The Conspicuous Absence of Class and Privilege in the Study of Resistance in Peacebuilding Contexts

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ABSTRACT
Attention to everyday forms of resistance in the liberal peace debates has provided a more sophisticated critique of peacebuilding but the concept of resistance remains limited. The paper argues that this is because leading approaches to resistance coming out the hybridity literature lack an account of class and privilege. These approaches have done a superficial application of the frameworks they were drawing on, primarily those of Michel De Certeau and James Scott. Resistance has been conceived as an international–local and liberal–non-liberal contention. The conclusion is that while the study of resistance is welcomed, this research agenda is limited and depoliticizing. Critics of hybridity have addressed similar points, taking issue with the account of the local, the lack of historicity and the reification of liberal norms. However, in seeing these problems as stemming from the everyday framework, they too have misread the importance of class and privilege therein. The article shows that Certeau and Scott have much to contribute to understanding peacebuilding processes by sustaining a sociological historicist and practice-based account of resistance as embodied in subordinate subjects. This has the potential to politicize, historicize and decolonize the liberal peace critique and to contribute to studying resistance in IR more generally.

Though resistance in peace and conflict studies has received much attention, it still requires a comprehensive account that embraces the privileges and class-based dynamics that underpin power relations. Resistance has become central to critiquing liberal interventions and to understanding the responses from intervened societies. These critiques have taken place within the liberal peace debates and resistance has been most studied within the hybridity or 'local turn'.[1] For this, hybridity authors have drawn extensively on everyday theories, which are focused on mundane activities taking place in day-to-day relations, and have made two sets of arguments. Firstly, they have argued that peace processes are complex and messy, because they combine multiple contradictory elements such as liberal, illiberal, formal and informal

ones, as well as different agencies, including of resistance.[2] They have also argued that local needs have to be placed front and centre, criticizing the prioritization of order, stabilization and market economy.[3] However, as already noted by an increasing number of researchers, these efforts have not offered an adequate account of resistance.[4]

Graeme Young argues that essential issues for understanding resistance have not been properly integrated into the framework.[5] These relate to the relationship between structure and agency, the meaning and presence of intent, the role of power, the nature of markets and the relationship between resistance and emancipation. I have elsewhere argued that 'three core elements of resistance regarding the subjects, object and means of resistance have remained ambiguous'.[6] Critics of hybridity argue that hybridity lacks historicity, reproduces aspects of the liberal credo, depoliticizes subjects and reifies a binary understanding of reality.[7] They see the everyday framework as problematic, but as explained below, an everyday approach supports their view, especially in relation to its historicism and subjecthood.

This article argues that most of these problems come down to one particular issue, which is the relationship (or lack thereof) the hybridity account of resistance has to class. This is an element ingrained in the theories these studies draw from and can be extended to other structuring relations such as gender and race. Interestingly, the fact that most studies of resistance in peace and conflict studies have relied on the everyday framework of resistance, and on Michel de Certeau and James Scott in particular, makes the absence of class particularly conspicuous and puzzling. For both authors class is central, even if they go well beyond class relations. Class in the everyday framework is not a deterministic structure or an unchanging condition. It is a relationship. This means that class does not exist independently, ascribes relative statuses and privileges and constrains agents' behaviour according to such relative position subjects are in. The distribution of these privileges and subjects' relative position to them and to each other are crucial to understanding what resistance is and who its subjects are. In the context of peacebuilding interventions, this is accentuated to the extent that conflict and interventions affect the distribution of these privileges. This cannot be understood simply in

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[2]Belloni, "Hybrid Peace Governance"; Jarstad and Belloni, "Introducing Hybrid Peace Governance," 4.

[3]Belloni, "Hybrid Peace Governance"; Mac Ginty, "Hybrid Peace"; Mac Ginty, *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance*; Richmond, "Becoming Liberal, Unbecoming Liberalism."

[4]Chandler, "Peacebuilding and the Politics of Non-linearity"; Iñiguez de Heredia, *Everyday Resistance, Peacebuilding and State-making* Young, "Conceptualizing Resistance."

[5]Young, "Conceptualizing Resistance."

[6]Hameiri and Jones, "Beyond Hybridity"; Iñiguez de Heredia, *Everyday Resistance, Peacebuilding and State-Making*, 8.

[7]Chandler, "The Uncritical Critique of 'Liberal Peace'"; Chandler, "Peacebuilding and the Politics of Non-linearity"; Hameiri and Jones, "Beyond Hibridity?"; Laffey and Nadarajah, "The Hybridity of Liberal Peace"; Nadarajah and Rampton, "The Limits of Hybridity"; Paffenholz, "Unpacking the Local Turn in Peacebuilding"; Randazzo, "The Paradoxes of the 'Everyday'"; Sabaratnam, "Avatars of Eurocentrism."

the context of a conflict and its aftermath. Class implies that these relationships are historically constituted. Understanding resistance through the relationship between 'locals' and 'interveners' ignores these important issues and does not fit into the everyday framework.

De Certeau and Scott provide a sociological practice-based analysis. This view of resistance places the focus, first, on patterns of social relations and interaction around extraction, entitlement and material and symbolic distribution. From this view, it is possible to understand peacebuilding not just through its outcomes, but also through such regular and repeated processes of extraction, distribution and their challenge. This approach also focuses on practices which can be conceived as acts, skills, know-hows, silences and discourses.[8] They offer us instances and microcosms of larger patterns and processes. These practices become resistance when they are directed to or inscribed in subordinate and unprivileged subjects' attempts to avoid, palliate or subvert the effects of those distributive and extractive patterns in power relations. This view of resistance is not particularly new.[9] However, the fact that the critical hybridity approach remains the standard for the study of resistance in peace and conflict studies and that the everyday has been central to both advance and critique these accounts makes reviewing the everyday's contribution to resistance urgent.

The article is structured into three sections. The first analyses the misrepresentation of the everyday in hybridity studies and in their critique. The second examines De Certeau's and Scott's insights into class, privilege and historicity in everyday power relations for peacebuilding. The last section discusses several examples of the peacebuilding context in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that suggest how the framework could be applied.[10]

The misrepresentation of the everyday and the focus on hybridity

Hybridity has drawn on, and to a large extent, been merged with everyday theory. The two have simultaneously represented a methodology, a theoretical approach, and a platform from which to launch alternatives about what that everyday should be. There are different overlapping approaches. Hybridity can be characterized as 'descriptive and prescriptive',[11] whether it depicts interactions and coexistence of practices and actors[12] or whether it argues that interventions should be designed to produce particular

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[8]Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 318; De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, ch.1.
[9]See, e.g. Iñiguez de Heredia, *Everyday Resistance, Peacebuilding and State-Making*, 75–89; Lemay-Hébert, "Resistance in the Time of Cholera."
[10]A full articulation and empirical analysis of everyday forms of resistance in the DRC can be seen in Iñiguez de Heredia, *Everyday Resistance, Peacebuilding and State-Making*.
[11]Millar, "Disaggregating Hybridity."
[12]Belloni, "Hybrid Peace Governance"; Jarstad and Belloni, "Introducing Hybrid Peace Governance," 4.

outcomes.[13] A third approach is formed by the critical versions of hybridity, which conceive of it as a radical critique of liberal peacebuilding and as potentially emancipatory. Though as discussed below its *criticalness* is contested, it is *critically* distinct from other versions of hybridity in that it draws on postcolonial, Foucauldian, poststructuralist and critical theory literatures.[14] Oliver Richmond argues that hybridity is the result of the tensions, agencies and resistances that can be found in peacebuilding contexts, enabling the renegotiation of order, care, empathy and even emancipation.[15] This critical version has taken a more nuanced approach to issues of historicity and inequality and has criticized the co-optation and instrumentalization of hybridity by liberal peace interveners as part of a neoliberal logic that lowers intervention costs, shifts responsibility and manages relations among different actors.[16] Critical hybridity scholars have been at the forefront of theorizing resistance, precisely in their attempt to offer a critical analysis that identifies the emancipatory potential of both the critique and the actions of local populations. However, their disregard for class and their (a)historical approach to the everyday has compromised those goals.

Hybridity: disregarding class, dehistoricizing the everyday

The notion of the local in the hybridity literature is simultaneously conceptualized as both agent and agency, blurring the lines between abstraction and materialization. For Richmond, who has extensively theorized this concept, the *local* grasps the different intersecting relations from within society between the interveners and societies and the processes of hybridization among them.[17] As such, though power and privilege are acknowledged in the notion of the local, resistance is not the exclusive domain of the powerless and has more to do with the cultural aspects interventions illegitimately transform than with the socioeconomic aspects that reproduce experiences of domination and dispossession. In this account of resistance material inequalities are acknowledged as part of the context of interventions, but they do not account for the agency of resistance.

My critique here is not that for hybridity theorists these power relations do not exist or do not matter. Critical hybridity scholars have extensively written about how the liberal peace reinforces political, economic and social inequalities.[18] My critique is that the primary account of the agency of resistance has

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[13]Belloni, "Hybrid Peace Governance"; Richmond and Mitchell, "Introduction: Towards a Post-liberal Peace."
[14]Richmond and Mitchell, "Introduction," 9–10.
[15]Richmond, *A Post-liberal Peace*.
[16]Mac Ginty and Richmond, "The Fallacy of Constructing Hybrid Political Orders," 7–8.
[17]Richmond, *A Post-liberal Peace*, 14.
[18]E.g. Mac Ginty, *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance*; Mac Ginty and Sanghera, "Hybridity in Peacebuilding and Development," 3; Mac Ginty and Richmond, "The Fallacy of Constructing Hybrid

been what Richmond calls 'a form of cultural oppression'.[19] This derives from international peacebuilders' insufficient knowledge of local societies resulting in the application of top-down formulae and in reinforcing power hierarchies.[20] Neither resistance nor culture itself are specifically defined nor are they connected to distributive and extractive patterns of that culture. Added to this is what Elisa Randazzo calls the 'selectivity paradox'.[21] By attaching a particular normative project to forms of 'local agency' only certain practices from selected actors are part of this emancipatory project, actors who are then constructed as authentic and legitimate. This is problematic because of its underpinning exclusionary logic and also, as Randazzo points out, because it reproduces the 'dualisms and arbitrariness' associated with liberal peacebuilding.[22]

In addition to disregarding class in conceptions of the local, these issues stem from critical hybridity's ahistorical portrayal of the everyday as self-created and detached from the broader structure of global politics. Audra Mitchell defines the everyday as 'an immanent realm […] that emanates from the lives of individuals and is self-constituting'.[23] This, however, diverges from the everyday view of the authors she draws on including Michel De Certeau, Agnes Heller, Henri Lefebvre and Raoul Veneigem, as embodying the patterns and legated structures in which actors operate. For Lefebvre, practice is inseparable from history and philosophy.[24] As a Marxist theorist, for Agnes Heller, 'everyday life is the basis of the current of history' and 'in the "history hitherto" of the human race, every person is a class-unit'.[25] The everyday creativity that Vaneigem speaks of is one marshalled against governments, capitalism, authority and systems of domination.[26] It is not obvious then how resistance can be equally carried out by 'all parties' and defined simply as 'objecting to something'.[27] This does not mean that the everyday should be seen as a singular monolithic abstraction or that there is a single *good* use of history. In fact, as Sandstrom argues, there are multiple everydays.[28] Additionally, different uses of history have contextualized the account and been seen as constituting local culture and identity.[29] The problem is that conceptualizing resistance as a response to the illegitimate

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Political Orders"; Richmond, *A Post-liberal Peace*, multiple references, see, e.g. 31–40; Richmond and Mitchell, "Introduction," 5, 9–12.

[19]Richmond, *A Post-liberal Peace*, 83.
[20]Ibid.
[21]Randazzo, "The Paradoxes of the 'Everyday'," 1355.
[22]Ibid.
[23]Mitchell, 1628.
[24]Lefebvre, *La Fin de l'Histoire*, 8.
[25]Heller, *Everyday Life*, 47 and 28, emphasis in original.
[26]Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, esp. Ch. 20.
[27]Mitchell, *Lost in Transformation*, 31–2.
[28]Sandstrom, "Cooptation, Acceptance and Resistance," 131.
[29]Mac Ginty, *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance*, 3; Richmond, *A Post-liberal Peace*, 128.

aspects of peacebuilding intervention disregards the important historical constitution of social and political hierarchies in society which the international is part of.

Critics of hybridity: misplacing the everyday

In general, critics of hybridity have seen in the local an unclear, essentializing, romanticized and depoliticizing concept. As Young argues, how 'local agency can inform resistance is unclear' because no explanation has been given for how it is constrained by structural issues.[30] The concept of the local has created an 'ontology of Otherness, understood as cultural distinctiveness and alterity' portraying the '"local" as non-modern and non-Western' that reproduces cultural hierarchies and Eurocentrism.[31] Thania Paffenholz also notes that 'a core problem in this literature is the construction of the local and the international as binary opposites'.[32] This weak conceptualization leads to important 'blind spots' by identifying the international with a monolithic West and standardize the diversity and divisions in societies.[33]

However, in advancing these arguments, critics have also merged the everyday with hybridity, dismissing the class-based, material and historical elements embedded in the local. David Chandler, for instance, rightly sees that the conceptualization of resistance in the hybridity literature omits subjectivity and 'possibilities for structural change'.[34] Resistance is, in hybrid/non-linear interpretations, an objective constitutive matter of the limits of Western liberal power, reflecting the endogenous cultural and ideational differences of local politics rather than economic and political structures. However, whereas Chandler sees these conclusions underpinned by Scott, I argue they are contra-Scott. Scott's point was not to create a different realm of politics but to show that both formal and informal forms of resistance were part of the same context and operated under the same structures, just through different means.

Similarly, Suthaharan Nadarajah and David Rampton argue that by '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'.[35] In so doing, the authors equate hybridity with everydayness. They argue that 'amid the emphasis on the everyday, indigeneity, affect, "local legitimacy" and so on, the hierarchical and penetrative

[30]Young, "Conceptualizing Resistance," 173.
[31]Sabaratnam, "Avatars of Eurocentrism," 267.
[32]Paffenholz, "Unpacking the Local Turn in Peacebuilding," 858.
[33]Ibid., 862.
[34]Chandler, "Peacebuilding and the Politics of Non-linearity," 31.
[35]Nadarajah and Rampton, "The Limits of Hybridity," 51, emphasis in the original.

order of globalising neoliberalism is lost'.[36] They see the everyday as a too fragmented arena from which to articulate resistance against the entrenched structures of world politics. Like Chandler, Nadarajah and Rampton make an artificial division between the realm of politics and the everyday. Not only is this unjustified, there is no such divide in the everyday.

The everyday framework affords us historical and political insights precisely because it requires a disaggregation of agents and their experiences with class, gender, race and other sources of domination. The local was supposed to account for that, but the result has been an undefined subject that is simultaneously power and resistance, oppressor and oppressed. This does not imply that the local–international binary should be replaced by an elite–non-elite binary but that accounting for resistance requires embracing the complex and contradictory inter-actions in social and political hierarchies in historical perspective. As a way to explore these contradictions and point to possible avenues of redress, the following section analyses the work of Certeau and Scott and their relationship to class.

Everyday class relations and resistance: a view from Michel De Certeau and James Scott

Class and privilege are central to everyday forms of resistance. De Certeau and especially Scott focus on class but that focus is not exclusive.[37] This is important to note because gender, race, ethnic group, sexuality, age and ability are denomi-nators of privilege and subordination. Any account that is based on, or inspired by, the everyday framework of resistance should see both resisters and the 'liberal peace' within broader patterns of social hierarchies, accumulation and disposses-sion. The point here is not to say that only class engenders resistance but that different forms of privilege should guide a disaggregated analysis of resisters. It is also important to note that neither Certeau nor Scott uses a Marxist frame-work. Their notion of class is not underpinned by 'real' shared interests or by a theory of history.[38] Nor is it a permanent condition. Class entails antagonisms because of the unequal and hierarchical relationships it gives rise to. Due to the differences between Certeau and Scott, this section looks at them separately to then address their value in peacebuilding contexts more explicitly.

Tactics of the weak in Michel De Certeau

De Certeau's theory of resistance is premised on 'the weak', making it mean-ingless without an account of privilege and material inequalities. For De

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[36]Ibid., 61.

[37]See walking, speaking, believing and cooking as different forms of subverting established order in De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*; see also the context of slave, gender, classroom and state–society relations in Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*; Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*.

[38]Cf. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, esp. sec. I.

Certeau, power is the strategic exercise of management, control, appropriation, delimitation and targeting. Resistance is a tactical art of avoidance, reappropriation and quest for autonomy. 'Strategy' is connected to the figure of the general, which represents the dominant classes and the sites where order is produced.[39] 'Tactic' is connected to the figure of the 'weak', inscribed in the soldier, the private and several other figures such as 'worker', 'people' or 'ordinary man'.[40] This 'everyday war' happens not in the realm of organized movements but in the daily dynamics of the factory, the city and everyday life.

But as De Certeau's examples of writing, language and text creation show, these relationships are forged historically. Writing and the invention of printing marks a step forward in the solidification of a stratified order where text becomes a site of subject production and control: 'It functions as the law in an educational system organized by the dominant class, which can make language (whether rhetorical or mathematical) its instrument of production.'[41] Writing is inextricably linked to the modern idea of exercising power through law, governing individual bodies by punishing, organizing, prohibiting or regulating them. It gives an account of how power has shifted from classes privileged by birth to the bourgeoisie, and from the middle classes to technocrats.[42] This privilege is resisted by reappropriating language, creating metaphors and by superstitious practices. However, it is also celebrated in a feeling of being part of it. These ambiguities and contradictions exist alongside practices of resistance. Whereas De Certeau's focus on the logics of practice can result in some indeterminacies in the conceptualization of resistance, he is very clear that resistance practices are inscribed in a critique of and attempt to subvert order by those at the bottom of the social hierarchy.[43]

Class struggle in Scott

Though Scott in later works refined and expanded his notion of resistance beyond class, the definition that has remained a reference of his theory pivots around class. 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.[44]

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[39]De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 37.
[40]Ibid., 18.
[41]Ibid., 139.
[42]Ibid., 140–2.
[43]Buchanan, *Michel de Certeau*, 21.
[44]Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, 290.

That is, the acts of resistance (which could be 'any') do not define what resistance is but rather the fact that they are used by subordinate classes to mitigate or deny the claims of superordinate classes made on them. This definition has gone through several decades of scrutiny from Anthropology to Political Science. Some of the most persistent criticisms have revolved around his oversimplification of power relations and intentionality.[45] Going through these critiques here in a few paragraphs would not do justice to them or Scott's rebuttals. Although Scott's account is by no means perfect, the use of his theory implies deploying its core tenets or explaining what needs to be done away with. Hybridity scholars, however, have not successfully explained how the passage from subordinate subjects to locals has been done.

Scott did not understand class as a single or unchanging common denominator but as a relationship. He follows E.P. Thompson in understanding this relationship as historically constituted by those who have property, political power and means of production who exploit, misrepresent and dispossess those who do not.[46] For Thompson, class is not a 'structure' or 'even a "category"' but rather something that 'happens (and can be shown to have happened) in human relationships'.[47] The same way that 'we cannot have love without lovers', there is not a free-floating working class, class is a relational phenomena.[48] In this sense, resistance is part of that relationship and it can only be understood in the context of unequal material and symbolic relations.

Conceptualizing everyday resistance

Following everyday theorists such as Scott and De Certeau, resistance is any practice by which unprivileged subjects aim to mitigate, oppose or subvert forms of oppression and the imposed order. These practices include a myriad of actions and inactions ranging from boycotts to bodily gestures, silences and discourses. Scott typically refers to foot-dragging, pilfering and fake compliance, to name a few. These could certainly be undertaken by a range of actors, acting collectively or individually, but they require an account of material and symbolic hierarchies. The framework does not make sense if it is not viewed from a historicist perspective nor does it make sense unless there is an acknowledgement that resistance, the same as power relations, does not purely and objectively exist without interpretation. History as a way to unearth patterns should serve as guidance but, in the liberal peace debates, it has been used as part of what Hobson and

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[45]Hibou, *Anatomie Politique de La Domination*; Ortner, "Resistance and the Problem of Ethnographic Refusal," 175; Mbembe in Shipley, "Africa in Theory," 666.
[46]Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, 296.
[47]Ibid., 10.
[48]Ibid.

Lawson would call a 'thicker description', and not as part of the theoretical explanation for what constitutes resistance.[49] Scott exemplifies this view when responding to the question of what distinguishes an egotistic act of pilfering from resistance.

- 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.[50]

Resistance requires an account of patterns of accumulation and dispossession underpinning power relations. Practice itself is defined in both Scott and De Certeau as a pattern of acts that are 'millenarians'.[51] De Certeau's own notion of history as a dialectic between events, the historian and the narrative illustrate the relationship between practice, patterns and the need for interpretation. For De Certeau, there is no overall grand narrative, much less unmediated. It is the result of an incoherent mixture of the patterns of acts by certain actors during a particular time and the pattern of acts enacted by the everyday work of the historian.[52] The implication is that resistance is not something objectively apprehendable but something that is mediated by the observer and narrator. When we understand the dialectic between these 'events' or fragments and the patterns in which they are produced, we are able to understand quotidian forms of resistance as having political significance. However big or small acts of resistance we want to account for are and whether we turn our gaze to acts against international interveners, resistance cannot be disassociated from the unequal distribution of privileges, material and symbolic goods. Neither can it be disassociated from the fact that these configurations of access and distribution have been co-constituted both nationally and internationally over time.

Placing emphasis on oppression through social hierarchies does not mean disregarding the complexities of everyday life and power relations. Nor does the acknowledgement of the importance of class and other social hierarchies in resistance imply that everything that happens between subjects in a social hierarchy are acts of power and resistance. It just conveys that alongside multiple exchanges and mutual accommodations, resistance happens as subordinates evade, palliate or subvert domination.[53]

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[49]Hobson and Lawson, "What Is History in International Relations?".
[50]Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, 295–6, emphasis added.
[51]De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, 2–6; Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 314–24.
[52]Mitchell, "A Fourth Critic of the Enlightenment."
[53]Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, ch.6; *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, ch. 2 and pages 214–17; (e.g. 'keeping at arm's length') in *The Art of Not Being Governed*.

Class, contemporary conflict and peace interventions

Many contemporary conflicts are rooted in long-term political, social and economic crises. However, though framed in the language of liberal reforms and aiming to foster wealth creation for development, peace interventions have generally reproduced a situation of poverty and subordination for the majority.[54] Additionally, these interventions have seldom acknowledged their implication in the roots of such crises. In the example of the DRC that we are about to explore below, two of the main donors and drivers in peacebuilding programmes, Belgium and the US, have historically shaped the Congolese state through their role in Colonization, the support for Mobutu Sese Seko and later in the war. De Certeau and Scott give us the tools for a sociology of peacebuilding, unravelling social struggles and levels of analysis, while illuminating practices of resistance in everyday situations.

This view contrasts with that of Severine Autesserre who discusses practices of evasion, contestation, resistance and rejection without regard for broader structures of class and privilege.[55] For Autesserre, this resistance comes from communities' feeling that international actors impose their projects without local consultation.[56] Though Autesserre has brought one of the most detailed account of peacebuilding's everyday, this everyday ends up being about the way internationals do things, blinding the fact that international's self-appointed authority places claims on beneficiaries, taps into historical experiences of subordination and racism vis-à-vis international interveners and relegates long-standing demands for political participation and autonomy by subordinate groups.

The focus on everyday resistance also brings a specific account of resistance that is not offered by broad accounts of contestation. From a political geography approach, Shahar Hameiri and Lee Jones illustrate how different actors and groups compete, ally and struggle among each other and different international actors because peacebuilding interventions are fundamentally an attempt to redistribute authority and resources.[57] Contestation is therefore central to this account, bringing out the politics of the intervention's specific context after the war as well as the historical configurations and entanglements of spaces, institutional arrangements, structures and networks. Unfortunately, this does not tell us what resistance is, only vaguely implying that it is an attempt to stop particular programmes by a variety of actors including governments, elites, women, youth, elders, etc. Moreover, as with hybridity, the politics of scale is focused on outcomes. What the everyday framework highlights is the importance of understanding processes whereby numerous

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[54]Sabaratnam, History Repeating?
[55]Autesserre, *Peaceland*, esp. Ch. 3.
[56]Ibid., 108–9.
[57]Hameiri and Jones, "Beyond Hybridity."

practices are put into place to allay extractive claims and subvert the order in place, independently of their outcomes. This is because, as Scott remarks most emphatically, resistance seldom achieves its aims yet it illuminates the everyday of power relations, their changes and reconfigurations over time.

The implication is that it is difficult to disentangle forms of resistance in a peacebuilding context from the everyday dynamics of class, privilege and state – society relations. It is also difficult to disentangle any specific forms of resistance in peacebuilding from the dynamics of the global political economy around long-term patterns of extraction and from the neoliberal dynamics that, as Young argues, have redeployed 'the state around a regime of private accumulation, dispossession and distribution'.[58] Since contemporary peacebuilding processes have relied on political structures configured on the basis of multiple inequalities and exclusions and they have furthered promoted an economic model based on large holdings and large investments, regardless of the actual social impact, they have reinforced regimes of unequal distribution of rights and privileges, reinscribing resistance in intersecting forms of domination. A focus on class and privilege should highlight the processes of material distribution, authority and privilege, where the 'international' element may place new claims of legitimate authority and extraction but is never external.

Class, Privilege and resistance in peacebuilding: an illustration

De Certeau's and Scott's sociological practice-based analysis opens up the possibility of observing resistance in several peacebuilding microcosms but the framework remains the same. It embodies resistance in subordinate subjects and studies acts and discourses that attempt to palliate the effects and claims of domination. Everyday resistance is therefore located in power relations that are historically constituted and it is patterned (as opposed to just ad-hoc and random). This section illustrates how the everyday framework can combine these elements through several examples drawn from the case of the DRC. The section first contextualizes the case and then discusses three examples of resistance.

Conflict and peacebuilding in DRC: a brief contextualization

The breakout of conflict in 1996 in the DRC (Zaire at the time) reflects the exhaustion of Mobutu's regime after 32 years in power, but also several continental and global transformations at the end of the Cold War.[59] Firstly, a series of pro-democracy struggles managed to turn single-party and military

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[58]Young, "Conceptualizing Resistance," 177.
[59]Prunier, *Africa's World War*.

regimes into multi-party states but left the infrastructure of old regimes intact and, many, as happened in the DRC, developed into full-blown conflicts.[60] Secondly, the rise of new elites, such as in Uganda and Rwanda, who had been educated and trained in the US, accelerated changes in military and political alliances. Finally, peace became synonymous with liberal democratic states. All this came together to allow the formation of a coalition of Congolese political opposition and army leaders linked to the armies of Rwanda and Uganda to stage a coup against Mobutu. Thousands of youth and peasants, including women, joined the rebellion with hopes of overthrowing Mobutu and defending the country from foreign invasion. For many, but especially for the most unprivileged, this was a moment of truth to achieve social change and to regain full control over their country. This quickly developed into a war of 9 African countries, supported by foreign powers such as the UK, the US and France, further partitioning the DRC into three areas of influence (DRC government, Rwanda and Uganda) between 1998 and 2002. These international–national alliances, added to transnational networks of military and business elites also served several political, security and economic interests.[61] Rwanda and Uganda, for instance, took part in the DRC government, took over key military posts, stationed their troops in key border positions and exploited all sorts of natural resources from minerals to coffee and land, becoming major exporters of minerals they do not even hold in their territories.[62] A peace agreement after the assassination of Laurent Kabila, who took over from Mobutu, sealed DRC's future around many entrenched dynamics that privileged old and new elites linked to political and military power, territorial control and resource-trading. Joseph Kabila, who was central for those agreements and has won two consecutive rounds of elections, has become increasingly authoritarian, recently subsuming the country into a new crisis by not respecting the constitutional limit of two terms.[63] The conflict continues today largely due to the neglect of those political, economic and social aspirations and the reproduction of structures of privilege and violence.

Though international intervention was instrumental to put an end to the full-blown war and has developed important reforms towards democracy and the rule of law, it is co-responsible for the continuation of conflict. Interveners have encouraged political compromises between the DRC and Rwanda, despite Rwanda's economic, political and military interference in the DRC. They have prioritized the consolidation of the central government and security apparatus of the state, even if both the government and the army

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[60]Olateju, "Popular Struggles for Democracy and Crises of Transitions in Africa," 54.
[61]Raeymaekers, *Violent Capitalism and Hybrid Identity*; Mac Gaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga, *Congo-Paris*.
[62]Clark, "Museveni's Adventure"; Iñiguez de Heredia, *Everyday Resistance, Peacebuilding and State-Making*, 78–9, 90–1; Bernard, "Le Rwanda et Ses Voisins."
[63]The Guardian, "Congo Steps Up Deadly Crack Down"; Radio Okapi, "les miliciens de Yakutumba contrôlent la cité de Kilembwe."

have spurred discontent and conflict. They have fostered strategies of development that have largely transferred large state-owned enterprises to large private corporations, reinforcing inequality. They have followed a counter-insurgency strategy against remaining armed groups, disregarding rural and popular classes' political aspiration. This has been done while establishing themselves as privileged actors with the necessary authority to make claims with material and symbolic consequences. In this context, everyday forms of resistance have taken many forms from unconfrontational practices to public protests and armed struggle.

Positionality and resistance in the context of Demobilization and Reintegration and Security Sector Reform Disarmament programmes

Different actors have impaired Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR) programmes, so central for the state-building mission. These actors have prevented the state from maintaining peace, combatants have not demobilized and police and army have not turned into public service institutions. These actors have come from the top and the bottom of the social hierarchy. From the top, Joseph Kabila has never wanted different donors' SSR programmes to be unified, conveniently allowing him to maintain a weak army, an army which could otherwise threaten his power.[64] From the bottom, a number of Mai Mai militias have continued their operations in their quest for social and political agendas.[65] Though these two can be said to be 'resistance' in the sense that both 'oppose something', they are driven by different dynamics and their agency emanates from fundamentally opposed positions vis-à-vis what they resist. One is an act of power to maintain power. The other reflects long-term popular classes' aspirations for land, political representation, autonomy and social justice. Laying down arms means for many combatants returning to a situation of economic uncertainty, a loss of status and autonomy and giving up their aspirations. This is not to simplify the existence of Congolese militias (which has to do with their ideology, local issues, and the failure of democratization and economic reforms), or to romanticize them – they have engaged in massacres, rapes, torture and human rights violations. Yet it is impossible to fully understand the motivations of these militias without an account of what have been long-standing historical issues for rural and urban underclasses in the DRC.[66]

Everyday forms of resistance do not constrain our focus to one set of actors to disregard others. It allows us to explore the patterns of social relations and

[64]Boshoff et al., "Supporting SSR in the DRC"; Trefon, *Congo Masquerade*, 15–17.
[65]Stearns, *Raia Mutomboki*; Verweijen, 'Taking Uvira?'.
[66]Jourdan, "Being at War, Being Young"; Stearns, "Mai-Mai Yakutumba."

configuration of social and political institutions with an account of material and symbolic distribution. Though Mai Mai militias have become engaged in practices of domination and in elite agendas of territorial and military control, the fact that the bulk of these militias represent popular rural classes and disenfranchised youth has to do with the fact that armed struggle grants them the opportunity to subvert their unprivileged social position.[67]

Gendering resistance

Women have also joined Mai Mai militias ever since the war started. Though many women and girls have been abducted into armed groups, many see armed struggle as a solution to the problems facing them and as a form of challenging their status.[68] Francesca Tosarelli reports how some female members from the Mai Mai Shetani/FDP in Nyamilima (North Kivu) claim to have joined the group to protect themselves and their communities after having been victims of violence.[69] Sara, a 16-year-old, tells another journalist: 'I was pushed out of school because my parents could not pay. So instead of roaming aimlessly in town, it was better to go and help them [militia groups] in the bush.'[70] Other women have supported armed groups by cooking for them, quartering combatants or looking after their children. They aspire to educate themselves, live in conditions of dignity and equality with men, partake in decision-making processes, access land and have independence.[71]

These intersecting aspirations have always been present in Congolese women's resistance. The anti-colonial struggle for women was already a struggle for two 'independences': as women and as black Congolese.[72] And though these issues may seem better placed in the realm of public and organized resistance, gathering food, water, charcoal and wood, cooking, child-caring and hosting travellers have been the most available forms of resistance to women. They have granted them greater autonomy and control and the opportunity to provide security and social services for the community. These activities represent what Certeau would call strategies of avoidance and reappropriation, which palliate the most damaging effects of war and create safe spaces from which to challenge everyday oppression in their families and the village.[73] These spaces have set the basis to, for instance,

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[67]Scott already included guerrilla-type warfare, *Weapons of the Weak*, 241.
[68]The Coalition, "Briefing Paper, Democratic Republic of Congo," 8.
[69]Tosarelli, "Ms Kalashnikov"; see also The Coalition, "Briefing Paper," 8–9.
[70]Ngugi, "Former Congolese Female Militants Return to Combat Due to Stigma."
[71]Odimba, *L'histoire des Associations féminines congolaises*, 23–4.
[72]Bower, *Gender and Decolonisation in Congo*, 2.
[73]I was able to gather this information in several trips to the DRC between 2009 and 2014, staying a total of 11 months in most territories of North and South Kivu and Kinshasa. Over the course of this research, I interviewed 17 women's associations. Iñiguez de Heredia, *Everyday Resistance, Peacebuilding and State-making*. See also The Coalition, "Briefing Paper," 7–9; Bisimwa, "Des conditions d'émergence de la solidarité entre femmes," 4–6.

mobilize a critique against the militarized strategy of both the government and the UN, accusing the UN of being complicit in the violence they continue to experience. These activities have also enabled women to organize campaigns and offer necessary support to more organized and politically visible movements.[74]

Peacebuilding programmes have offered women opportunities but with unequal and contradictory effects. On the one hand, international programmes for the inclusion of women in, for example, forest management initiatives or gender mainstreaming have allowed women to launch their long-standing struggle for their right to land and oppose customary law.[75] On the other, they have reified upper-class women's capacity to get public posts and have more responsibility when campaigning for those posts. This has generated resentment among working-class women who have seen their upper-class counterparts as opportunistic players in the 'gender struggle'. However, overall, peacebuilding programmes have mostly just 'added' women to the structures already in place, without questioning the power relations that underpin structural violence and patriarchy.[76] As such, women continue to resist, against, through and despite peacebuilding programmes, what Molara Ogundipe-Leslie calls 'the six mountains on [African women's] back': colonialism, tradition, poverty and ignorance, man, race and herself (due to the negative views of herself).[77] In the DRC they also resist the war and the economic, political, social, sexual and personal consequences it has.

Class resistance in the compound

One space where there are indeed relations of resistance between 'internationals' and 'locals' is the compound where UN peacebuilders and many aid workers live and work. The compound, or the 4-wheel drive or hotel for that matter, are hierarchical social spaces where one is likely to find expats in managerial positions and hosts in supporting positions, such as cleaners, security guards or drivers.[78] These spaces, as Lisa Smirl noted, 'provid[e] the setting for a remarkable number of political acts and performances', including rituals of power and resistance.[79] But as 'a site of perceived inequality and amorality it is also the target of outrage, vandalism and violence'.[80] These forms of resistance are not fundamentally about 'how' internationals

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[74]Ibid., 8–9.
[75]Stiem and Krause, "Exploring the Impact of Social Norms and Perceptions"; Sassa-Kiuka and Botamba, "Integrating Gender into Community Forestry and Land Rights."
[76]Wilmer, "Gender, Violence, and Dehumanization."
[77]Ogundipe-Leslie, *Re-creating Ourselves*, 25–8.
[78]Smirl, *Spaces of Aid*, loc. 407–409.
[79]Ibid. loc. 2027.
[80]Sandoval-Strausz cited in ibid.

do things – in their 'arrogant, condescending, paternalistic, bossy, preachy' way 'telling people what to do' and 'disregarding local ideas'.[81] Neither is in this context the local–international relation one of cultural difference. Rather these are class and racial hierarchical relations that determine questions of entitlement and privilege. The pay-gap between internationals and locals in aid and peacebuilding posts and its knocking effect on rental costs and inflation are revealing.[82] This gap can be up to 400–900%[83] and is added to other benefits expats have, such as paid safe comfortable accommodation, security and personal transport.[84] These allocations reflect historically constituted relationships of privilege that build on colonial relations, following what Sabaratnam calls the global intellectual hierarchical order 'of "advanced" and "backward" groups, along lines produced by historic systems of colonial exploitation and dispossession'.[85]

The resistance strategies that Congolese subordinate workers enact in these contexts are therefore not unlike what they do against their Congolese bosses or their own authorities. One example is poisoning: it is not uncommon to find humanitarian workers who have been poisoned.[86] In my first visit to the DRC in 2009, one of my interviewees warned me not to touch the door handles because that is where the poison is often placed. I initially took this to be a legacy of war, yet soon realized that this was an extended practice that signalled class and race relations. After that, three humanitarian workers explained to me how they had been poisoned after they had either fired someone, denied a pay-raise or did not give work to workers' family members. They admitted that this was not unusual and told me of other similar experiences they had witnessed. Being a Carter Centre electoral observer for the 2011 elections, I saw how the man we rented our car from and who employed our driver was poisoned and almost died for being 'a bad boss', as our driver stated.[87] This practice has been described as a 'culture of poisoning'.[88] It can be added to regular experiences of petty theft and foot-dragging. These practices reveal resistance in that they target exploitative relations, and not relations of cultural difference or bad habits.

These examples bring instances of everyday situations and microcosms where the impact of war and the process of peacebuilding are notable but where resistance cannot be seen as separate from the longer history of power and resistance relations. Women's acts of resistance are, as Sophie

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[81]Autesserre, *Peaceland*, 97–8.
[82]Sabaratnam, *Decolonising Intervention*, 127.
[83]Carr and McWha-Hermann, "Expat Wages up to 900% Higher."
[84]Secret Aid Worker, "Why Do Expats Earn More than the Rest of Us?".
[85]Sabaratam, *Decolonising Intervention*, 7.
[86]See also poisoning in community relations in Verweijen, "Military Business and the Business of the Military in the Kivus," 74.
[87]Mbandaka, October 2011.
[88]EDTV, "L'empoisonnement, Nouvelle Culture en RD Congo."

Richter-Devroe argues, inseparable from women's struggle against patriarchy, even if, as in her case study, they take place in the context of the Israeli occupation.[89] This is partly because patriarchy is itself inseparable from the nature of the Israeli occupation and the Palestinian political order and because that order, in Palestine and in the DRC, as in many ex-colonies, was largely configured through violent conquest, rape and slavery.[90] Youth, rural and class resistance also relate to particular state configurations forged historically. Lemay-Hébert argues that resistance in the context of contemporary UN interventions in Haiti is made up of the social class and the historical formation of the state and so it is ultimately a structural continuation of historical class struggles.[91] In so far as interventions reproduce relations of oppression, they also reproduce long-term forms of resistance.

A research agenda for resistance in peace and conflict studies and beyond

The study of resistance in the liberal peace debates reveals important weaknesses in the way interventions are carried out and has opened the analyses to the responses war-affected societies pose. Critical hybridity scholars have gone a long way to articulating a grounded critique of these interventions, taking into account the complex context of societies and interventions and how they are intertwined with global structures of power. We now know that peace operations intervene in the relations between state and society, that they impact the distribution of wealth, rights and freedoms, that they have intended and unintended consequences due to their experimental approach, and that they have international, national, liberal and non-liberal elements. However, the most certain thing we know about resistance is that it hybridizes the liberal peace. The lack of a robust framework for resistance has jeopardized the critique of liberal interventions by reifying several issues that the critique was meant to overcome. One of the main pitfalls is to have substituted a class-based account of resistance, so central to the everyday framework critical hybridity accounts were drawing on, for a vaguely defined account of local agency.

This article has addressed a puzzle in which resistance was claimed to be the cornerstone of a critique of peacebuilding yet went undefined. At the same time, the everyday framework was supposed to inform the account of resistance, yet it has been misrepresented. Critical hybridity scholars have undermined the framework by transforming subjects into locals, defined mainly by their cultural background and relation to the

[89]Richter-Devroe, "Palestinian Women's Everyday Resistance."
[90]Mama, "Sheroes and Villains."
[91]Lemay-Hébert, "Resistance in the Time of Cholera," 200.

intervention, by theorizing the everyday as something self-constituted, and voiding its historical globalized content. Critics of this framework have seen in the everyday a further obstacle to a radical critique and to developing resistance yet much of what they were aiming for (i.e. an account of structures of power, a politicization of subjects, and a historicist approach) are all essential elements of the everyday framework. As this article has argued, the focus on class and privilege offers the possibility of integrating these elements. Examining everyday practices of resistance in the context of social relations not only affords a better comprehension of what resistance is – the attempt by subordinate classes to evade or palliate domination – but also a deeper sociological understanding of conflict and subsequent interventions. This view unearths how the processes of extraction, entitlement and distribution are resisted, also highlighting that peacebuilding's disregard and reproduction of historically constituted relations of material inequality underpin peacebuilding's own failures.

The limitations to conceptualizing resistance in peace and conflict studies represent a wider limitation of IR in engaging with positionality, embodiment and different levels of analysis.[92] This means that though many scholars have taken account of the impact on livelihoods, material and symbolic privileges, and different intersecting forms of power on individuals and groups, the tendency has been to theorize resistance in abstract macro-terms. This has been added to a still divided approach between resistance as something public and organized as opposed to something individual, quotidian and uncoordinated.

The implication is that everyday resistance whether in peacebuilding, globalization, or other global processes is not a special kind of opposition. It is the product of historical relations of domination, co-created nationally and internationally, and experienced in everyday life. 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 overcome these divides. Otherwise, as exposed by the absence of class and privilege in the hybridity debates, the account of resistance remains limited, ambiguous and depoliticized.

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[92]Bleiker, *Popular Dissent, Human Agency and Global Politics*; Marchand, "Some Theoretical 'Musings' about Gender and Resistance"; Wilcox, *Bodies of Violence*.

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