathing in water blessed by prophet Kimbangu. This bathing protects them from the bullets, which at the moment of impact are turned into water. Another formula is the fabrication of a potion called 'dawa', 'Formula 115' or 'grigri'.<sup>42</sup> Once this potion is swallowed, it provides protection from death. Being under the effects of these formulas, Mai Mai combatants would attack a battalion, killing its members or making them flee, and then collect their weapons (Demobilised Mai Mai Padiri Combatant 2 2010; Mai Mai Yakotumba Combatant 1 2010; Simba Mai Mai/MRS Combatant 2010).

Another source of weapons and ammunition is illicit trafficking, mainly of minerals. Mai Mai Yakotumba is a case in point. Being in control of part of the coast in Lake Tanganika gives it access to Tanzania and Burundi. It has been known to capture boats (CCAP Representative 2010; Mfaume 2010). It also controls mines whose profit is used to purchase armaments (JMAC Officer 1 2010; UN Group of Experts 2011: 4–5). However, the transport and hiding of many of these arms is carried out through networks amongst the civilian population and not necessarily amongst combatants.

#### *Food, protection and information*

Although weaponry is fundamental for the continuation of militias and their military successes, they rely on other services such as food, protection and intelligence for survival and strategic planning. Militias tend to be hidden in the forest, although some of their members live in the villages. Most of the time they do not have the resources to set up self-sustaining camps. So, for instance, an NGO representative who was active in training women in self-defence in the territory of Kabare (South Kivu) states that 'their enemy were the FDLR and the FRF ... the Mai Mai [General Padiri] just came here to eat and get provisions' (Demobilised Mai Mai Padiri Combatant 1 2009). Although this would be typical of a family connection, the support network seems to be much greater.

The Raïa Mutomboki counts on popular support in Bunyakiri, but many interviewees reflected that this support is requested when people cannot really grant it and ends up being obligatory or exploitative. For example, the spokesperson for Femmes Unies stated the following:

We don't have any problems because they don't rape us, but they make us cook for them and ask our husbands to go with them, even sing for them songs of honour. We have now a group organised that keeps food and supplies for them, in case they come. We owe them respect, most of the time they are husbands or fathers of our children, what they demand is what keeps us as a family. (Femmes Unies Representative 2014)

Buroyoga civil society delegate confirms this:

Our women suffer, especially those who can't leave the town when the Raïa Mutomboki come. They demand them to go with them to help them carry their supplies or to cook for them. The women do that quickly because they love them inside and think that otherwise no one will liberate them from those who pillage, kill and rape everywhere. (Buroyoga civil society delegate 2014)

Civil Society secretary in Kichanga stated the following:

The Raïa Mutomboki come suddenly without us previously knowing, then they ask or oblige people to leave what they are doing to join them. They can ask you to stay with them for several hours or even to stay overnight. They often find us tired, after having worked in the fields, and then, imagine, they tell you to stay with them and they make you transport their supplies, sometimes up to 70 kg for 8 hours. [...] we do that because we fear of what can happen if we don't. (Civil Society Representative 2014)

This is added to the displacement and human rights abuses that are committed as a result of attacks against the FDLR or the FARDC. Still, it is not possible to make a clear-cut division between these Mai Mai groups and the civilian population.

Speaking about Fizi and Yakotumba, an NGO researcher noted that the strongest support Mai Mai had were from its own clans and families. 'It is from here that they take what they need: provisions, munitions, information ...' (Human Rights NGO Representative (no. 127) 2010). However, support has to be bigger than the clan, by necessity. The interviewee noted that 'they also have their networks from which they can send a messenger even to the heart of the army to gather information'. Different services are sought, ranging from the closer environment of the family to the clan, to the ethnic group, to the broader political, military and economic networks and other Mai Mai militias. As will be noted in the next chapter, these networks and exchanges are also part of strategies of everyday survival against poverty.

A FARDC colonel in charge of Fizi had no doubt about the solidarity and overlap between the Mai Mai and the population. He pointed out firstly that

Kimya II had failed because of a lack of support from the population, and that 'in fact they [the population] kept passing information to the armed groups' (FARDC Colonel (no. 129) 2010). For this FARDC colonel, it was clear that 'what makes the whole thing complicated is the population', and he added 'what enrages me when I see how a soldier is killed is to think, how many houses has he passed by to arrive there? Why has he been hidden? Why hasn't the population given any information?' (FARDC Colonel (no. 129) 2010).

On the whole, Mai Mai's strongest and most reliable support is the population. Gradients of support are likely to develop from the family to the clan, to the ethnic communities and then onto broader networks. This support, even if it cannot be generalised across the whole of the population, represents a challenge to the statebuilding mission. A main obstacle to inter-community dialogue and local peacebuilding strategies is Mai Mai's conviction that the laying down of arms means subjection to the rule of the army. Evariste Mfume from the NGO Solidarites de Volontaires pour l'Humanité summarised it succinctly: 'If the communities were to get together and say no to the armed groups, the problem would be finished ... but each sees in their armed group their protector' (2011). In Masisi, Bunyakiri, Fizi and Baraka, fieldwork illustrates not hatred against other communities but mainly fear of the army, the FDLR and other armed groups (Banyamulengue Sheep Herder 2010; CCAP Representative 2010; FEDI Representative 2010; Fizi SOCICO Representative 2010; Gakunzi 2010). Peace is highly desired but there is a general distrust that the Government and the military can provide it. Significantly, the breaking of ties between the civilian population and their armed groups lies at the heart of many UN and government statebuilding strategies.

#### *Desolidarising popular classes and Mai Mai militias*

The popular support given to Mai Mai militias becomes a visible fact when we observe the significant resources the Government and the MONUC/MONUSCO invest to 'desolidarise' the population from the Mai Mai militias and 'sensitize' 'civil society' to 'accept state authority', 'lay down the arms' and 'live peacefully with the army'.<sup>43</sup> UN Civil Affairs, for instance, has these 'sensitization' exercises as part of its mandate for supporting the restoration of state authority (MONUSCO Civil Affairs 2012b). 'Since 2011' MONUSCO Civil Affairs claims to have 'reached about 7000 people in 17 different localities in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri District' in a 'sensitization campaign on the rights and responsibilities of the administrative authorities and local population' (MONUSCO Civil Affairs 2012a: 7). STAREC has done its own 'sensitization forums' throughout those provinces with the support of civil society organisations (e.g. Ahoussi 2009). STAREC sessions are done by civil society representatives because 'people do not have any trust in the political class' (Kikongo Kisimila 2010; President

of Civil Society Masisi Centre 2011; SOCICO – North Kivu Representative 2010). Their aim is to convince people to stop supporting the armed groups, to stop guarding their weapons and to ‘pacifically co-habit with the army’ (SOCICO – North Kivu Representative 2010).

*An example from Baraka and Fizi*

One such ‘sensitization’ activity is the workshop organised by MONUC Civil Affairs in Fizi and Baraka (South Kivu) to ease the sour relationship between civil society (population) and the military (Participant Observation XIV 2010). The purpose of this workshop is best described in the words of the Civil Affairs officer in his opening speech: ‘there needs to be collaboration and cohesion between society and power in order to render results towards peace and stability’ (MONUSCO Civil Affairs Officer (no. 191) 2010). This officer is voicing not only the perception that people’s solidarity with the armed groups is a real impediment for the statebuilding mission, but the extent to which resistance is successful in denying and subverting state agendas.

The significance of the Fizi territory has already been noted. Aside from the tense relations that have developed between the Tutsi-Banyamulengue population and the Bembe population, the 23 March agreement, by which CNDP elements integrated into the army and were spread throughout the Eastern provinces were also felt in this region. This military deployment fed the theories claiming that Rwanda would be infiltrating the army in its attempt to annex a part of the Kivus. Many of these reintegrated CNDP elements are of Tutsi origin and include many who speak only Kinyarwanda.<sup>44</sup> This situation, in addition to the military strategy of scattering an utterly under-resourced and undisciplined army throughout the territory, has created a *low-intensity* war between the population and the military. As previously noted, this strategy entails those military elements living with and off the civilian population. Although many brigades engage in multiple commercial activities which complement local commercial networks, residents are forced to provide the military with labour, food, housing, sex and information, while the military are a source of violence and predation.<sup>45</sup>

As such, this so-called ‘sensitization workshop’ illustrated that the military is perceived as an enemy by the civilian population, and that the military and state authorities needed ‘civil society’ in order to establish state order. The military complained that people would side more with the Mai Mai militias than with them, that people would not give them information, that the population was hostile to them and that they did not respect authority (Participant Observation XIV 2010). NGOs present at the workshop complained about the military’s human rights abuses, including rape, arbitrary arrests, extortions, theft and abuse of authority. They also complained about the fact that the military did not speak their language and that the population were treated like criminals, because



of the perceived support for the local militias. One of the UN officers moderating the sessions at one point explained what role each was supposed to play: 'the army, the police and civil society all have a role to play in society under legality'; for example, he said, 'the teachers must teach and not take up arms'; 'the soldiers must protect the population and not steal from them' (Participant Observation XIV 2010).

This workshop demonstrated two interesting factors. One was that the civil society/population component, represented by local NGOs and religious organisations, had links to the Mai Mai militias. Two days after the workshop, members of this 'civil society', in an attempt to show good will, passed information to the commander of the area to notify him of an incoming attack on one of his battalions. Similarly, despite the imbalance of power, it was demonstrated that people retained a substantial amount of control over what takes place on the ground. Army and state administrators had much to gain from the withdrawal of civilian support to militias and they could obtain concrete commitments from the population: pass information, stop making donations, stop giving food and shelter to the militias. However, there were no similar commitments on the part of the military and the state administrators: stop abuses, rape, robbery, abuse of authority and illegal tax collection. Still, the frustration of the military and administrators was that without the help of the population they could not get rid of the armed groups (FARDC Colonel (no. 129) 2010; FARDC Officer (no. 162), Baraka 2011).

The experience of the workshop also revealed 'civil society' as an ambiguous partner for statebuilding strategies. This ambiguity has been established by research conducted within both policy and academic circles (DFID 2010: 56–7; Mac Ginty 2011: 15–17 and Ch. 8). Mac Ginty, for instance, has shown the thin line in Northern Ireland between 'civil society' and 'armed groups' (2011: 194). This is important because, whereas civil society is seen as a pillar for liberal peace in order to legitimise a project of statebuilding based on good governance, civil society's role in this situation is not straightforward. It can act as an antagonist rather than a partner.

#### *'People are intoxicated'*

An examination of the efforts to 'desolidarise' the civilian population from the Mai Mai militias illustrates the non-elite support for these militias and the motivations behind this support. Firstly, it is possible to establish a significant overlap at the non-elite level of the population, even if the boundaries of class, resistance and domination are blurred and complicated in the DRC context. Secondly, these efforts highlight underlying elite assumptions. Precisely because these militias represent the subordinate groups in society it is not uncommon to observe how DRC Government representatives, UN officials and NGO members, far from making an analysis of people's political agendas, think of the Mai Mai as 'the



poor' or 'marijuana smokers' or just remnant 'embers' (Amani Leo Operations Officer 2010; Catholic University of Bukavu Seminarist 2009; Heal Africa Representative 2009; MONUSCO Political Affairs Officer (no. 63) 2010; Stearns 2012b: para. 1). From these analyses the reasons explaining popular support for Mai Mai militias can be summarised in the statement of an NGO officer: 'people are intoxicated' (Human Rights NGO Representative (no. 127) 2010). People's support of the militias is seen as the action of helpless, ignorant, 'lumpenproletariat'-type of people, manipulated by politicians to fulfil their own interests. These assumptions illustrate elites' hidden transcripts. Delegitimising and mocking the militias by denying them any political significance and linking them to drug use and human rights abuses is a discursive attack of the form seen in the previous chapter.

Conversely, that state authority is not straightforwardly accepted resonates strongly with what Certeau would see as a popular mechanism that subverts discipline (1984: xiv). The denial of state authority, whether symbolised in the rejection of the army in Fizi, of the MONUC/MONUSCO-backed military operations in Bunyakiri, in the self-defence mechanisms against the FDLR in Bunyakiri, added to the continuous provisioning for the militias, illustrates political choices with collective dimensions that cannot be seen as anything but forms of resistance.

### **Militarised peace, militarised authority and violent resistance**

The militarisation of peace and the dynamics of violence in the DRC are carried out through both official and unofficial channels in relation to how ideals and practices stick, or deviate from the kind of ideal state. Although at an official level strategies may attempt to concentrate the use of legitimate violence on the hands of the state, the practice of statebuilding has achieved what Mbembe calls the 'socialisation' of violence. For Mbembe, this means that community groups form their own armed groups and remain armed or ally themselves with armed groups as an effect of domination and not as an action of resistance (2001: 45 and Ch. 2). Although Mai Mai militias represent this form of socialisation and many times have become a source of domination and violence to their own constituencies, they represent a challenge to statebuilding and the broader order it is part of. Mai Mai militias signal self-reliance for community protection and hence a challenge to the discourse of protection on which peacebuilding is premised. They are a vehicle towards political aspirations. These are articulated through a discourse of survival, security, political participation and land distribution, which are equated to emancipation. Although their ongoing military activity reifies a militarised context that provokes further domination, Mai Mai militias represent an everyday form of resistance. Not only do they generally operate in

typical self-defence and non-confrontational ways, but there is also significant overlap between the militias and the non-elite sectors of the population. Either directly or in representation of a larger constituency the Mai Mai deny or mitigate the actions and effects of those that cause insecurity, which is experienced as a form of domination. The cases of Bunyakiri with the presence of the FDLR and the Amani Leo troops, and Fizi with the FARDC are exemplars.

Both MONUC/MONUSCO and the Government defeat their idealised vision of the state in the very praxis of peacebuilding and state-making. The idealised vision of the state, deployed in the sensitisation workshops to desolidarise the population from the militias, involves a civil society that demands services, an army that secures people and a government that provides services to the population. That the Government and the army act as predatory armed groups and the fact that MONUC/MONUSCO, knowing this, still supports a strategy of disarming the population while supporting the military strategies of the Government and the army challenges the approaches by which they want to restore public service, order, development and peace. A significant response from the population when flight is not possible or is unwanted is to join or support the Mai Mai militias.

The fact that these 'poor marijuana smokers' present a challenge to the Government lies not just in their capacity to mobilise illegal resources from mines or weapons. Rather, the main challenge is that they convey the sentiments of a significant sector of the population against domination and are a tool to protect people's agendas of security, political authority and land. These broader political agendas and not just the difficult economic circumstances they endure should be seen at the root of the challenges many demobilisation programmes face. In conversation with a demobilisation officer, it was stated that without programmes providing reinsertion in to a life with enough means of living and a motivating job, it was difficult to persuade combatants to return to civilian life (UPN-DDR Officer 2010). However, as Marriage and Hoffmann show, it is not just the lack of motivating elements to return to civilian life, but the ideological commitments to the armed groups that demobilising strategies do not take into account (Hoffmann 2007; Marriage 2007).

Mai Mai militias represent a violent way of claiming popular aspirations. Yet these weapons of the weak need not to be seen as the summation of other strategies, or as a step forward from the others. Rather, they need to be seen alongside others. Armed resistance, whether it is by supporting the Mai Mai or becoming a combatant should also be seen as an effect of war and statebuilding. Denying and mitigating their effects while advancing alternative agendas is an example of everyday resistance. The next chapter will illustrate in a similar manner how the context of poverty pushes people to organise their own forms of survival as well as challenging authority's claim on the distribution of wealth.

NOTES

- 1 Majority response in 2005 World Bank survey in 'DRC, economic sector, Governance and Service Delivery' (cited in Trefon 2007: 27).
- 2 Young notes that Mulele's rebels 'eliminated a central government presence for some months in the northeast quadrant of the country and some parts of the Kwilu district in the southwest' (Young 2002: 20; see also Ndaywel è Nziem 2009: 496–9).
- 3 ADEPAE's monograph also accounts for socio-political factors.
- 4 A series of NGO reports and monographs also illustrate this (ADEPAE et al. 2011; Morvan 2005).
- 5 Wood, Erikssen Baaz and Verweijen, Kalyvas and Bravant and Nzweve cited in Verweijen (2015: 173).
- 6 This includes academic and policy literature, both international as well as Congolese. See section 'Social justice as a façade?' below. The Comité de Coordination des Activités pour la Paix (CCAP) representative coordinating the first dialogue between Banyamulenge and Babembe stated: 'the problem was not the capacity of the communities to live together, but the influence of the war, the flow of weapons into the area as well as the political discourses that some governments and politicians started to play with' (CCAP Representative 2010).
- 7 For an earlier analysis of these two areas see Vlassenroot (2002).
- 8 This is the area from where Che Guevara attempted to organise a revolutionary movement with Laurent Kabila. By 2012, as Judith Verweijen points out, 'some of the "brigades" forming part of the larger Mai Mai movement built by Yakutumba in 2007/2008, operated *de facto* as entirely autonomous groups, and later left the movement. It concerns the 5th brigade under Assani Ngunu Ntamushobora, the 6th under Aoci Behekelwa and the 7th under Mulumba' (Verweijen 2012).
- 9 Babembe literally means Bembe people.
- 10 Especially the period immediately preceding the Goma Accords, as described in Chapter 3.
- 11 Banyamulenge literally means people from Mulenge, in Swahili. Traditionally, this term has been given in South Kivu to people associated with the wave of migrations from Rwanda and Burundi in the early twentieth century, who settled in the high plateaux of the Minembwe massif in between the territories of Kalehe, Mwenga and Fizi, and who tend to be of a Tutsi background.
- 12 As seen in Chapter 3 this included the transferring of Belgian and white-owned land to selected Rwandan/Tutsi who were made Congolese nationals after the changes in the nationality law.
- 13 See below the discussion on civil–military relations in Baraka.
- 14 Thanks to Judith Verweijen for pointing this out.
- 15 His real name is Joseph David Karendo Bulenda.
- 16 According to Kasper Hoffmann: 'In 1999 the Mai-Mai were officially recognised as a part of the Congolese army by decree of the then president Laurent-Désiré Kabila, but their operations on the ground were not coordinated by Kinshasa' (2007: 77).
- 17 This feeling was transmitted by all Mai Mai combatants interviewed in formal and informal conversations. According to APC representative and ex-Mai Mai Padiri combatant, in the case of Bunyakiri this has been felt particularly amongst Mai Mai leaders like General Ziralo, General Kirikicho, Major Janvier and Colonel Sadam (APC Representative (no. 114) 2010; Demobilised Mai Mai Padiri Combatant 1 2009).
- 18 The issues raised by this combatant were shared by the 11 other Mai Mai combatants interviewed formally and in informal conversations. In conversation with a DDR and

## *Everyday violence and Mai Mai militias*

- STAREC officer, although they did not directly acknowledge lack of payment, challenges for funding were raised as a challenge for demobilisation (STAREC Representative 2 2014; STAREC – Amani Leo Representative 2010; UPN-DDR Officer 2010).
- 19 Scott too notes that rural rebellions have many times been underpinned by a concern for security (1998: 37).
  - 20 Illegal taxation, cattle theft, especially from Banyamulenge farmers, and recruitment of children, although denied by Mai Mai Yakotumba members (UN Group of Experts 2011: 184–7; 657 and 663).
  - 21 During fieldwork in 2010, 12 NGO representatives were interviewed in Baraka. This interpretation was reflected in four interviews with MONUSCO staff and one with UNHRC staff working in Baraka, as well as by two officers working from Uvira and Bukavu, but with direct responsibility of the Baraka-Fizi region. Multiple informal conversations with residents, local NGOs, INGOs and MONUSCO operating in Baraka also supported this view. See also: Alden, Thakur, and Arnold (2011: 116–17).
  - 22 This has been shared by most interviewees in the area (APC Representative (no. 184) 2014; Primary School Teacher 2014; Raïa Mutomboki Combatant (no. 183) 2014).
  - 23 A local human rights NGO representative said that normally complaints about the army could go to the customary security council. However, as the military could participate, the extent to which residents could voice their concerns about the army were limited (APDHUD Representative 2010).
  - 24 The interview took place in the form of a public audience attended by 15 people. These words resonated amongst the group. This was the general sentiment gathered across the fieldwork in the area of Bunyakiri, including Maibano and Bulambika. At the time, it included 14 interviews with residents, 5 of which had a similar public setting. This was also reflected in two focus groups (Focus Group Bunyakiri Women 2010; Focus Group Young People Bunyakiri 2010).
  - 25 Amuri Misako 2008 points out how prophetic religion, the syncretism of Mai Mai militias, is part of its radicalisation (2008: 127).
  - 26 Militia activity is also seen in other provinces like in Ituri, Maniema, Equateur and Bas Congo. Mbembe argues this is across Africa (2010: 196–221).
  - 27 Information in this paragraph comes from Mai Mai Yakotumba Combatant 1 (2010). It was reflected in the rest of interviews with other Yakotumba members (Mai Mai Yakotumba Combatants 2–5 2010).
  - 28 This and the following quotes come from Simba Mai Mai/MRS Combatant (2010).
  - 29 Especially Simba Mai Mai/MRS and ex-Mai Mai Padiri. Others thought these were false accusations coming from the Government, MONUC/ MONUSCO and the INGOs.
  - 30 From the French *colline* (small hill), they speak of ‘collinisme’ (Simba Mai Mai/MRS Combatant 2010).
  - 31 Opportunistic, motivated for self-gain or self-aggrandisement.
  - 32 Only 1,749 attended, according to the same report.
  - 33 Abduction and forced recruitment have been reported in Human Rights Watch (2008: 18); UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon (2009: 39). For an overview of membership see Lubala Mugisho (2000); Maindo Monga Ngonga (2007); Vlassenroot (2002).
  - 34 An exception is the FRF in Minembwe, which was formed through a split in the military leadership. Still, many disillusioned unemployed youth in the area may have joined since (EARDC General (no. 146) 2010; ADEPAE et al. 2011: 47–8).
  - 35 PARECO’s creation was helped by MP Bakungu Mithondeke; as discussed in Chapter 3, PARECO was co-opted by the Government to fight the CNDP (Stearns 2013c: 34).

- 36 This was the view gathered from 15 government and local administration officials, 10 military officers, 17 UN officials and two UNHCR representatives. The desolidarisation strategies discussed below also support this view.
- 37 Several MPs spoke of these dynamics as an obstacle to ending the conflict (Goma MP 2011; Masisi MP 1 2010; Masisi MP 2 2014).
- 38 E.g. Yakotumba in the Mukera, Ngandja and Milimba mines in Fizi (ADEPAE et al. 2011: 119; see also: UN Group of Experts 2015b).
- 39 From the DRC Government, there are three presidential decrees (DRC Government 2004a, 2004b, 2004c).
- 40 The World Bank created a multi-million-dollar donor trust for Disarmament and Reintegration that in 2009 had invested US\$275 million (World Bank 2009: 1).
- 41 This was available information in all fieldwork locations. It was confirmed by the two demobilisation officers interviewed, all Mai Mai and ex-Mai Mai combatants and was raised in several interviews with MONUSCO and local authorities (JMAC Officer 2 2011; Masisi Territory Administrator 2011).
- 42 Dawa (medicine in Swahili) is a generic name across territories but the others are also used in Bunyakiri and Uvira, respectively.
- 43 These words are part of the technical vocabulary of used by MONUC/MONUSCO and STAREC (Ahoussi 2009; MONUSCO Civil Affairs 2012c. esp. Q.1 and 3). 'Sensitization' activities were already attempted by L. Kabila after the 1996 war and at beginning of 1998 war (ADEPAE et al. 2011: 39–40).
- 44 Kinyarwanda is a Rwandese language. Some of the elements reintegrated in the army do not speak the official languages of the provinces (Swahili and French), let alone the local languages. I was able to observe this during my field trips in Baraka, Fizi and Masisi.
- 45 Some of these issues were raised in the workshop. They came in several interviews and have been reported extensively as dynamics in civil/military relations (e.g. FEDI Representative 2010; Femmes Père Saint-Simon Representative 2010; Free the Slaves 2011: 13; Human Rights Watch 2009: 3).

## *Creative survival as subversion*

### Solidarities and creative tactics against ‘conditions of death’<sup>1</sup>

In the DRC, the exercise and consolidation of state authority does not necessarily imply social transformation or a real commitment of the state to impose itself but, rather, the management of state absences and state presences through a plurality of authorities. Still, the patterns of coercion and extraction that have followed from the 20 years of conflict, with the different state-making and peacebuilding processes, determine the conditions for the continuation of poverty on the ground. Poverty has a long and complex historical legacy. Nonetheless, the process of producing state authority is part and parcel of processes of production, distribution and institutionalisation of social hierarchy.<sup>2</sup> Kankwenda notes that predation in the DRC, or, as he calls it, ‘predatocracy’ is ‘as old as the country’ (2005: 10 and 17). As such, the strategies of resistance against the impact of war and peacebuilding on livelihoods are inscribed in a long historical trajectory. Some would argue that these strategies are characteristic of the material relationship between states and societies, or even of the *natural* struggle against poverty (Ouendji 2009; Latouche 2007; Ward 1973).<sup>3</sup> Although a similar argument should be made of discursive and violent practices so far observed, creative survival figures prominently as an example of how patterns of resistance are recontextualised alongside changes in political and economic circumstances.

Peacebuilding in this sense represents a contemporary snapshot of a historical process in which political, economic and cultural relations connect the local to the global. Whether resistance is exercised discursively, violently or, as will be explored in this chapter, as a form of survival, it is conditioned by the way authority is asserted along the axis of state absence and presence. Nonetheless, in this interstice, solidarity, and not just coercion and extraction, is an important element of the everyday political landscape.

Creativity, as the art of *la débrouille*,<sup>4</sup> is defined here as the use of imagination, solidarity and reciprocity to produce anything that allows or improves survival. Although a rumba song may have captured the concept better,

Figure 6.1 is also illustrative of the ways in which creativity provides everyday needs.<sup>5</sup> It is a broom made from needle-like palm leaves held together by a tomato can. The making of this broom is the fruit of a myriad of monetary, symbolic and reciprocal exchanges. The final product is testimony to how Congolese creativity facilitates survival and that this is a collective project.<sup>6</sup> This creativity is applied to the delivery of all sorts of services (food security, health, education, conflict resolution, and even national army and police provisioning). By taking control of these services, subordinate classes are simultaneously articulating modes of political authority and social organisation in a way that denies, mitigates, 'de-totalises' and provides alternatives to state authority (Bayart 1983: 119).<sup>7</sup>

This is not necessarily an attack, or a direct denial. Rather, it is a self-regarding activity, a form of *aikido*, that subverts forms of extraction by enacting



*Figure 6.1* Home-made broom, photo taken June 2010, private dwelling, Yolo Nord, Kinshasa



channels of re-appropriation. This re-appropriation provokes denial of extractive claims and facilitates the mitigation of the effects of domination. Within these practices of survival there are different practices and grades in the visibility of intent. For instance, while tax evasion or defending landownership through armed groups could be seen as a more direct claim-regarding form of resistance, non-violent self-help tactics of land seizure, negotiating the terms of military rule and social service and infrastructure provision could all be seen as self-regarding activities that subvert the effects of poverty, appropriation and authoritarianism.<sup>8</sup> Revisiting Certeau's language, they are tactics that follow self-logics, they redirect wealth, re-appropriate it and defend it, subverting the logic of power. This interpretation is nonetheless contested. Everyday survival is also the site of structural violence, racketeering and mutual manipulations. The analysis of survival as resistance does not tell a romantic story but only explores the dynamics of resistance that rely on survival strategies as they attempt to appease or evade extraction.

This chapter is structured in four sections around the topics just mentioned. It first addresses these critiques as a way of analysing how the framework applies to survival. The following three sections then offer examples that illustrate different aspects of peacebuilding and resistance practices, starting with tax evasion and practices against elite land appropriation.<sup>9</sup> Then follows a section illustrating the mitigation of the authoritarian nature of military rule through negotiation. This has to do with the military approach against armed groups as part of the political compromises with the FDLR, CNDP and Rwanda, and as a palliative to state absence. The chapter finishes with a section examining various examples of social service provision.

All these examples illustrate that surviving and mitigating the effects of dispossession are simultaneously a way to provide self-management and to rearticulate the social and political space. They reaffirm mechanisms of self-reliance and assert alternative political agendas. In all these areas, although it might not be explicitly stated, women take a central role, being the main service providers (Demobilised Mai Mai Padiri Combatant 1 2009; Peasant Union Member (no. 151) 2010; Yoka 2009: 11). The note on gender division should not be seen, especially after the preceding chapter, as a portrayal of war-mongering men and caring women (Elshtain 1998). Far from establishing an image of women as 'peace-makers' and men as 'war-mongers', these divisions need to be seen as part of the imperative of a broader war context, determining labour roles through gender roles. It should also be noted that the examples discussed here of taxation, land distribution, negotiating military rule and social service provision, are all complex areas from which one could generate volumes of analysis. They have been chosen as illustrations of the dynamics between peacebuilding, state-making and resistance as they pertain to the sphere of livelihoods and material extraction.

### **Appropriation and extraction in the interstice of state presences and absences**

The reliance for survival on the *débrouille* has been a feature of Congolese history. The response to the 'delinquency' of this relatively absent state, as Kankwenda puts it, has been 'the emergence of an active and dynamic civil society, organised to take control of everyday survival, education, health, neighbourhood security, etc' (2005: 176). 'People being in charge' has a dual political value as social services and as political organisation (Barrios 2010: 6–9). For Mac Gaffey, for example, 'through the second economy, the citizenry may not only evade civil obligations but also express resistance to the state and to the class which controls it' (1991: 10). It follows that with the humanitarian crisis of the different wars in the DRC, the economy has once again relied on people's capacity for survival, reflecting the tension between necessity and resistance.

Survival has been seen as an effect of governmentality, signalling accommodation, not resistance, to a successfully imposed neoliberal agenda (Chabal 2009).<sup>10</sup> Some have also argued that the relative absence of the state facilitates the creation of mechanisms of domination where the state and the effects of a particular political economy transcend private life (Chabal 2009; Hibou 2011b; see also: Meddeb 2011). Subjection, or at least, negotiation, is henceforth the key for surviving domination, but may not be seen as a form of resistance.

The work of Chabal exemplifies this view. He argues, firstly, that 'the state may not be able to do what it is mandated to do but it is still vigorous enough to keep a check on what is being done informally' (2009: 132). As a result, the state keeps a degree of control on the ground and maintains informal networks of power linked to state agents and bureaucrats. Secondly, Chabal argues that subordinate classes, by providing all sorts of social services, from security to electricity, and hospitals to rubbish management, are actually involved in a form of state extortion. 'Civil servants', he argues, 'prey on those who cannot afford to resist them: police harass ordinary people; nurses demand bribes; teachers require payment; the providers of official paperwork (ID cards, passports, market licences, etc.) sell their "good offices"' (Chabal 2009: 151).

Chabal identifies what has been noted in previous chapters, that the capacity of peace strategies to claim success is the capacity of subordinate classes to absorb their negative consequences. Leaving people to 'fend for themselves', whether it is rubbish collection, dealing with armed groups or sustaining the national army, can be viewed, within the context of the DRC, as a mode of extortion only benefiting those who would otherwise be responsible for dealing with these things. However, the problem with Chabal's arguments is that he does not afford agency to the political choices that subordinate classes make. This is not to say that people opt to be exploited, but to observe just this factor is to ignore the daily strategies of resistance to exploitation and the capacity of subordinate classes to exercise control over their circumstances.<sup>11</sup> Whereas

predatory strategies are seen in many state-residual services, self-provision helps to placate poverty, violence and war, and to mitigate the extraction of labour, land and taxes.

These strategies also create mutual obligations where ideals concerning what authorities should be doing provide a measure of legitimacy. Chabal himself states that:

[a]t the heart of the politics of belonging and partaking[,] relations of proximity and reciprocity provide the foundations upon which rulers and ruled, elite and populace, relate to each other within and across communities [and] notions of ethics and morality are based on the honouring of relations of social exchange and on how these relations influence the nature and conduct of politics on the continent. (2009: 136)

Therefore 'bartering' puts authorities and subordinate classes on a more equal footing. It grants non-elites a space for subverting the relationship by imposing on elites the requirement to negotiate. In all of this, as mentioned before, there is an element of exploitation and abandonment. As a resident of a Butembo neighbourhood put it: 'if we have to wait for the state, nothing gets done' (Neighbourhood Representative of 10 houses 2010). This self-management and self-provision palliates the effects of domination, identifying alternative political agendas of food security, land and political participation. The examples provided in this chapter are not exhaustive; they illustrate instances of everyday survival where the elements of denial, mitigation and the advancing of subordinates' own agendas are present.

### **Confronting extraction, subverting distribution**

State authority assertion and consolidation is done through the levying of taxes and the transfer and allocation of property rights. Despite its claim to bring order and stability, statebuilding brings with it a predatory effect, which is seen in the areas of land property management. In the DRC, since land belongs to the state by law, its allocation can be arbitrary, yet remaining within the law; land links state administrators to multiple state institutions and private elites. Similarly, taxes are not only a tool for state financing but also a survival strategy for public servants.<sup>12</sup> Contradictorily, the resilience of customary and collective land administration, in addition to the fact that the state cannot efficiently raise taxes, offers an insight into how everyday creative survival denies and mitigates the impact that taxation and elite land distribution has on peasants' livelihoods (African Development Bank 2012: 4).

#### *Tax*

Popular classes see tax collection as illegitimate. Whether in a formalised or informalised way, there is widespread concern that taxes are paid to *enrich the*

*pockets of the politicians*.<sup>13</sup> There is nothing unusual about this; the same patterns of discourses and tax evasion could be found worldwide. However, in the DRC, taxes not reaching the state take on an important dimension. Those that are collected on the ground generate revenues, and this is illustrated by the dynamics in which tax collection and tax evasion take place. The tax revenue in the DRC was 13.5 per cent of total GDP in 2010 (as opposed to for instance the 25.1 per cent of the UK) (World Bank 2012b, 2015). According to the World Bank, in all countries, generally, 1 per cent of registered tax-payers provide 70 per cent of the tax revenue (International Finance Corporation 2009: 17). Thus, while non-elite tax contributions to the state treasury are marginal or non-existent, they make up the salary of state-representatives on the ground.

Still, the way taxation works also means that there is widespread tax avoidance.<sup>14</sup> In a focus group in Butembo (North Kivu), five out of six participants confirmed that they did not pay their taxes, firstly because the tax officer rarely came to their houses, and secondly because they felt that they did not owe anything to the state (Focus Group Butembo Residents 2010). The chief of this neighbourhood stated that before they paid their taxes, the state had to fix the streets (only three major roads were asphalted) (Walikomba 2010). In informal conversations, many residents stated their refusal to pay their taxes if they were not going to get anything back from them. Interestingly, the idealised version of the state works as a tax avoidance strategy: if the state does not work for them, people will not pay the state its dues.

This was a constant in all places where fieldwork was undertaken. Conflict around tax seemed to be especially prevalent around small commerce, where tax officers are more present. In Goma, in a small survey carried out with street sellers, all participants confirmed that they had found ways to avoid taxation.<sup>15</sup> This included hiding merchandise, packing and leaving, and alternating selling days. In the central market at Baraka (South Kivu), sellers complained about the variety and cost of the taxes. They said that the benefit they receive is too low and the taxes are too high. As a result, they have invented mechanisms for tax evasion (Baraka Market Sellers 2010). For instance, people selling the same products tend to gather together in the same place. They keep checking whether a tax officer might be coming. If an officer arrives, several sellers of the same product will go away, while one remains. This individual tells the officer that all the products are hers so that the tax paid is substantially lower than if each person had to pay for their products separately. The result is a mutual reticence. Neither the tax officers nor the taxpayers are happy with the tax system, but they cohabit as a kind of a stalemate. This does not mean a lack of conflict. On the contrary, there is a constant 'toing and froing', which, in the context of war, entails negotiation, but also armed confrontation.

As with the workshops organised to desolidarise the population from armed groups, tax payment has its own 'sensitisation' workshops. For example, a Civil

Society (SOCICO) representative in Masisi was asked by the Government to carry out seminars to 'demand people to pay their taxes'; but, as he said, 'that didn't pass well through their ears' (President of Civil Society Masisi Centre 2011). A representative of the Itinerant Traders Association in Bunyakiri spoke about the arbitrariness with which taxes were charged. In an exemplary instance of negotiation, he indicated that often 'when there is a tax that traders see as unfair or that they cannot pay, the association speaks to the inspector or the authorities so that traders are relieved of the payment' (Bikanaba 2010). This cautious negotiation style was reflected in the taxation campaign started by the provincial government of South Kivu. The message on a poster, displayed in one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Bukavu, gently asked: 'Dear tax-payer, pay your taxes and duties in order to aid your provincial Government to finance the 5 pledges and other projects of development.'<sup>16</sup> As Mkandawire has shown, unpaid taxes are a sign of the weakness of the state and the success of resistance in many African countries (2008: 119–20). The result is a mutual 'arm's length' distance. The Government makes the people responsible for the lack of development, while people are not willing to pay taxes until they see the Government working for development.

However, negotiation and coercion go hand in hand. The state seeks alternative ways to finance its own presence and support elite networks, including both threats and the imposition of penalties, including prison (Mukendi 2010). The state shares the power to levy taxation with armed groups, the army and the police. This kind of taxation is often negotiated but, if it is not accepted, it is done at gunpoint. The use or the threat of violence makes this taxation difficult to evade and further spurs armed contestation. As an example, Table 6.1 shows the taxes extracted by the FARDC and Amani Leo forces.

Table 6.1 only shows estimates, from multiplying the extraction observed in one day by the 30 days in a month. Although these are not exact figures, extortion by FARDC and Amani Leo troops has been widely reported (Global Witness 2009: 27–30, 2010b: 8; UN Group of Experts 2010b: p. 3 and para. 177; 2011: paras 301–2). However, it would be limited to conclude that the above supports Chabal's arguments about successful domination. These activities should not be looked at from the perspective of whether the state has been 'successful' in extracting taxes and whether resistance has been 'successful' in avoiding them. Rather, both of these practices should be seen as ongoing dynamics. For state-making, these dynamics entail negotiation and sharing fiscal authority; for resistance they mean a denial of taxes and legitimacy to the state.

### *Land*

To a large extent, all of the above regarding taxation applies also to land. However, land has a special symbolic and historical meaning. Changes in its use and property have a direct impact not just on revenue and political authority, but

*Table 6.1* FARDC extortion at checkpoints in Kabare and Kasha

No.	Checkpoint	Area	Troops	Period of observation	Daily takings (USD)	Estimated monthly takings (USD)
1	Cibingu	Axe	Amani Leo	13.4.10	69	2,055
2	Citende Ludaha	Kabare-Nindja	Amani Leo	14.4.10	102	3,069
3	Kamukenge		Amani Leo: 31st	8-10	101	3,036
4	Mulembo		Amani Leo: 31st	&12-14.4.10		
5	Lushandja		Amani Leo: 31st			
6	Chez Nshembe		Amani Leo: 31st			
7	Biranga		10th Military Region			
8	Mbalaza	Kasha	10th MR: Bagira camp	23-26.4.10	24	719
9	Rugondo I	Kasha	10th MR: artillery	23-26.4.10	48	1,427
10	Rugondo II	Kasha	10th MR: artillery	23-26.4.10	53	1,600
11	Mogo	Cirunga	10th MR: Bagira camp	15-17.4.10	55	1,637
12	Cidaho	Cirunga	10th MR: Bagira camp	12-14.4.10	36	1,094
13	Kaiwaira	Bugobe-Ludaha	10th MR: Bagira camp	12-15.4.10	22	660
14	Chez Chiyumpa		10th MR: Bagira camp	12-15.4.10	28	839
15	Buhanga		10th MR: Bagira camp	12-15.4.10	69	2,068
					Total	18,203

Source: Oxfam International (2009: 5)

also on the social order and identity attached to it. As such, the conflict over land is one not only of livelihoods but also of political projects. One project is based on community control, participation in political representation and dignified living; another concerns increasing land privatisation and concentration; yet other concerns state security and managing military and elite conflicts. These have been underlined by a process of militarisation, as war has acted as a conveyor belt between statebuilding and changes in land tenure. Land seizure and allocation in the DRC have become militarised both through direct occupation by armed groups and by the military response these seizures have prompted. As with the operations of armed groups, wars over land, and subsequent lack of access to land, have caused massive flight.<sup>17</sup> Even if the land becomes empty, it still fulfils a series of statebuilding purposes: production of revenue through its sale, allocation or transfer to politicians, entrepreneurs or MNCs and the production of shared authority. Similarly, even if armed groups occupy land, if they are sufficiently powerful, they are likely to join elite and statebuilding networks.<sup>18</sup>

Creativity has subverted elite-land distribution in three ways: as survival against deteriorating livelihoods, as cooperation for production and distribution and as a form of negotiation with elites.<sup>19</sup> These practices do not necessarily demonstrate a victory against elite-land redistribution, but they subvert the logic of appropriation, mitigating its effects and serving non-elite agendas. The effect is also a denial of legitimacy to elite claims, the detotalisation of coercion, the imposition of negotiation and the projection of political alternatives. Networks of proximity and kin, cooperative schemes, relying on solidarity and reciprocity, are often used as the 'workers' wig', in Certeau's terms. They are the foundation for maintaining and recreating forms of political authority and self-organisation. There is a caveat to this affirmation: as the conflict over land has followed ethnic lines, one may argue that the elite/non-elite distinction is inadequate. This is partly true. However, the elite/non-elite division identifies the political and economic status linked to land tenure, even if social mobility makes these identities fluid.<sup>20</sup> As such, without making permanent statements about who belongs where on the basis of class or ethnic identity, this division gains currency because it illustrates the patterns in which those who hold the power to grant land access are resisted by those who do not.

In a study on land tenure, conflict and household land-use strategies in the territories of Masisi, Lubero (North Kivu) and Walungu (South Kivu), Vlassenroot (2006) identifies several mechanisms of survival within a context of increasing dispossession and food insecurity. They go from collective responses such as shared production and cooperative membership to individual methods such as crop theft and militia membership. Table 6.2 summarises the research and findings.

Many of these strategies are present in the activities of the League of Women Peasants Cooperative (LOFEPACO).<sup>21</sup> This is a federation of peasant



*Table 6.2* 'Food constraints and household strategies'

Constraints to food production	Constraints to food access	Household strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shifts in land tenure systems:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• from a system of relative equality, proximity and mutual dependency based on customary chiefs to a system of alliances based on proximity to Kinshasa's authorities</li> <li>• collective tenure increasingly privatised and expropriated to large ranches</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Limited access to land</li> <li>- Crop restrictions on rental land</li> <li>- Reduction of plot sizes</li> <li>- Conflicts over land ownership</li> <li>- Loss of livestock</li> <li>- Other conditions:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease of land fertility due to over-exploitation</li> <li>• Demographic pressure</li> <li>• Presence of armed elements</li> <li>• Pillaging of harvests</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction of purchasing power</li> <li>- Limited availability of food</li> <li>- Increase in the amount and number of taxes</li> <li>- Limited access to markets due to insecurity</li> <li>- Absence of cooperatives that protect merchants</li> <li>- Lack of organisation</li> <li>- Pillaging of stocks</li> <li>- Degradation of road network</li> <li>- Destruction of market infrastructures</li> <li>- Disappearance of microcredit systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cultivation of small plots in wetlands</li> <li>- Shift from monoculture to polyculture</li> <li>- Adaptation of crop diversification to (lack of) tenure security</li> <li>- Shift from agriculture to petty trade</li> <li>- Shifts in food consumption patterns</li> <li>- Harvest and consumption of immature crops</li> <li>- Cash for work</li> <li>- Joining of farmers' associations</li> <li>- Cultivation on shared plots</li> <li>- Migration to urban centres or mining sites</li> <li>- Joining of local militias</li> <li>- Theft of crops</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted and edited from Vlassenroot (2006: 3. Clarifications on land tenure changes from pp. 6–7)

organisations for the protection of peasant interests, but with a special regard for women's issues (most organisations integrated in LOFEPACO are women only). According to Clarisse Ngemulo, LOFEPACO's activity animator, the creation of these organisations and the federation responded to a need to provide women with a space to deal with their specific problems. These problems include a sense of disempowerment, inequality and marginalisation. In the Hira culture in particular, women have inferior cultural status,<sup>22</sup> and around the year 2000 they decided to create a federation to reinforce the strength and effectiveness of other organisations in the empowering of women and peasants.<sup>23</sup> The league facilitates exchanges and training in different domains,

including government lobbying. What is striking is that in the middle of one of the worst periods of armed conflict they felt that the struggle they had started and the campaigning tools the cooperative was granting them became even more meaningful. Not only did women feel like the main targets of war, but they also considered that part of the solution to war relied on solving the problems of poverty, inequality, corruption and certain customary traditions that kept women disadvantaged.

As such, the federation constituted an economic solution, a funding mechanism against the effects of war, a campaigning tool and a vehicle for political and social change.<sup>24</sup> Its activities included the creation of a credit cooperative, assuring food security, creating a seed bank and exchanging products and skills training. The women-only spaces promoted discussion on empowerment, self-esteem, leadership, awareness of land-tenure rights, customary rules and sexism, and what they called 'listening spaces'. These were spaces where women who had been raped could be heard by other women; this has been reinforced by INGO funding and training and has now developed into a psychological and economic support for survivors of sexual violence.<sup>25</sup> They have organised sit-ins to demand the de-militarisation of certain areas like Mangango and Beni. They have also been successful in allowing many widows to access land titles. This has been achieved through campaigning and accompanying claimants to the territorial administrator office.

These activities demonstrate an associative tendency when addressing needs and engaging in political claims. Most importantly, they demonstrate that the constraints imposed by the political context do not make peasants lower their political aspirations; instead these become imperative. Of the six peasant cooperatives interviewed for this research, all emphasised that the end of war should bring well-being, development, education, equality and political participation.<sup>26</sup> For instance, a representative of the Union of Peasant Cooperatives of North Kivu (UCOOPANOKI), a cooperative of farms and cultivators, said that the main problems they faced were the appropriation of land by politicians, big landowners and MNCs, as well as the incursions by armed groups stealing their crops.<sup>27</sup> Their aspirations were stated in terms of land access, security and fair prices to assure life in dignity (Batenda 2010).<sup>28</sup>

Likewise, in Bukavu, the UPDI (Union Paysanne pour le Developpement Integral) was born in 1994 out of peasant members feeling disempowered and marginalised from INGO development projects (UPDI Representative 2010). Although land seizures and changes in land tenure had been in place already under Mobutu, the war has accentuated this. Peasants feel that they are victims of all parties, including politicians, armed groups and MNCs, and marginalised in decision-making. They see themselves as an essential part of development, being at the heart of agricultural production. Significantly, the activities of the cooperatives mentioned above included a project of food security and a project

of social change. The peasants all claimed a need for empowerment and resolution of land conflict.

*Subverting logics*

Extraction through taxation and elite-land distribution illustrates the mechanisms whereby statebuilding and resistance could be seen simultaneously in direct conflict, as in conditions of mutual reticence. The models of private ownership pursued by the DRC Government and international agencies, added to the favoured model of extraction whereby precarious artisanal and militarised mining serves large corporations but not necessarily local communities, poses a threat to some of the core subsistence mechanisms that the peasantry has traditionally relied on (Global Witness 2009: 59–69). Tax levy, although not a source of state income, serves other political and military purposes that foster the presence of state authority. In this context, resistance delegitimises authority, reduces its extractive impact and imposes negotiation. More so, resistance produces self-organising mechanisms that resonate with non-elite aspirations for social justice and alternative forms of political authority. It is argued that these subversive practices follow self-regarding logics and operate as self-help mechanisms for re-appropriation and well-being; they are a form of resistance to the modes of accumulation. This raises the question of the relationship between these forms of resistance and peacebuilding. Peacebuilding produces externalities that are felt by the civilian population on the ground. An additional use of survival strategies and cooperative schemes is to tame the effects of the authoritarian nature of the army. This is a direct implication of having a strategy that privileges the needs of armed groups, security and economic interests over the needs of the civilian population.

**Taming the military**

The strategy of scattering the army throughout the North and South Kivu territory serves the political compromises acquired by the military operations arising different negotiations such as the Goma Accords or the 23 March agreement, and also the purpose of having some form of state authority presence. Despite much criticism of the poor discipline, lack of control and disorganisation of the FARDC, the actions of MONUC/MONUSCO have supported the Government in what seems to be a ‘better than nothing’ approach. MONUC/MONUSCO, the EU and a plethora of foreign government aid agencies have provided operational support, training and funding (MONUSCO – ISSSS/STAREC liaison Officer 2010; STAREC – Amani Leo Representative 2010). But, aside from militarising the environment, which in practice is a tool for hierarchisation and the reaffirmation of positions of domination, army deployment is also an extractive tool. On a daily basis, the political, social and economic cost of this military

deployment is assumed by local residents, particularly in rural areas. As seen in previous chapters, this deployment has generated resistance and met with discourses of delegitimisation and armed attacks. The military's dependence on the population has created an ambiguous ground on which survival tactics have been a way both to meet the military's needs and to mitigate its effects. Notwithstanding the abuses of the military, these tactics have subverted the effects of the military presence, such that they serve the self-help logics of the civilian population. Although Chabal, Hibou and Mbembe, for instance, argue that there is not resistance but accommodation, and even a logic of subjection, the dynamics of negotiation highlight that arrangements are contingent, thus allowing for redefining the limits of domination.

In this case, the process of negotiation taps into the logics of reciprocity and creativity that sustain daily life. Militarisation and authoritarianism, imposed by the conditions on which the army is deployed, is 'detotalised' through expectations of mutual obligation and the creation of mutual dependency. On the one hand, FARDC expects the population to respect its authority, provide security intelligence, assume its families' livelihood needs, supply labour and grant it privileges in certain economic exchanges.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, residents expect FARDC to provide them with security, policing, labour, a greater guarantee or even 'official' stamp on conflict resolution processes and reciprocity in economic and service exchanges. Judith Verweijen (2013), who has extensively studied civil–military relations, notes that exchanges and civilian expectations of FARDC provision include conflict resolution, arbitration, policing, economic regulation and other governance practices. In terms of conflict resolution, arbitration and policing, these can range from settling chief succession or dowry disputes to being present at football matches and markets and prosecuting crimes such as cattle theft and poisoning (Verweijen 2013). FARDC's authority becomes mitigated and detotalised by the process in which survival, including that of the FARDC troops themselves, is better assured by reciprocity and negotiation than by force. In conditions of arbitrariness and inequality, the sphere of negotiation allows space for equalisation and brings a public eye to precisely the arbitrary and violent use of authority.

This dual effect of creative survival applied to civil–military relations can be seen in the response that the newly deployed battalion of Amani Leo in April 2010 had in Baraka. Arche d'Alliance Refugee Protection Supervisor, Ildefonse Masumbo Zongolo, relates what has been noted by many Baraka and Fizi residents: these troops were forcing the displacement of people just in order to steal their goats to eat, and beating residents sometimes just to steal their mobile phones or money (Masumbo Zongolo 2010);<sup>30</sup> some of their members were even accused of rape (Masumbo Zongolo 2010). The worst period, according to Zongolo, was between April and May 2010, which included the attack by Mai Mai Yakotumba in April 2010. Arche d'Alliance organised a series of encounters

with these troops and with the Amani Leo commandant deployed at Baraka. According to Mr Zongolo, from then on the residents would be able to go to the commandant, tell him who had done what and the commandant would apply the penalty accordingly. In a primary example of how DIY and personal reciprocal ties produce direct control, the victims and their representatives would come to verify whether those who had finally been sentenced were serving their sentence. According to Mr Zongolo (2010):

Now when someone is the victim of misbehaviour by these troops, we visit the Commander and we say: 'call in such and such because he has done so and so' – the Commander applies to him maybe fifteen days of imprisonment ... then we verify whether he is really in the cell ... we go there and may say: 'Commander, we have come to give him something to eat' – each day, because it is necessary that he gets his punishment.

In many ways the hierarchy here has been subverted. This does not change what the military still means for many residents: disorder, violence and abuses, but engaging with it through collaboration, networking, solidarity, exchanges and mutual dependency is a way of equalising the relationship and taming the arbitrariness and authoritarianism of its presence. Jane Jacobs, in her study of public order, argues that order is not kept by the presence of the police, but by the presence of a multitude of bystanders, watchers, wanderers, shoppers, sellers and commuters going ahead with their myriad activities (cited in Scott 1998: 132–46). A similar argument could be made regarding the role of creative survival strategies put in place to host and feed the troops. Their menace, disorder, disruption and distrust are mitigated by the same activities that are used to sustain family, neighbours and community. The hierarchically commanded militarising presence is subverted by making the military dependent, with a duty of reciprocity, on the landscape of 'uninstitutionalized, uncodified habits of street-level trust in the production of civic order' (Scott 1999: 280). Forms of mitigation allow for a possible equalising of civil/military relations. Rather than compliance, they signal social conflict and a rejection of militarisation and predation by state authorities.

### **DIY everything**

As Tollens argues, it is due to the Congolese art of survival and their creative strategies that, in the midst of one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes since the Second World War, there has not been a declared famine (2004: 47). The home-made broom illustrated in Figure 6.1 represents that when something is needed, it is created. This does not apply just to everyday needs but goes as far as peace and reconciliation, mitigation of armed groups' operations and the army presence, and, as this section will illustrate, a variety of social services and

basic infrastructure. Reciprocity, solidarity and mutual dependencies established through community networks, ethnic, clan or family links, cooperatives and other groups are channels used for survival strategies. Self-reliance takes priority over reliance on the Government or state authorities. Its effect, however, is the subversion of extractive practices and the conditions of poverty and violence inherent in the political order.

As Vlassenroot and Romkena argue:

People tried to rely on the trust of personal relationships to compensate for the absence of a functioning legal and judicial apparatus. They also tried to evade a venal bureaucracy and an oppressive state by operating in the second economy to find opportunities to better lives. This popular economy of survival, in the end, became an alternative system of economic development that completely escaped state control. (2007: 9)

They also note that ‘these informal structures can pose a serious constraint to state building as part of reconstruction efforts’, and identify three important reasons (Vlassenroot and Romkena 2007: 8). Firstly, this provision undermines legitimacy in the eyes both of the population and of donors. This has a domino effect regarding the alternative channels sought by the population for provision, which include the reliance on armed groups for security provision. Secondly, it places both the population and the state in competition for external funding. Thirdly, as a consequence, donors have felt more legitimate and secure in providing funds to NGOs rather than to the state, which has contributed to an even weaker state presence (Vlassenroot and Romkena 2007: 8–9).

More importantly, these mechanisms of survival entail a deeper political statement that resonates with a logic of re-appropriation over political affairs. They signal a ‘reinvention of order’, as Trefon (2004a) puts it, where there is a process of negation of the imposed order, a subversion of it and a projection of alternative forms of social organisation and political authority. These points are illustrated with the example of electricity and the case of Mabuku (North Kivu), where there is no permanent presence of state authority.

#### *Household and commercial electricity*

Only 6 per cent of the population in the DRC have access to electricity, although the DRC is an electricity exporter (EU Energy Initiative (EUEI) 2008: 1; Manson 2010). However, Congolese residents access electricity not by demanding it from the Government or the Société Nationale d’Electricité (SNEL), but through self-organising mechanisms. There are three main ways of accessing electricity outside the official provision: by stealing it, by collectively sharing a generator or by paying a fee to a neighbour who has bought a generator. In Kinshasa, people in poor neighbourhoods steal electricity from the official SNEL network. The problem is that this source does not always work. Hence the mockery and



the renaming of the state electricity provider as the ‘National Society of Darkness’.<sup>31</sup> All of the above strategies function to avoid government-provided services and their consequences, including taxes. As an electrician hosting one generator in a neighbourhood in Goma states: ‘we don’t pay the tax for the electricity anymore because it is not provided, we do it ourselves’ (Cooperative Generator Electrician 2010). The fact that for access to electricity it is less trouble and more straightforward to rely on proximity channels and one’s own creativity than to engage with the government demonstrates that self-provision is simultaneously a political disengagement from the government.

Strategies to produce household electricity started in the North Kivu territory of Butembo. There, residents started to create a system by which approximately every 60 houses would buy a generator together and set up their own electricity system. The system is basic but orderly, set up with trunks and pieces of wood. One house hosts the generator and everyone contributes to the petrol, and electricity is generated from 6 pm to 10 pm. In Figures 6.2 and 6.3 one can observe how a whole electricity system has been created in which lines of cable and wooden posts supply entire neighbourhoods. From Butembo this mean of electricity production has now expanded to other provinces.



*Figure 6.2* Street view with community-built electricity lines, Butembo, photographed 30 July 2010



Commercial electricity is done generally through an entrepreneur or a collective undertaking within a household to supply the neighbourhood. Those who rent electricity from such an individual or household are generally small businesses such as hairdressers, bars and restaurants or internet cafes. Four households were visited that host a generator in the popular neighbourhood of Keshero, Goma (Figure 6.4). They reported that the cost of the generator – around US\$ 3,000 – is never recovered; what users pay for is the cost of running it and the maintenance, although for much of the time this is not enough. Entrepreneurs decide to make the investment because they require electricity for their own business; the fact that they can facilitate the existence of more



*Figure 6.3* Street in Goma, self-made electrical line, photographed 27 July 2010



*Figure 6.4* Commercial generator, photographed 2 August 2014, Keshero, Goma

businesses offers the neighbourhood more possibilities for development and security (Figure 6.5). The business owners interviewed reported that they paid a fee of between 1,000 and 2,000 Congolese francs per day (US\$1–\$2), which is what they could afford to pay. Other forms of energy production, such as solar panels, are not seen as powerful or easily available. Hence the reliance on these generators.

Commercial electricity provision rests on the same logic of reciprocity and creativity as the household approach. Although it starts from an individual initiative it responds to collective needs and is not for profit. In both examples, the imposed conditions of lack of electricity and lack of interest by the state in providing it are transformed into a logic of provision, collective undertaking and mutual support. Both of these forms of delivering electricity either to the private households or to small businesses generate spaces for dialogue about the production of a public good. This opens collective spaces of mutual support and reciprocity that are simultaneously a space for public organising about an important aspect of the neighbourhood; it avoids state taxes and state enterprises and is able to mitigate the lack of electricity. In these collective spaces, people establish means for distribution and payment. In the case of households, families establish



*Figure 6.5* Businesses supplied by the generator, photographed 2 August 2014, Keshero, Goma

how much they are going to spend on the generator, how much electricity they are going to use and how the maintenance will be done. In the case of commercial electricity, there is negotiation between the business owners and the generator owner. Although the outcome is the privatisation of electricity, the fact that these mechanisms are very extended has, as a more visible effect, the multiple reproduction of collective spaces of dialogue and decision-making, redefining the terms of the distribution of a public good.

### *Mabuku*<sup>32</sup>

Much of this self-provision is illustrated by the town of Mabuku, a small town in the territory of Beni, North Kivu, where no official authority has a consistent presence. Police, intelligence officers (Agence Nationale de Renseignement) and administrators do not have a permanent post. The Catholic Church, the hospital and a school are the closest forms of institutional authority present, in which the population has a direct input, even in decision-making processes. There is an established payment scheme for teachers, nurses and doctors, who also provide a loose form of authority. For instance, the women of the village built

the maternity wing of the small hospital/health centre by collecting materials around the area and making their own bricks and renamed it 'Maternite Yetu' (Our Maternity; Figure 6.6). They also established a cooperative so that they can have a partnership with international organisations and thus distribute the money through different activities.<sup>33</sup> Members of the cooperative receive training, a shovel, a hoe and a machete to work on their fields, and bring their products to the cooperative from different villages nearby in order to trade them. They also contributed money to have a mill for flour.

The cases of Mabuku and of electricity are not isolated: this is the normal way that everyday life is approached across the DRC. Regarding services, others could be added, such as health. Health provision is a paradox because, as Zoë Marriage (2010) has observed, while a substantial amount of aid goes towards health services in DRC, it does not address the causes of the lack of a health service in the first place. Aside from the doctors per population ratio being 0.6 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants, infrastructures are either lacking or in very poor condition (Ngoma and Luzolo 2010; Participant Observation XII 2010; UN Population Fund 2011: 68). Funding comes from a combination of remnants of government health service, INGOs and foreign government aid funding.



*Figure 6.6* Maternity hospital, Mabuku, photographed 1 August 2010

Patients are asked to pay for the services and 'if someone does not have money, they can bring a goat so that it can be eaten by those working on the construction site' (Ngoma and Luzolo 2010). The same applies to staff salaries and the provision of medicines. The South Kivu provincial hospital in Bukavu works this way.<sup>34</sup> State funds are unreliable and insufficient, and its management is done through a Catholic Church scheme, each department being managed on a daily basis by the doctors and nurses working at the hospital, and their ongoing payment relying on the contributions made by the patients (Informal Conversation with Emergency Unit Nurse, South Kivu General Hospital 2010). Similar schemes are found in schools, other social services and in public infrastructure, including road maintenance and house construction.

Infrastructural work is often done through what is called 'Salongo'. Salongo has had several adaptations. It was first a 'perversion of a traditional custom of communal labor in service [...] by colonial administrators to justify forced labor' (Free the Slaves 2011: 13). It was then made 'obligatory civic work' by Mobutu as one-day-a-week work towards community service (Free the Slaves 2011: 13). Under Salongo, FARDC, armed group leaders and government authorities have justified forced labour, including mining, porter services, cooking and housework (Free the Slaves 2011: 13–14). In Butembo, it has been re-appropriated as a way to provide community service and improve living conditions (ADDF 2010; Focus Group Butembo Residents; Neighbourhood Representative of 10 houses 2010; Walikomba 2010). In this case, the beneficiaries of a subverted Salongo are those who initiate these works, and they are also those who need them or otherwise they would not have these services. Other times, people collectively decide not to do Salongo, as is the case in Mwenga, where, despite the call to all residents to do Salongo from 7 am to 10 am on Saturdays, they decided to continue with their own activities. In 2014 the provincial government representative visited Mwenga. People had to clear the roadsides of vegetation but, despite the call by the territorial authorities to do so, people did not attend. Residents argued that it was the work of the roads office to do it and that they already paid the tolls for it to be done (Participant Observation XXVI 2014).

Not only is the extent to which all these important services are provided and to which many more could be added remarkable, but so too is the extent to which this provision creates significant control over important social and political processes.<sup>35</sup> This does not mean successful evasion of domination, but it does entail resistance to it. As such, these services could be seen, as Mac Gaffey noted of similar dynamics under Mobutu, as a 'political option' against 'the interests of the state-based class' (1987: 157). For Mac Gaffey, this 'political option' was seen as one where 'people confront a predatory state which fails to provide them with the opportunity to earn a living wage, with a functioning economic infrastructure or with basic social services' (1987: 157). These non-confrontational forms of resistance mitigate the effects of domination in which the production of social



order and decision-making processes are re-appropriated. To retake the language of the MONUSCO officer cited in Chapter 2, taking over these services provides the 'software' that operationalises the 'state'. In this case, such operationalisation is being redirected to serve people's needs, provoking, as Vlassenroot and Romkema argued, the undermining of statebuilding in the process.

### **Conclusion: reinventing authority**

The illustration at the start of this chapter represents those survival mechanisms that are not only a form of navigating a hostile environment but an activation of multiple channels of exchange and production. These create mutual dependencies resting on solidarity and reciprocity, and have the capacity to subvert the effects of domination. As Aili Mari Tripp states, the provision of and control over these services speak to a broader issue of self-reliance and self-organisation of the social and political arena:

By pursuing their various survival strategies, people were not just responding to necessity, they were actively remoulding their own destinies. They were not only seeking new and innovative ways of obtaining an income, they were consciously and vigorously resisting the state. In the course of defying various anachronistic state policies, they were reshaping the political and economic structures that surrounded them. (2003: 161)

Resistance, then, should be seen in these survival strategies as a mitigation of predation. And this predation is, in the eyes of many people, mainly the responsibility of state action. In the process, as Tripp reminds us, alternative forms of political organisation are being created. In this sense a further argument could be advanced: if, as Mbembe states, Africa has been portrayed as the 'embodiment of nothingness', we might have to rethink Africa as the embodiment of creativity. Survival/DIY activities 'signal renewal and creativity' in ways that show 'Africa [...] immeasurably more alive' (Davidson 1992: 293).

Survival is not just a form of accommodation or domination, but also a form of subversion. Although some survival strategies are a direct denial of a claim, such as evasion of tax levies, they should be seen, following Michel de Certeau, as tactics that, without being intended strategies of attack, and following self-logics and one's own needs, generate the possibility to subvert order. The intent to impose taxes and elite-land distribution is directly rejected through tax evasion, disobedience and multiple strategies to retain landownership and food security, especially through peasant cooperatives. Army deployment provokes a direct impact on the economic and political order. Its maintenance is externalised politically and economically onto the population, making the army dependent on the population. This dependency, alongside subtle negotiating mechanisms, is used by subordinate classes to tame the authoritarian rule of the military and

its extractive effects. Finally, taking over all sorts of social services and public infrastructure simultaneously provides opportunities for avoiding state control and for establishing forms of social organisation where people participate more directly in decision-making processes. This may not be a 'political threat' as Maliyamkono and Bagachwa point out, 'but they certainly pose an economic challenge to the official establishment' (cited in Mac Gaffey 1991: 157). This challenge has a significant political dimension, since the ways in which state authority is resisted have embedded forms of reinventing social organisation and modes of political authority.

The chapter has addressed one of the pillars of statebuilding: extraction and wealth distribution. Although extraction in the DRC has been seen as state-destructive rather than state-constructive, there is a certain logic to the way in which it is carried out (Johnson and Kayser 2005; Kankwenda 2005). It produces authority: it is not necessarily invested, nor is there a project of turning popular classes into working and consuming taxpayers, but it allows for sectors of the elite to retain channels of appropriation and distribution. It is self-serving: these forms of authority assertion have been examined from the point of view of the effects they have on the civilian population's living conditions. The chapter has indicated three areas of resistance through the dynamics of state presence, the layer of peacebuilding strategies and the dynamics of state absence. These three areas have illustrated patterns of responses and different characteristics of how resistance unfolds.

This challenge is both theoretical and practical. On the one hand, peacebuilding shows itself to be a less peaceful and committed method to building a developed, peaceful, democratic Congo than it claims. On the other hand, it shows that as far as its practice on the ground contradicts subordinate classes' aspirations, it is stripped of legitimacy, attacked and subverted. Mac Ginty's 'tale of two economies' in Iraq, one official and one of survival, reflects how, in the absence of an economy that is able to serve the needs of the population, the people go outside of the official channels, subverting one of the most important foundations of the liberal peace project (2011: 15; ch. 5). In other words, creative survival mechanisms prepare a fertile ground not to accept the state but to reject it.

However, the balance between reciprocities and solidarities, on the one hand, and violence, inequalities and hardships, on the other, demonstrates the ambiguous character of survival. Trefon points out that the *reinvention of order in Congo* 'has been characterized by tension, conflict, violence and betrayal, as much as by innovative forms of solidarity, networks, commercial accommodation and interdependencies' (2004a: 2). Daily exchanges are the target of scams, deceits and chicanery. But from here important features of resistance can be extracted that relate back to the themes that have been explored in the course of this book.

The analysis of resistance should not project onto the practices used or onto actors the vision of an ethical world that characterises the actors' own



aspirations. Resistance is contradictory because it is not a permanent state of being of the actors concerned. Nor is it a neat succession of events that connect actors' ideas with their everyday actions and outcomes. On the contrary, seen from the point of view of the actors, resistance is a conditioned response to a particular context and various changing relationships. More so, the ambiguity of survival as a site both of domination and of subversion makes resistance something that cannot be analysed by its strategies, nor by its outcomes. From the point of view of the everyday micro level, resistance rests more on intent, as Scott argued. However, this intent is gradated along a political spectrum that ranges from individual protection against a particular claim, to the collective refusal of it, to the attack against it and the disengagement from it. More important are the patterns created at the macro level by this variety of actions, making resistance a permanent feature of the process of state-making.

#### NOTES

- 1 The conditions that represent the particular relationship between sovereignty, life and death in Africa (cf. Mbembe 2003).
- 2 See Chomsky for an interesting reflection on the role of the state in post-war reconstruction as a vehicle for a capitalist economy (1996: Ch. 2).
- 3 To say that there is a *natural* way of surviving poverty resonates with Manfred Max-Neef's observation (1992) that universal strategies against poverty include being alert, creative, imaginative and make use of networks of solidarity and mutual aid. Others have reflected on survival strategies and state–society relations in the DRC (Lemarchand 1989; Mac Gaffey 1991; Roitman 1990).
- 4 French for 'survival' or 'to get by'. The term makes reference to Mobutu's command in 1973 'débrouillez vous' (fend for yourself), literally meaning that the state was withdrawing many social services. Other terms are also used: 'article 15', 'opération qui cherche', '6e chantier', 'horoscope' and 'libanga' (Yoka 2009: 246).
- 5 Music is most representative of creativity in the DRC. Not only is it part of Congolese historical heritage in a special manner, but also it is ever present in daily life as an essential part of its recreation. Music has thus particular significance in *la débrouille*. Arguably, music, even mainstream, is a tool of political engagement rather than simple entertainment (Zezeza and Eyoh 2003: 71 and 130). Note the lyrics of a rumba song by Koffi Olomide: 'Toza na systeme ya lifelo moto ekopela kasi tozo zika te ('We are in hell. The fire is burning, but we don't burn') (cited and translated in Zezeza and Eyoh 2003: 307; see also: Mangwanda 2009).
- 6 Note here the notion of Jean Marc Ela (1994; 1998) whereby the 'Africa at the bottom' has a common project of survival where solidarity is an imperative, an expression of a common cause and an acknowledgement of a common destiny. This is a different notion to that of Göran Hyden's economy of affection (1980), where the peasantry is 'uncaptured' outside the sphere of action of the state by its own survival activities. On the contrary, it is argued, survival is an effect of domination and resistance reflects a social conflict, not non-dominated spheres of action.
- 7 An exercise against the totalitarian effects of certain forms of authority.
- 8 'Self' as both individual and collective.

- 9 In order to simplify the analysis, the term elite-land appropriation will be used to refer to those strategies that are in the orbit of statebuilding, including as a consequence of the policy to grant ownership to land holders in detriment of collective holdings via customary law, or as the result of new wealth allocations and development policies. The term non-elite land distribution refers to peasants' agendas, which imply collective or customary landownership, land rights and food security.
- 10 Chabal follows Foucault here. For Foucault, government practice had a certain rationale not only about what government means but about the best way to achieve it. 'Governmental *ratio* is what will enable a given state to arrive at its maximum being in a considered, reasoned, and calculated way. [To govern is] to arrange things so that the state becomes sturdy and permanent [...] wealthy [and] strong in the face of everything that may destroy it' (Foucault 2008: 4).
- 11 As Scott argues in relation to inhabitants in the high plateaus of 'Zomia', people do not reject 'development' but domination (2009: 113–15).
- 12 Callaghy notes that at the time of the copper crisis in 1978, the state had already stopped collecting much of its taxes in a formalised form (Callaghy 2001).
- 13 Cf. discourses explored in Chapter 5.
- 14 This interpretation resonates with other studies (Adam and Vlassenroot 2010; earlier studies include: Roitman 1990; Mac Gaffey 1991).
- 15 Small survey sampling 10 street sellers in the Boulevard Kanyamuhanga in Goma, including: three phone credit sellers, two tomatoes, chillies and peanut sellers, one music seller, three bread sellers and one photocopy maker.
- 16 Provincial Government of South Kivu, Bukavu's Kadutu neighbourhood. Poster seen on 8 August 2010.
- 17 This was the tactic used, for instance, by the APR against the Interahamwe, but it has also been used by CNDP and the FDLR (Pillay 2010: para. 150; Andreu Merelles 2008: Facts 18 and 27).
- 18 This has been the case of the CNDP entering the orbit of Rwanda's state project, and PARECO for the DRC Government to counter it.
- 19 Other responses include flight and the use of militias. This section explores practices of resistance directly linked to creative survival strategies.
- 20 For instance, while Banyarwanda Hutu peasants had felt discriminated against by Hunde chiefs in Masisi through at least the beginnings of its largest migration movement from Rwanda in the 1950s, they gained political and military leadership in Masisi by joining the CNDP under Banyarwanda elite and Rwanda's Government (Banyarwanda meaning literally people of Rwanda, which is a term traditionally used in North Kivu to denominate Kinyarwanda speakers, people of Rwandan origin or with Rwandan ancestors). JMAC reports that CNDP was majority Hutu but with minority Tutsi leadership (NRC Representative, 2010; JMAC Officer 3 2012; Vlassenroot 2006).
- 21 Unless otherwise noted, the information in the following two paragraphs relies on Ngemulo (2010).
- 22 This is the ethnic community that many members of LOFEPACO belong to. Women are not allowed to own land; when their husband dies, the land is redistributed by the customary chief or through the male members of the family (Ngemulo 2010; Walikomba 2010).
- 23 Their activities were focused in North Kivu and their name was in fact LOFEPANOKI. After 2005 they acquired a national focus, changing their name to LOFEPACO, although at the time of the interview their radius of action was still North Kivu and more so the Beni-Butembo axis. Maintaining a national coverage, even if nominally, can be a way to have access to certain national and international funding.
- 24 Information in this paragraph comes from Ngemulo (2010).

- 25 In particular the INGO Vredeslanden.
- 26 UCOONAKOPI, LOFEPACO, Association of Manioc producers (Bunyakiri), Syndicat de Protection des Intérêts Paysans (Beni), UPDI and Association Nutrition Assise Communautaire (ANAC). The first three are federations of cooperatives operating across different territories within the province. UPDI and ANAC also operate as broader platforms for peasants to exchange products and cultivation techniques, provide community service, conduct lobbying activities and attract international funding. UPDI has eight cooperatives associated with five territories in South Kivu (Kabare, Kalehe, Walungu, Mwenga and Uvira), and ANAC works in Mabuku and Beni (North Kivu). This was also the sentiment transmitted in other interviews with peasant unions and producer associations (Market Sellers and Buyers of South Kivu Representative 2010; SPIP Representative 2011).
- 27 As an example, they stated that 725 hectares of land in Kabiso (North Kivu) that belonged to the cooperative were threatened to be expropriated by the provincial Government. According to a UCOOPANOKI representative, the issue had been taken to court, but 'the approximate 1000 residents were threatened to have to leave in favour of 3 or 4 new proprietors'. Flight normally occurs to another area where other family members can host them, help them to migrate to the city or attempt to work in the mines. Most farms belonging to the cooperative had suffered attacks from all armed groups, in particular, Mweso and Nyanzale (Batenda 2010).
- 28 Access to just prices was also raised in Bunyakiri by the Manioc Producers Association (Manioc Producers Association Representatives 2010).
- 29 Respect and intelligence became one of the most important demands of the FARDC to civil society in the MONUSCO Sensitization workshop in Fizi and Baraka to ease civil-military relations (Participant Observation XIV 2010). How the civilian population provides for the everyday living needs of the military was directly raised in several interviews. This includes cooking, helping with childcare, aid with housework to military wives or directly hosting them at home (ADDF Representative 2010; FARDC Colonel (no. 129) 2010; FEDI Representative 2010; Femmes Père Saint-Simon Representative 2010; Manioc Producers Association Representatives 2010).
- 30 The interviewee did not mention that in fact the crimes committed by some FARDC members have amounted to crimes against humanity, condemned in 2011 by a military tribunal in Baraka (UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon 2010: para 13, 2011: para. 42).
- 31 From Société Nationale d'Electricité is called Société Nationale de l'Obscurité.
- 32 Unless otherwise noted the information relies on Participant Observation I (2010).
- 33 This included Veterinarios Sin Fronteras (VSF) and Doctors Without Borders.
- 34 The same staff-patient management either directly or through the mediation of Catholic or Protestant Church schemes was present in Bunyakiri (South Kivu), Butembo and Walikale (North Kivu) and Mbandaka and Gemena (Equateur).
- 35 Other prominent services include rubbish collection, road repairs and house building (Goma's Town Hall Representative 2010; Participant Observations IV-VII, IX and XXVI).

## *Everyday resistance and everyday order in world politics*

Despite the increasing involvement of peacebuilding strategies in spheres of sovereign authority after the Cold War, and despite the fact that these strategies aim to reconstitute state authority, peacebuilding continues to be thought of as external to the conflicts and violent dynamics it addresses. The critical peace and conflict studies literature has challenged this vision, but in trying to understand the power dynamics in peacebuilding processes it has reified a binary vision by analysing these dynamics along an international–local axis. This vision has also reinforced the view that conflicts and their aftermaths relate to a different kind of politics and history to that of peacebuilders and peacebuilding. Resistance in this context is the ad hoc strategies of multiple local actors towards the international peacebuilders.

Throughout this book I have argued that resistance in a peacebuilding context recontextualises historical practices of mitigation and denial of domination. This domination comes not only from the international imposition of particular policies, but primarily from the reproduction of coercive and extractive practices embedded in state-making. Peacebuilding is premised on building state authority as a necessary means to achieve and consolidate peace, democracy and development. However, practice makes these aims more of a claim to legitimate authority than a manifestation of what is actually done. Peacebuilding's everyday demonstrates that the reconstitution of political authority after conflict is plural, contradictory and improvised. Everyday forms of resistance therefore provide insight into the everyday practices of institutions, norms and processes that operate transversally at local, national and international levels. This is demonstrated by how the everyday resistance strategies seen in the last three chapters target national and international actors as symbols of authority. This is also why peacebuilding cannot be seen as an external process or actor. The study of everyday resistance reveals important elements of everyday order in world politics.

Lack of attention to resistance has long provided a view of peacebuilding as overpowering and monolithic in peace and conflict studies. The turn to hybridity

has included a focus on resistance and provided a more grounded critique of peacebuilding. But resistance remains under-theorised, given how subjects and their aims are left undefined. The everyday framework of James Scott and Michel de Certeau that this book has drawn on places the agency of resistance on subordinated subjects, on patterns in power relations and on different types of acts that are context specific. In the militarised and complex context of the DRC, practices that overtly challenge authority, whether discursively or physically, go hand in hand with practices that are covert and self-regarding, but still subversive of domination.

Theorising resistance in peacebuilding contexts is not only an important part of a critical project that seeks to provide a more nuanced and realistic account of peacebuilding: it is also a step forward in theorising resistance, which is crucial for a critical IR as a whole. This is a necessary contribution for a subject whose focus is primarily the study of power. This last chapter offers a path to that research agenda and summarises how the book as a whole has provided a step in that direction.

### **Resistance, a relational heterogeneous practice**

Xavier Guillaume notes that '[t]he tryptic [sic] constituted by resistance, the everyday and the international does not readily fit the idealized images of the international: the realm of exceptional events conducted by states and statesmen, or their proxies' (2011: 459). As discussed in previous chapters, everyday forms of resistance are the insults, mockeries and jokes; the ways in which violence from popular militias is used as well as how popular classes find channels of re-appropriation and confront extraction. These are not just activities that take place on an everyday basis, they are a pattern. It is the realm of normality, against the realm of the exceptional, as Guillaume notes, that sets the ground of resistance. This does not mean that all of what happens in these relations can be reduced to dynamics of power and resistance, but that resistance is found in this context. Both Scott and Certeau base their account on this patterned element. Even as they place other elements at the forefront of their analyses, such as acts and intent in the case of Scott, and tactics in the case of Certeau, they both see these as recovering meaning when they become a pattern and are not just random. These patterns and the power relations in which they are embedded give heterogeneous individual and collective acts political significance.

Their heterogeneity comes from the fact that they are practised according to opportunity and context. Resistance is context dependent, and in the coercive and extractive context of the DRC it is visible in a discursive, violent and subversive form. On the whole, the framework allows us to see some overarching

elements about subjects, objects and practices of resistance in a way that a general theoretical framework can be derived, but is not fixed.

*Subjecthood and agency*

Regarding the subjects, the way the everyday framework is interpreted throughout this book challenges the notion of subjects of resistance in the liberal peace debates as 'locals'. This conceptualisation of subjecthood and agency clashes with the fact that another important element in understanding what resistance is, at least from an everyday framework, is the material and symbolic inequalities that constitute relations of domination. The resistance that both Certeau and Scott describe and the subjects they focus on in their works are not members of a privileged class, they are peasants and working classes – in general, individuals and collectives in a subordinated position, both materially and symbolically.

Identifying this subordinated element in resistance has several implications. Firstly, it narrows down the account and acknowledges that it may not be possible to account for all forms of resistance from all actors under all circumstances. One of these limitations is applying the framework to governments, international organisations and members of privileged classes. This does not mean that elite resistance does not exist, nor does it mean that it would be impossible to adapt forms of elite resistance to this framework, although it would require explanation and reconfiguration of the framework. This is because resistance is not simply the act of objecting, challenging or transforming, but has to do with the aims and positionality of the subjects that carry out these actions. Scott foresaw that relations of resistance are simultaneously power relations (Scott 1985: 22–3, 1990: 45). In the same way that peasants, market sellers and cooperative members tilt at UN members and the Government for not doing anything about the conflict or for fuelling it, UN officers and Government officials launch attacks against Congolese or the 'marijuana smokers' for being lazy, uncommitted to solving their own problems and violently pursuing narrow-minded village-related interests. The problem is that the power of governments, international organisations and members of privileged classes is not comparable to that of peasants, street sellers and members of popular classes. It is this element that has to be embedded into accounts of resistance and analysed.

A second implication is that placing subjecthood and agency on subordinated individuals and collectives historicises relations of domination. Though the different wars have had a great impact, subordination has a longer history. This history reflects the social and political configuration of a particular place and the dynamics that reproduce it. The everyday order in world politics, which impinges on this configuration, is at play here. In the DRC, inequality and violence have a history that goes from colonisation to the different regimes

governing the country, most prominently, Mobutu's regime. This history has turned the DRC into an economy of extraction for the world economy whereby the DRC produces raw materials for export, and imports manufactured consumer goods. It is also a recipient of aid and a producer of debt repayments. The economic and political conditions necessary for the transformation into a service state and a social economy have not taken place. This is due as much to the Mobutu and the two Kabilas' regimes, and the way politics function in the DRC, as to the everyday international order under which these regimes have operated. The living conditions affected by war that peacebuilding strategies have not improved also have to do with this longer history. These conditions are at the root of resistance.

A final implication is that resistance becomes something embodied rather than abstract. Whether resistance requires a theory of embodiment is another matter. At a minimum it requires an account of subjecthood and agency. In the everyday framework, subjects of resistance are 'fleshed' people with a particular experience of subordination, with difficult or no access to decision-making power at the institutional level and with difficult or no access to sufficient means of living. Although the hybridity literature in liberal peace debates has explored the impact on livelihoods, material and symbolic privileges, and intersecting forms of power on individuals and groups, the tendency has been to theorise resistance in abstract macro-terms. This adds to a division in IR more generally between resistance as something public and organised, where resistance is reflected in the aims of social movements and collective transformations, as opposed to being embodied in the individuals who resist oppression on their own terms. Very few scholars have been able to link these two as sides of the same coin (Bleiker 2000; Marchand 2000; Mittelman and Chin 2000).

#### *Object, motivations and intentions*

The same way that the concept of the *local* hides a great variety of subjects and agencies, placing the object of resistance on the liberal peace conceals the wider spectrum of aspirations and experiences that trigger resistance. The agency of resistance comes out of an alternative agenda that motivates actors to undertake resistance acts. These may not have to do with grand ideologies, and can instead be as mundane as demanding greater protection or maintaining rent prices. On the whole, what the above reveals is that the object of resistance has to do with improved conditions of living, social justice, political and economic participatory democracy and access to land. It therefore has to do with long-term political aspirations by subordinate classes though it now uses peacebuilding discourse as a platform. This agenda permeates whatever practices of resistance are used and as such is not, as Scott argues, simply another act of resistance. What this means is that these practices always have an embedded



idea of how things should be, and this serves both as justification and as motivation behind resistance acts.

In the DRC this ideal 'should be' works both as a claim to authority from international peacebuilders and Government and as a form of resistance. Using an ideal image of how things should be aims to hold peacebuilders to account against a picture of how things are. This allows resisters to point out what authorities should be doing, and how conditions of living are far from the promises of peacebuilders and Government. The object of resistance is visible in discursive form, but it also underpins forms of resistance such as survival and re-appropriation strategies, as well as the activities of armed groups. Motivations become a moral justification for disobedience and attacks.

In this sense, aims become the immediate rationale for a particular act. As was illustrated in previous chapters, this can be seen in not paying taxes, not having to give all the food to the military, or hiding the armed groups' weapons. The result of these aims is to deny and disobey authority, which are clear forms of resistance. This is different to, though intertwined with, the motivation for these acts in the sense that they represent an ideological vision that taxes are unjust, or that military authority is exercised in an unjust and extractive form. Denying these claims, or deploying strategies to mitigate them, are also forms of resistance. The aims and motivations go hand in hand, and they become representations of the aspirations and politics of subordinate classes.

#### *Means, acts, practices*

The means used for these objectives are infinite. That is why to simply refuse does not say much about resistance. When the use of these means or the undertaking of these acts becomes a practice, that is, a pattern in relations of domination by members of a subordinate class, it becomes resistance. Much emphasis has been placed on acts and not on the other elements of the account. Additionally, different types of acts, whether violent, overt or covert, have been seen as signs of different forms of resistance. This is added to old debates about whether resistance has to be intentional or can be unintentional, whether it has to be selfless or can be self-centred.

I have argued that means or acts can have different gradients in terms of intensity, visibility of intentionality and engagement with claims. Having different gradients provides a solution to the problem of gathering intent, its visibility and the diverse range of acts. Using the differences in Certeau and Scott, this book established two categories of acts: one inspired by Scott of claim-regarding acts; and another inspired by Certeau of self-regarding acts. Thus, everyday resistance can manifest itself as an attack or direct denial against authority claims in the form of insults, mockery, armed violence or tax evasion. But it can also take the form of subversion, including redefining the ideals

embedded in the peacebuilding discourse, using armed groups to protect oneself or mitigating the dominating effects of military rule through negotiation and creative survival. The Scottian claim-regarding practices address elite claims directly. The Certeauian 'self-regarding' practices identify acts that deny or mitigate elite claims indirectly. These acts have the self (individual or collective) at the centre of the action. By using or ignoring the claims, subjects have the capacity to subvert these claims. Actions like entering into negotiations with the military or enacting forms of survival not only facilitate the mitigation of authoritarian forms of rule and the effects of poverty but also facilitate alternative forms of social organisation and political authority.

Africanist scholars have objected to what they see as unambiguous interpretation of certain acts as resistance embedded in the everyday framework, and in particular that of Scott. While they have provided nuanced understandings and critiques of how structures of power operate in daily life, they have also portrayed an image of subjection and an imbalanced account of power. These competing interpretations are not surprising, since power and resistance cannot be theorised with regard to independently existing facts. What has been surprising is to find a convergence of literatures seeing 'agency', 'process', 'complexity' and 'hybridisation' as limiting, with a scepticism around the possibility to account for resistance in its own right. These divergences need to be explained.

For example, in regard to discourses and mockery in particular, Achille Mbembe criticises Scott, Toulabor and, more extensively, Bakhtin. In Mbembe's articulation of post-colonial political authority, mockery, derision and popular discourses should not be seen as tools of the governed but as the banal dramatisation of political power (2001: 104). For Mbembe, the way authorities become symbolised in jokes and derision with reference to the anus, genitals, sexual intercourse, defecation or belching is evidence of power's descent to the banal, its usurpation of popular discourses and its own dramatisation (2001: 108–13). Henceforth, derision is the domain not of resistance against power but of power's own reproduction. Mbembe and Scott are not far from agreement. Mbembe's point is that post-colonial relations are too complex and muddled to be seen through a prism of categories that are based on structures that are not necessarily opposed but negotiated (1991b: 106). But Mbembe agrees that, despite these sophisticated tools of intimate and entangled power relations, oppressive structures and their subversion play a constant game of readjustment where none of them is completely able to subject or subvert the other (1988: 217). This is not dissimilar to Scott's conceptualisation of the pose, nor to Certeau's notion of trickery.

Mbembe also reminds us that 'the ways in which societies compose and invent themselves in the present – what we could call the *creativity of practice* – is always ahead of the knowledge we can ever produce about them' (Weaver Shipley 2010: 654, emphasis in the original). Any practice of resistance has to be understood as embedded in the practice of everyday life, without reducing

daily life to a binary relation of domination and resistance. Survival strategies and non-elite re-appropriation escape rigid categorisation, but they also display elements of claims, denial/mitigation and agenda advancing present in relations of domination. These strategies facilitate non-elite denial of the state's extractive and wealth-distributive mechanisms; they mitigate multiple daily sources of oppression, including the externalities of peace strategies; and they represent self-organisational arrangements closer to alternative political agendas of participation, distribution and social service. The same way that militias are an effect of state-making, understood as the continuation of war and the militarisation of peace, survival strategies are also an effect of state-making. They have to be understood within the context of presence and absence of multiple authorities, and of their distributive and extractive capacity.

Regarding the use of violence, the book pointed out that Scott's framework is not one of peaceful resistance per se, but a framework to analyse the political significance of these quotidian practices. Because Scott's studies are not settled in a context of war, they concentrate on relatively peaceful practices. However, Scott acknowledges that even within these contexts, boycotts, hit-and-run and guerrilla tactics are habitual (1985: 241). 'Such low profile techniques', Scott argues, 'are admirably suited to the social structure of the peasantry – a class scattered across the countryside, lacking formal organization and best equipped for extended, guerrilla-style, defensive campaigns of attrition' (1985: xvi–xvii). That is, despite the use of violence, guerrilla-style tactics are not rare and they follow the patterns of other practices regarding loose organisation and avoidance of direct confrontation. Following Thandika Mkandawire, this book embraces the challenge that 'fatally flawed and morally reprehensible though these movements may be, one needs to take their political roots and ideological cognitive components seriously, even as their banditry confounds their political agenda' (2008: 107). This ambiguous ground problematises the account of resistance but unearths important nuances without imposing a Manichean vision.

The militarised context and historical dynamics of self-reliance generate interesting insights into different practices, showing that not just opposition and attack, but also reciprocity and solidarity, are important mechanisms against domination. Different practices run alongside each other, affording the possibility to observe the interplay between violence, self-defence and political aspirations for social justice. Even if the same practices may give rise to different conclusions, this analysis establishes one way to challenge uni-vocal readings of discourse, violence and survival as agencies of subjection or evidence of domination.

In Certeau, violence is hardly visible, although uses of Certeau have provoked different readings of the relationship between the framework, resistance and violence (Mitchell 2011a; Richmond 2011a). Everyday forms of resistance

establish a framework to understand that the tendency to enact non-confrontational and unorganised self-help practices against everyday forms of domination is connected to the ability these methods have to avoid repression. Different practices need to be seen alongside and in relation to the political context in which they are embedded.

None of these elements, regarding the subjects, object and means, nor the intensity and visibility with which they operate, is free of ambiguity. One of the advantages of the everyday framework is its capacity to visualise its own limitations and the complex relation between *reality* and *interpretation*. The fact that resistance and domination do not speak of permanent states of being but of an ongoing, changing relation requires theorising relations of domination in reference to their fluid boundaries. Daily life and its political context cannot be accounted for only by reference to a relation of domination and resistance. However, taking resistance out for being too ambiguous is to take out an essential part of power relations and everyday life. This book is evidence that resistance is not only relevant, it is a necessary category in our understanding of reality. Resistance, as Scott argues, is a prosaic presence. This is visible in the DRC, as in other peacebuilding contexts. Yet it is precisely this prosaicness that requires from us an examination of the practices of peacebuilding through practices of state-making to understand the longer history from which resistance comes.

### **War and peace between coercion and extraction**

Since the end of the Second World War, collective security has been articulated to prevent conflicts and threats from degenerating into the two world wars experienced in the first half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, its practice has never been without challenges and contradictions. If interventions during the second half of the twentieth century were almost paralysed due to the Cold War, interventions at the turn of the twenty-first century have also suffered from aiming at transforming state authority while lacking sufficient means and clashing with other agendas. In the DRC, the granting of the monopoly of legitimate violence to the state, so central to peacebuilding, has been a constant source of the reproduction of violence. However, due to peacebuilding's capacity to externalise blame and claim the authority to continue operating, the strategy has not changed.

Bourdieu observes that history forecloses the multiple possibilities it brings. He notes that, at one particular time, it would have been possible not to develop nuclear energy, or to enact a fairer system of property law. Once these policies are established, however, they are seen as irreversible and unthinkable otherwise (Bourdieu 2014: 164–5). The consequence of an international system that rests on state authority means that any threats to states are a threat to the entire

system. State-making becomes the only alternative to war and insecurity, even if core aspects of it are a cause of instability.

Defining the problem and its solution is thus evidence of the authority peacebuilders exercise. Yet, in the context of an African country, it also proves Africa's paradigmatic status as 'an object of experimentation' (Mbembe 2001: 2). In so far as 'Africa stands out as the supreme receptacle of the West's obsession with, and circular discourse about, the facts of "absence," "lack," and "non-being,"' it is also a paradigmatic target of interventions and policies that 'through a process of domestication and training, bring the African to where he or she can enjoy a fully human life' (Mbembe 2001: 1–2). The DRC was in fact one of the first cases in which statebuilding was attempted, and scholars have seen in new policy more of a discourse than a real undertaking (Chandler 2010a). They have linked the goals of these strategies to the broader global governance agenda, whose aims, as Duffield (2007) points out, are not the improvement of institutions and conditions of living for Global South residents, but the protection of Global Northerners from the perceived problems of the so-called South.

The outcome of over 15 years of peacebuilding in the DRC has not been the reconstruction of a democratic state but the continuation of patronage and violence (ISSSS 2013). In this sense, peacebuilding becomes a claim to legitimate authority to deploy a series of policies that reflect more on discourse than on their real outcomes. Yet its everyday practices are important to analyse, as they provide us with an understanding about how these policies have in fact reproduced issues they wanted to solve. In addition, and more importantly in our case, they help us to better understand resistance.

Drawing on a critical reading of Weberian historical sociology and through the analysis of critical Africanist scholars on the nature of political authority in Africa, the book presents state-making as defined by the practices of coercion, accumulation and legitimacy claiming. This does not fit a narrative of centralisation and institutionalisation, but it reflects patterns of violence and wealth management as sources of state authority. Following contemporary Weberian scholars, it is evident that states are far from the ideal image of organised coherent institutions depicted in peacebuilding policies (Mann 1993; Tilly 1990). Authority is drawn from the combination of the use of force and the negotiation of multiple public and private interests coming from inside and outside the state. Violence and extraction play a fundamental role in the distribution of power, privilege and wealth.

As discussed, the African state maintains an extractive and violent structure but this is not because African states *have not made it yet*, or because African leaders are particularly corrupt individuals. It is the combination of a series of historical events that go hand in hand with, or even ahead of, world history (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012). Although the book did not have the chance to

deeply analyse the history of the DRC and common features of the African continent, it has pointed out that there are historical factors which need to be taken into account to understand the nature of contemporary states and wars in the continent. These include how independence largely enforced a colonial state, albeit with native leaders (Davidson 1992). They also include how the Cold War hijacked the processes of socialisation and democratisation of African states: either as violent confrontations like those in Angola and Mozambique, or as the quashing of transition processes such as those in the DRC and Burkina Faso. Added to the authoritarian regimes and economic crises of the Cold War, development strategies, and in particular the SAPs, made states go through a process of adjustment, privatisation and the dismantling of public institutions, with little left over for social services and infrastructure. The democratic aspirations that came with the end of the Cold War were shattered by wars and crises. The wars of the post-Cold War period in Africa should be seen in the longer patterns of Africa's relations with the world as well as with its own history.

The problem is that the view of peacebuilding and its actors as external to this history maintains a vision of issues in a country like the DRC as endogenous. This partial view ends up primarily focusing on the format rather than on the content. It targets so-called neopatrimonialism and personalised forms of governance, leaving untouched the terms of trade, of debt, of investments and distribution which contribute to the violent and extractive nature of the Congolese state. In fact, peacebuilding/statebuilding strategies have themselves entered logics of informal shared governance arrangements. Even though the peacebuilding discourse generates important dynamics regarding the 'pose' state-builders need to legitimise their actions, assertion of state authority is linked to power-sharing agreements between warring parties, military strategies and political compromises. These include shared coercive and extractive capacity with foreign countries, state and non-state actors. The DRC case illustrates that state authority is seen as paramount to other post-conflict strategies like democratisation, economic reconstruction and even peace. However, it also illustrates that state authority may be represented, mediated, shared or compromised by other institutions, actors and even other competing state authorities.

This sociological understanding of peacebuilding goes beyond the hybridity accounts. It analyses how macro, micro, present and historical dynamics interrelate with patterns of continuity and change. In this book, it has offered the possibility to identify resistance practices, not only as part of the complex processes and agencies that mould and hybridise peacebuilding, but as part of a distinct relationship emerging from practices of appropriation and violence in state-making. This is not a single homogeneous process, but should be seen as a series of intersecting, improvised and second agendas that come into place from myriad of actors, whether local, national, regional or international. There are therefore many and not one state-making processes. The commonplace nature



of resistance in state–society relations has also shown the need to ‘pay attention to micro-developments that are often governed by contingency but taking care to place these within broader patterns of historical development’ (Hobson, Lawson, and Rosenberg 2010: 3360). The value of studying practices is to facilitate a study at the intersection of these divides across time and space.

Statebuilding has come as a priority and will succeed, whatever other liberal goals came in the liberal peace package. For Hameiri (2014), for instance, this is because forms of regulatory statehood have emerged in which states need to fulfil a series of international goals relating to risk management. This does not make statebuilding any more real in the form of actually building state institutions, but in the form of assuring the fulfilment of certain functions in regard to global security policies. However, as he also argues, this will create the contradictions that we have already seen with the Arab Spring and other uprisings. Statebuilding interventions create a tension between the way they diffuse state power while strengthening the executive branch of the state, and the popular demands for participation and equality (Hameiri 2014: 328–9). We may find here again the contradiction that Aimé Césaire has already seen. He accused colonial powers of ‘holding things back’ while ‘the colonized want[ed] to move forward’ (2000: 46). He pointed out at the time that ‘it is the indigenous peoples of Africa and Asia who are demanding schools, and colonialist Europe which refuses them; that it is the African who is asking for ports and roads, and colonialist Europe which is niggardly on this score’ (Césaire 2000: 46). The point is, as Scott and others have noticed, that once the promises are laid out, the ground is open for confrontation (Gilroy 1993: 134; Scott 1985).

Notwithstanding that, as Hameiri rightly points out, statebuilding is not likely to dissipate but, rather, will continue to play a global regulating role; it is also likely to continue losing legitimacy as the cornerstone for democracy, peace and development. The way popular classes interpret their rights is sharply at odds with the rhetoric and the practice of interventions and the broader function that states serve in the global political economy. What a sociological approach to peacebuilding and statebuilding explains is precisely why statebuilding will continue its course, despite suffering a crisis of legitimacy. Although legitimacy has been seen as indispensable for statebuilding, this is only limited, and instead must be seen in relation to the practices of coercion and extraction that maintain everyday order.

### **War and political transformations in central Africa and the Great Lakes region**

Fanon’s view of the Congo as Africa’s revolver’s trigger still holds. However, as put by Kankwenda, it is not because Congo bears Africa’s military’s weight, but because it has the capacity to mobilise it (2005: 362). The 1996–97 war is a perfect example. The ousting of Mobutu triggered an even larger and longer war



of continental proportions. In the same way that Europe and the world changed with the Second World War, Africa's World War signalled significant transformations for the central and Great Lakes regions and the African continent at large. Firstly, Africa's World War consolidated a series of hegemonic centres in Angola, South Africa and what Mbembe calls the new military principalities of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi (2000a: 277). While there is a certain balance of power between them, the different conflicts of the DRC since the mid-1990s have proved that these regimes are willing to use violence in order to secure their interests in the region. Secondly, the policies that were tested as a result of the 1996 war and the ones that followed, based on the neoliberal reconstruction of the state, have not returned to the 1960s development policies where investment was channelled largely through the state (Moyo 2009: 14–5). They have furthered a policy of private investment, which has deepened forms of private governance and shared sovereignty, weakening rather than strengthening the state (Abrahamsen and Williams 2009; Hönke 2010). The coming of new players like China and India has also meant that regimes such as the DRC have been able to bypass much of the terms embedded in the conditionality of good governance policy. Still, that has not changed the fact that wealth has continued to funnel upwards and outwards. As Prunier notes (2009), these new commercial trading actors are added to the dynamics of the US war on terror and the interest in new discoveries of oil in the Great Lakes and in the Guinea gulf. Thirdly, the war signalled African societies' long-standing struggle for democratisation and freedom, renewed at the end of the Cold War. As Prunier also notes, no one thought that the 1989 revolutions in Europe would end up affecting Africa, but they did (2009: xxxii). The end of the Cold War was not only a change in the geopolitics of aid and political alliances, it was also an opportunity for many in Africa to demand from their own elites and the external powers that sustained them the democratic changes that the end of the Cold War promised. In the words of Christopher Clapham:

Even though the spectacular collapse of the Soviet bloc and the end of the Cold War created powerful international pressures for democratisation, these have had so much apparent influence because they have been able to interact with a favourable internal climate. In many ways, indeed, a process analogous to that which led to the collapse of communism has been taking place inside many African states. This has notably involved the failure of state-centred 'development'. It was always, no doubt, optimistic to suppose that the relatively feeble structures and ideologies of post-independence statehood would be able to mould the societies which they governed in the ways that their leaders hoped ... From the later 1970s, however, they started to be challenged in earnest, a challenge which has aptly been described by Jean-François Bayart as 'the revenge of African societies'. In all manner of ways, the suppressed and apparently docile institutions of the governed started to subvert and in some cases to demolish the states that had been imposed on them. (1993: 430)

All of these factors make Prunier (2009) connect the conflict not just with its past, but with the process of transformation that Africa as a whole is undergoing in the form of a second modernity. Yet the tendency to study Africa as a case of neglect, war and desperation has been prominent in articulating the causes of conflict and in neglecting an account of politics and resistance. This has been largely due to the paradigm of the failed state. The conflicts in the DRC have been seen as taking place under the guise of ethnicity, greed and mismanagement. The three major explanatory approaches to the conflict explored in this book (the resource wars, the localist and the regionalist approaches) are underpinned by the vision of the state as failed or embroidered in neopatrimonial dynamics that prevent it from turning into an accountable legitimate institution. Each of these explanations highlights important dynamics of the conflict, whether the impact of the exploitation of natural resources, the relevance of land and identity at the level of village politics or the impact of the politics of the region. However, none of these dynamics is autonomous from the others. Nor can they be seen as delinked from the longer history of the DRC and Africa, or in a way that portrays land and identity as historically unchanged and fixed.

In focusing on different forms of resistance, this book has attempted to highlight an important dynamic of the conflict that has been largely undermined. As argued, the war awakened a latent desire for change. This did not trigger the formation of large social movements, although it did trigger the self-management of many villages under self-defence militias. The problem is that these militias have not been an example of ethical struggle or management. Scholars and policy-makers alike have denied a political element to many of these forms of resistance. And yet, as conflict in the DRC continues, a political response to the different actors, including popular classes, is an imperative.

Interestingly, the challenge posed by the context of peacebuilding and the DRC highlighted a convergence of several literatures with implications for the study of resistance. To liberal peace debates and the political sociology literature on statebuilding, it has highlighted the importance of accounting for the practices of accumulation and coercion embedded in state-making. Resistance in these literatures needs to find a place in its own right, rather than being an instrument for hybridising or moulding liberal interventions. Regarding peacebuilding, the DRC illustrates the reconstruction of state authority as mediated by different national, international, state and non-state actors. This mediation has fostered the pursuit of state security agendas through formulas of shared sovereignty, proxy wars through militias and a militarisation of extractive capacity. These formulas have created a contradiction between the aim of reconstituting state authority and the aim of furthering peace. This contradiction responds partly to accommodate the interests of Rwanda and allies in the region, as well

as to the perception that the instability of the region is primarily due to the DRC as a failed state.

It is difficult to ascertain what the future of the DRC will look, but it is possible to see several transformations and continuities in the short term. Firstly, this context will be marked by a broader transformation that the entire region is undergoing, as Prunier has identified. However, the new modernising process has not only governments, investors and power dynamics as main actors, but also newly created social movements representing a trend in Africa and the world at large. Although we know more about Tunisia, Tahir Square or the Occupy movement, similar social movements across Africa have been at the forefront of a series of uprisings since the mid-2000s (Branch and Mampilly 2015). One of the characteristics of these movements is that they aim at deep social transformations rather than being focused on single-issue campaigns. The DRC has been part of this wave, with organisations like the Lutte pour le Changement (LUCHA), created in Goma in 2012, or the movement Filimbi, created in 2015 (Iñiguez de Heredia 2014; Telema 2015). They are largely urban youth movements demanding political reform, democracy, development and social justice. These and other traditional civil society organisations have been at the forefront of a campaign demanding President Kabila to step down at the end of his mandate in November 2016.

The DRC constitution allows for the renewal of the president's mandate only once, therefore Kabila cannot run for a third term. Rather than clearly stating that he will abide by the constitution and that he will organise presidential elections by the date they are due, Kabila has been creating a chaotic situation in what looks like a bid to stay in power, with massive protests in January 2015 after his decision to redo the census (Guardian 2015). Although these protests managed to stop what would have meant the delay of elections for over three years, repression against dissidents and critics has continued. Members of the opposition, youth groups, civil society and journalists have been arrested without judicial process, placed in isolation regimes, are currently disappeared or have had to seek exile (Amnesty International 2015; Boisselet 2015). Kabila's call for a dialogue with the opposition has been rejected as a manoeuvre to delay elections. The issue is that unless Kabila states openly his commitment to step down, a crisis is likely to ensue. Whether this will end up in a Burkina-Faso-type of scenario, where the government will be ousted after a short popular uprising, or there will be a Burundi-type scenario, where the country will experience another period of conflict and repression, is yet to be seen.

What we do know is that there are still parts of the DRC suffering from armed conflict, and a crisis like this will only fuel it. In any case, none of these transformations is likely to change the patterns in conflict, failed negotiations and military strategies that we have seen in the last 10 years and that have been unable to put a stop to the conflict. Neither are we likely to see a change in those

longer patterns of extraction and coercion that prevent social justice in the DRC. After over 15 years of peacebuilding strategies and two decades of conflict, the DRC, its neighbours and popular militias are yet to establish real political negotiations. These have also been undermined by international donors' disregard for regional politics and by an increasingly authoritarian Congolese state. In the short term, meaningful political negotiations could address immediate demands regarding the proxy wars taking place, the policy towards refugees and the opening of a dialogue around land and representation. In the long term, these will be far from addressing the demands for participation and dignity of the popular classes in the DRC. The context is thus a continued trigger factor for everyday forms of resistance, whether violent or non-violent, and eventually, as we are starting to see, a pathway to greater social movements.

### **Reflections and openings**

The focus on resistance is a way of opening a debate. Embracing its ambiguities and complexities entails entering a multidisciplinary and long-standing intellectual discussion. The study of resistance is just beginning to be established as an integral part of debates in post-conflict statebuilding and peacebuilding. A first step has been to establish that exploring resistance is an important part of providing a more nuanced, realistic and critical account of peacebuilding. The next step therefore is to have a more nuanced and critical account of resistance. This book has provided the ground for such an account and argued which core elements it should be concerned with. Different avenues may come to light with the comparison of more case studies, or with a comparison with other frameworks. There is ample scope to compare how more overt and organised practices of resistance relate to the more covert and uncoordinated ones under different frameworks. This has to do not just with the particular conceptual standpoint used to account for resistance, but also, with the need to gradate and categorise its practices.

The focus on resistance in the liberal peace debates has implications for how resistance is theorised in IR. As in the liberal peace debates, in IR, despite significant attention to resistance, there have been few attempts to systematically theorise it (Bleiker 2000; Marchand 2000; Mittelman and Chin 2000). Richmond has attempted to make this connection by adapting his work on resistance in peacebuilding to theorising resistance in IR. However, the theory of resistance that Richmond proposes fails again to historicise the everyday and to materialise the subjects of resistance. His Foucauldian-postcolonial everyday approach sees resistance as critical agency that does not just hold power to account, but that also offers a real transformative agency as a hidden everyday force (Richmond 2011b: 422). This transformation is neither 'governmentalism' nor 'revolution' but one that 'produces a state that is representative and accountable' (Richmond

2011b: 431). Here again, the 'hybrid' outcome of a 'representative and accountable state' is above an account of resistance. The dynamism of power relations is made static by the possibility of achieving a common good between resisters and their targets.

The everyday framework offers the possibility to observe the commonplace presence of resistance, even when forms of conscious and organised activism are absent. Its study of practices makes the everyday framework well attuned to capture the ambiguities of power and resistance relations. One of the most important insights from examining resistance in the liberal peace debates is that resistance, whether in peacebuilding, globalisation or other processes, is not a special kind, rooted in an international/local contention. Rather, resistance should be seen as stemming from historical relations of domination that are experienced in everyday life, and that are co-created nationally and internationally. This is not a reification of unhelpful divides. It is precisely the nuanced ways in which the study of everyday practices captures the interconnections and co-constitution of structure and agency, discourse and practice, material and symbolic elements, and micro and macro dynamics that allow us to break with these divides.

The everyday framework has much to contribute to help IR to go beyond these limitations. Aggie Hirst argues that 'the emergent scholarship [on resistance] suffer[s] from a common problem in that the forms of resistance they conceptualise are highly susceptible to appropriation by, or reinscription within, prevailing forms of global ordering' (2015: 7). The resistant subject Hirst calls for is 'an auto-deconstructionist actor committed to viewing her own subjecthood, as well as her concrete interventions, as a site of political struggle' (2015: 7). Moving from the analytical to the normative account of resistance is a necessary exercise, but one that does not automatically happen. Hirst does not go into the debates around intent, her account points to a conscious resistance against the violence, hierarchies and exclusions embedded in global politics. This may indeed be the way resistance is more effective, but it does not constitute the only form of resistance there is.

The book has not accounted for forms of resistance as a route towards political change in the form that Richmond or Hirst have proposed. The implication, however, is not that the study of resistance is empty of ethical forms of activism or revolutionary capacity. Indeed, an important insight from this research has been that, despite the war environment and the dominating effects of state-making, popular aspirations for justice and well-being not only do not go away, they become even more relevant. The argument advanced is that resistance cannot be accounted for in Manichean ways. After all, 'there are not good subjects of resistance' (Colin Gordon cited in Scott 1985: vii). Staying away from analyses along the 'unmanly' divides of 'good' and 'evil' is to recognise the contradictions embedded in social and political action (Nietzsche 1997: 100).

Manichean analyses, as Mbembe argues, have a particular legacy in Africa, as part of 'a moral economy – whose power of falsification derives from its opaque ties with the cult of suffering and victimization' (2002: 630). The implication is, Mbembe continues, that the 'African subject cannot express him- or herself in the world other than as a wounded and traumatized subject' (2002: 630). The intention of the book is to contribute to a breaking up of these divides. This does not mean a rejection of an ethical commitment to research, but it does seek to 'avoid the philosophical pathology of demanding that the world reflect our conception of it' (Hoover and Iñiguez de Heredia 2011: 191).

What these millenarian *anthozoans* of resistance mean for the realisation of the agendas of social justice embedded in its practice is another matter (cf. Scott 1985: xvii). In wondering whether the DRC might have a 'Tahir Square moment', Stearns argues that the main obstacle to such a moment taking place is lack of leadership, whether on the part of the political opposition or on the part of social movements to channel support around them and build 'social capital' (2012d). Everyday forms of resistance are the 'social capital' of revolution, but they cannot be theorised as if they mattered only if they work towards it. Nonetheless, it would be a disservice to the analysis to end with the idea that everyday forms of resistance do not change anything. They do. They are the microscopic reworking of political and social order. As Certeau states 'The actual order of things is precisely what "popular" tactics turn to their own ends, without any illusion that it will change any time soon' (1984: 26). Everyday forms of resistance rework meanings, advance agendas, place limitations on how domination is imposed and create alternative forms of social organisation and political authority. These may not be enough to stop war, change the government and the rules of international political economy, but they are an essential basis for more meaningful social and political order.

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