PEACE PARKS: WHAT CAN THEY DO FOR POSITIVE PEACE?

Introduction

The late 20th and early 21st century have seen policy makers face issues on a global scale unlike anything heretofore experienced. The rapidly declining biodiversity rates and increasing poverty levels have forced world leaders to attempt peace keeping through international environmental strategies such as peace parks. Generally described, peace parks are large conservation areas that cross international borders of two or more countries in the attempt to address the international characteristics of the environment. There are currently around 147 peace parks straddling 112 international borders in 98 countries (Peace Parks Foundation, 2018). Peace parks can provide ecological, economic and political advantages to the nations involved in their implementation through the securing of environmental stability and the support of international cooperation in the name of nature. Peace parks also have the capacity to involve local communities in conservation as the nation states are meant to give up sovereign control to intranational institutions. As many peace parks are suggested in post-conflict zones, the potential economic, environmental and political benefits of peace parks provide solid footing on which to build positive peace.

However, the manner of peace park implementation is arguably archaic as it generally employs colonial and neo-liberal conservation mechanisms which negate local and indigenous knowledge, restrict access to resources and, in some cases, displace entire communities. Even further, the Peace Park Paradox allows for nations to extend control and regulation under the mask of relinquishing power to communities in intranational bodies. Thus, while peace parks have great potential to provide for international cooperation and the building of positive peace via increased livelihood and environmental security, the manner of implementation fiercely opposes the realization of these outcomes. This essay argues that the antiquated peace park implementation ideals cannot contribute to positive peace building unless there is a shift in discourse and practice to a more community-driven approach.

The Evolution of Peace Parks

Evolution of Peace and Security

Throughout time, peace has been a human aspiration sought after the world over. The origins of the concept have their home in every sector and region across the globe. Generally, peace is the concept of harmony and the absence of hostility or fear of conflict (Galtung, 1985). Noticeably, much is left to be interpreted from this vague definition. In the field of International Relations there are generally two types of peace under which all case studies and research fall: negative peace and positive peace. Here, negative peace refers to the absence of conflicts such as war and civil unrest and positive peace is generally seen as what follows and pertains to the health and increased livelihood security of communities and populations (Galtung, 1985). The late 20th and early 21st centuries have seen a rise in the aim for positive peace as many international disputes have been settled (though many wage on), leaving in their wake war torn countries and lawless communities. Another reason positive peace has moved to the forefront is the recent realisation of global environmental destruction. Due to the effects of climate change and mismanaged resources, global environments are shifting at rates never before experienced by mankind (Dalby, 2009). Though this does not innately pose the same threats as do civil conflict and international war, environmental change has the same capacity for human destruction because the natural world provides the very basis of human civilisation and life (Dalby, 2009; Brock, 1991).

Any threat of human destruction swiftly pulls security to centre stage. The interplay of national and global security with environmental safety presents a difficult paradox for modern policy makers. The paramount issue here is that current discourse surrounding security does not include the innately intimate relationship that human security has with the environment (Floyd and Matthew, 2013). However, contemporary authors are pushing for this relationship to be recognised and protected. For example, Dalby (2009) has called for a shift to understanding security from an ecological background because environmental upheaval or uncertainty has the capacity to not only affect ecological aspects of communities but can also be a cause or exasperator of civil unrest and international conflict, which would put human lives, security and peace at even greater risk (Gemenne et al, 2014). Thus, the environment has started to emerge as a driver of security and therefore, something that should be protected to ensure future safety and peace.

These evolving ideas of security and peace which stem from the sustainability and longevity of environmental health have brought about the inception of multitudes of international environmental movements attempting to conserve and sustain biodiversity hot spots as well as environments on which developing communities rely (Brock, 1991). From this unfolding interplay of

security, peace and the environment, the idea of peace parks, also known as transfrontier conservation areas, has been conceived and, in some places, practiced (Peace Parks Foundation, 2018; Stevens, 2007; Duffy, 2001).

Evolution of Nature

In order to comprehend the discourse of peace parks and their intended functions, it is imperative that the recent evolution of the idea of nature is also understood. The prevailing ideas of nature were, and continue to be, shaped by social, economic and scientific shifts in the world (Williams, 1982). Until the 18th century, nature was viewed as a wilderness that was savage and dangerous; something to be tamed. However, from the 18th century on, nature was understood as a place that was to be explored and researched. By the 1870s, wilderness areas had become idealised and imagined as places of pristine habitat, untouched by human hands and something that is outside of society; void of social and cultural aspects. This deeply Western idea is often referred to as 'othering' in that the livelihoods based on the environment are portrayed as outside of those very settings. From this, an intense desire to conserve these places was born (Lorimer, 2015; Adams and Mulligan, 2003). This desire has can be seen articulated in modern day national parks, managed public lands, conservation areas and the international peace parks. Combined with the described evolution of peace and security, these environmental preservation attempts have been the focal point of policy makers for the past few decades and will very likely continue to be for the foreseeable future (Salardi, 2015; Adams and Mulligan, 2003).

What Do Peace Parks Have to Offer?

Peace parks, as mentioned above, have much to offer the ideals and discourses currently underpinning security and peace in the field of International Relations. Specifically, peace parks support the claim that they have the capacity to build international partnerships in post-conflict zones and to increase livelihoods of the local communities in and around the designated areas. These assertions make peace Parks an attractive candidate for a means of positive peace building. This positive peace, if achieved, would be found via the physical and societal improvements that peace parks have to offer. Such potential ecological and societal improvements are outlined below.

Ecological Advantages

The philosophy underpinning the peace parks notion is the idea of bioregions which implies that there exist ecological regions which do not follow political or national boundaries, and that these regions need to be conserved and managed as wholes for the benefit of the ecosystems and, therefore, the surrounding communities (Thayer, 2003; Welsh, 1994). One such ecological aim of

peace parks is to restore migration corridors that have been restricted by political and national boundaries. These will allow for more healthy populations as the gene pools will be increased along with the territory and the number of individuals. For example, the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) which connects South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe has moulded the once harsh borders back into the wildlife corridor they used to be. By so doing, the elephants from South Africa have been able to migrate along their traditional corridors to the much less populated Mozambican and Zimbabwean sides. This has assisted in maintaining healthy populations and has permitted the Kwazulu Natal Conservation Services to halt the animal culling that was previously used to manage the gene pools (Duffy, 2001).

Similarly, the Mesoamerican Biological Corridors Project was created to re-establish wildlife corridors and create connected bioregions that span across rain forests, coral reefs, mangroves and many other sites of interest throughout Central and South America (Miller et al, 2001). There are also a great number of Central American Peace Parks that are intended to preserve Mayan archaeological sites such as El Pilar, which spans the Belizean and Guatemalan borders (Ford, 1998). These wildlife corridors, as seen already in southern Africa, have the potential to keep wildlife populations healthy which keep environments healthy with less need for man-made regulations (Gaston and Spicer, 2013). Thus, there is a great deal of ecological gain to be had from the creation of these peace parks.

Political Advantages

Aside from the biological benefits of peace parks, supporters claim that they also provide the possibility of eliminating or minimizing the impact of violence over natural resources. They argue that they could support and encourage regional integration and peaceful co-operations between countries that have been or are currently engaged in conflict. For example, one of the main aims of the Balkans Peace Park Project (B3P) that has been proposed for the border regions of Kosovo, Albania and Montenegro is to foster cross-border state and community cooperation in the wake of intense civil wars and international conflict (Balkans Peace Park Project, 2018). This will be difficult in the region as the countries are very much still experiencing strife due to residual conflict and the feelings which accompany the powerful history of the region. However, B3P has started from the community level and claims, based on recent studies (Gabioud, 2012; Young, 2008), that, as the park moves forward, peace will be fostered, and the nations will come together to support the preservation of the picturesque mountain regions which surround the local communities (Balkans Peace Park Project, 2018).

Similarly, in central Africa, the International Gorilla Conservation Program (IGCP) has been working in the Virunga-Bwindi region to protect gorillas and to foster cross-border cooperation. This has proven a difficult task as the conflict history of the region is deeply rooted and very complex. However, the IGCP has been working with governments and communities in Rwanda, The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda to preserve these gorilla species. A recent study has found that this cooperative conservation effort and the regional meetings it creates, are largely perceived by locals and governments as contributors to peace-building in the region (Ali, 2007). Therefore, when implemented correctly, Peace parks and other transfrontier conservation areas can, in fact, contribute to the political healing of previously conflict-torn regions. If the Balkan Peace Park and the IGCP continue along these paths, these international environmental agreements could, perhaps fulfil their potential as mechanisms for positive peace.

Economic Advantages

There is also an economic rationale behind the idea of peace parks. In most cases, peace parks call for funding under the assumption that, when created, they will be centres for revenue in some manner. When a peace park is suggested, the surrounding communities and national governments require such incentives to participate as at some point the power over a given territory is to be relinquished in some form or fashion to intranational governing bodies (Duffy, 2001). Ecotourism is most often the promise made to the nations and communities who will be involved in such plans (Büscher, 2013; Duffy, 2001). Ecotourism can be broadly defined as nature tourism which consists of travelling to an undisturbed and untouched natural area or region with the specific intent of admiring, enjoying and perhaps studying the wild fauna and flora as well as the culture of the areas (Mowforth and Munt, 2015; Boo, 1990). In many places, institutions such as this have been largely successful, supplying employment for local communities as well as income for national and community level organisations. For example, in Costa Rica, the world's leader in conservation efforts and ecotourism, locals involved in ecotourism on the Osa Peninsula view it as the activity which contributes most to livelihood and attitude betterment. In speaking with locals, Hunt et al (2014), found that, contrary to some arguments, ecotourism can do well to address poverty and disparities in access to resources and can assist in placing decision-making power in the hands of the local communities. However, in many places individual who rely completely on the environments which are now protected cannot equally rely on the institution of ecotourism. This is because tourism projects generally take a number of years before they are financially viable, which is far too long for local communities to wait (Duffy, 2006; Mowforth and Munt, 1998).

As mentioned before, ecotourism is seen as a necessity in the creation of peace parks. This is because it has the potential to drive local economies and simultaneously create cross-border cooperation (Duffy, 2001; Honey, 2008). However, many criticise this aspect of the peace park narrative saying that, due to the emphasis on the peace park being a revenue incentive and the then necessary commodification of the natural environment, it is simply another neo-liberal conservation plan based on market systems which create winners and losers (King and Wilcox, 2008). As the natural world is commodified, it becomes 'othered' from human activity and livelihoods. This only exacerbates the 'othering' that took place during colonial rule, which will be discussed in the next section of this essay. This commodification also assumes that local and indigenous communities will support the idea of allowing strangers in the lands on which they place sacred meanings and from which they acquire resources in exchange for economic incentives (Honey, 2008; King and Wilcox, 2008).

Despite this neo-liberal basis, under a national scheme ecotourism can achieve community improvement and the sustainable management of ecologically vital zones as seen in Costa Rica. However, under the pretext of an international peace park, the realization of outcomes such as this become much more difficult. This is due to many factors, including the increased number of stakeholders and ensuing partnerships. Wolmer (2003) states that this language of "stakeholders," and "partnerships," present in the neo-liberal ideal has led to the hugely depoliticized discussions of community conservation and involvement in peace parks. As a result of these depoliticized discourses and neo-liberal incentives, often times, communities that live on the resources provided by areas within the new peace parks are asked to give up user rights in return for the promise of revenue through tourism. These actions are reminiscent of colonial era conservation techniques, which are discussed below.

Peace Park Implementation

As mentioned above, a simply national combination of increased environmental health and an economic boost to local communities can achieve positive peace in small communities and potentially in nation states. However, when these protected areas and the revenue which would go along with them begin to encompass border regions and the relinquishing of state power to some intranational body, complications not present on the national level are conceived.

Colonial Conservation

As described above, the current creation of protected areas is underpinned by residual colonial era (1884-1964) conservation ideals which are based on the 'othering' of nature from the human

existence and experience (Duffy, 2001). As part of this Western colonial mentality, local traditions are often portrayed as separate from the environments on which they are built. They are, as described, 'othered', which in many cases leads to the overstepping of state control into territories and boundaries that were previously only locally valued and trafficked. Evidence of this 'othering' can be seen in the ways by which the African continent is portrayed in modern media. For example, hit films such as the Lion King (1994) and Born Free (1966) both portray the African savannas and grassland as completely void of culture and people all together. Instead of showing the rich cultures and communities who live in and use those environments, the landscape is portrayed as unchanging and identical to that in which human ancestors evolved, now, however, void of human life and activity and composed only of mega-fauna and wide-open spaces.

As these ideals are largely promoted still today, most modern conservation schemes created are based on the same principles that underpinned colonial policy making and rely almost completely on the described western assumptions around the primitivity and barrenness, or non-westernised, peoples and lands (King, 2010; Duffy, 2001). Policies based on these antiquated western portrayals inevitably exclude the environmentally-based livelihoods of local peoples and the political and cultural boundaries which have likely been in place for decades or longer.

The Peace Parks mentality unfortunately does not escape this incomplete media portrayal of the lands in which they are being created. Ecotourism also balances on this idea of untouched landscapes as people from around the world travel to the African savannas, alpine forests and tropical paradises to see not human communities and culture, but mega fauna and flora, in the picturesque landscapes which they have read about and seen in books and movies. This poses a problem for many local communities who will be affected by peace parks because it means they face the possibility of land tenure changes or displacement similar to what was done to Native American communities during the establishment of national parks such as Yellow Stone and Glacier in the United States (Burnham 2000; Neumann 2004).

The history of national park establishment in the United States is not very different from that of the Kruger National Park in South Africa, which is the centre piece of the GLTP. The expansion of the Kruger National Park was achieved through the forced eviction of indigenous peoples who had lived on those sites for generations and relied on the resources available in the park (Carruthers, 1995). This caused great anxiety for the indigenous populations living on the border regions of Mozambique and Zimbabwe when the GLTP was announced in 2000 (King, 2010). These anxieties proved to be well-placed as the creation of the GLTP ran its course.

In 2001, Mozambique created the Limpopo National Park as a future contribution to the GLTP. Seven years later, a study by Milgroom and Spierenburgb (2007) found that there were about 27,000 people living within the Mozambican park. 7,000 of those individuals were asked to resettle. Though the government stated that all displacement was voluntary, due to restrictive livelihood strategies and the influx of wild animals, many of the communities had to 'agree' on the terms for resettlement. Even though indigenous peoples were forcibly removed from their homes, donors and park authorities have spun the resettlement to look like a development plan, and so there was very little backlash from the international stage (Milgroom and Spierenburgb, 2007).

The similarities of the colonial and modern implementation of natural preservation areas is cause for concern, especially at the local level. Modern conservation programmes still emphasise the need for land tenure and registration reform as key to creating conservation-oriented behaviour and policies in both local communities and the governing entities. These concepts are generally translated to situations like what has been described above; where indigenous peoples are either forced from their ancestral homes, given restricted access to the resources on which their livelihoods depend, or a combination of both. These actions taken against local peoples directly contradict the aim for positive peace for which international peace parks seemed a good candidate. Though the absence of war seems surer, the increased livelihoods of those involved is more of a dream post peace park implementation than it was before.

Science and Community Conservation

International institutions such as the World Bank, the United Nations and NGOs like the World Wild Life Fund (WWF) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), already hold great influence on nation state actions in developing conservation areas. In 1992, the IUCN declared that one of its objectives was to have 10 percent of the world's terrestrial areas protected in an effort to ensure the survival of global biodiversity (Barzetti, 1993). Similarly, the WWF has convinced many states to outlaw the trade of endangered species and, on top of that, to create instruments for international sanctions to be taken against violators. These international non-state actors achieve this 'teaching' of national governments via the collection and production of scientific information that inform state policy. As the providing bodies of such scientific information, the monitoring and governing reach of these NGOs and international organisations has become extended (Litfin, 1997).

Often, when science is created in and disseminated from the west and then used to inform policies in the developing world, generations of indigenous knowledge are pushed to the side and policies are created that bar them from practicing as they have for hundreds of years. This can have devastating effects not only on the local cultures but also on the environments in the area. For

example, in Morocco, the westernised idea of desertification has been perpetuated via inaccurate and incomplete scientific studies that have fuelled policy making. When westerners first saw the North African country, they compared it to images of their own lands, which are green and wet, and declared the region to be in an environmental crisis. They assumed the lands were degraded and dried due to local farming and grazing techniques used by the Aarib communities in the area. Therefore, the grazing habits were forcibly changed as boundaries for where grazing could take place were instated both by policy and by borders (Davis, 2005).

The outcomes of these policies have been less than successful as the environment has not changed but the camel and Aarib populations have plummeted in the last quarter century. When asked about the plant life and dryness in the region, Aaribs and other locals stated that what they are experiencing is simply a dry spell; a drought. It has happened before, and it will happen again. They know which plants will survive, which ones to use as food and which ones are medicinal. Most importantly, however, is the fact that most Aaribs said that they do not think droughts are increasing or that the state of the plants has worsened in recent years (Davis, 2005).

These revelations show that westernised ideas fuelled by science and 'taught' to communities by international organisations have a huge capacity to ignore local knowledge and employ ill-equipped policies for such areas. The case of Morocco illustrates perfectly the effect that colonial underpinnings and far reaching international agencies still have on local populations today. However, community conservation efforts rooted in local skills and involvement can produce positive results for the environment and for communities. For example, in the Brazilian Amazon, when locals were listened to and involved in river turtle conservation efforts, the amount of turtle egg harvesting dropped by 26% in one year. This is compared to the two prior years where law enforcements attempted the same goal, but nothing changed (Norris et al, 2018).

Though only one year of study has been completed, successful community conservation plans like this give hope for the future of bottom-up conservation approaches. However, if international conservation zones are to work as they have promised, these colonial narratives and incomplete scientific studies must end and the power for decision-making and conservation planning must be given to the people who will be living in and around the preserved areas. They are the people with the necessary knowledge of the lands and ecologies and are those who will be affected most by what happens in the potential parks. By using ethical community conservation plans, the aim for positive peace through international peace parks is again in sight.

The Peace Park Paradox

As can be seen from the previous sections of this essay, Peace parks hold great potential for ecological and political advancement and sustainability. However, they hold equal potential for the destruction of local communities and environments via the antiquated ideals which underpin so much of the modern conservation sector. To address these possible negative effects, proponents of peace parks, such as the World Bank and the Peace Parks Foundation based in South Africa, assert that the implementation process will start from the bottom up and be rooted in community conservation (Peace parks Foundation, 2018; Ali, 2007), thereby ensuring the continuation of livelihood security and health. It has also been claimed that as nation states come on-board with the idea and implementation of transfrontier conservation regions, they agree to the giving up of control over the designated regions and plan to hand that power over to intranational bodies (local communities in those areas). These assertions describe a notable shift to a largely decentralised form of environmental governance in contrast with the historically state-run institutions. While this seems to mend the potential issues presented by the 'land-grabbing' and other colonial-based mentalities, in reality the states will likely be given *more* governing power than they had previously. Herein lies the great Peace Parks Paradox.

The Power Dynamics of Nation States and Communities

Peace parks have fuelled, and continue to fuel, shifts in state making debates during the current era of globalisation. The environment has opened a new realm of possible state control as environmental management has fed into attempts to increase the influence of states over border regions. Much like the addition of the environment to the fields of peace and security, this idea of national and international environmental management has created the vision of transboundary state making which would represent a new segment of global politics that works in favour of the environment and, therefore, the health and security of mankind (Duffy, 2001). However, even as nation states assume the position of listeners and community education providers and supporters, the conservation interventions which, as described previously, are led by global agencies are inevitably connected to national governments and states and not to local communities (Duffy, 2001).

As they are based internationally, peace parks innately require nation states to place sovereign control of a territory into the hands of some form of transnational or intranational management authority. However, there is much more to this process than meets the eye. In reality, peace parks require states to give up sovereign control over certain territories. However, peace parks also greatly assist in the extension of state power over areas that had previously been out of reach for law enforcement, thus producing more, not less, governing power for the states involved (Duffy, 2001;

2006). So, as nations intend to give up control over pieces of land for the sake of an international environment and peace agreement, they simultaneously acquire more control over the border regions that were previously out of reach. It could be assumed then, that this is all in the name of control for the state. As mentioned, these international agreements give potential for states to attain control over border lands that before were beyond the reach of state jurisdiction. Thus, Neuman (2004) suggests that '… the language of participatory conservation development schemes conceals the will of states and international agencies to take control and govern remote areas.

This paradox, in and of itself, seems quite confusing enough. However, with this interplay of state and non-state actors and the accompanying new phase of international governance and global politics has come a plethora of new stake holders and actors that have not been present in these negotiations thus far. Even further, the authorities of these actors are constantly altered by the centralising and decentralising tendencies of the described paradoxical state of environmental globalisation (Duffy, 2006; 2001).

Pre-Globalised Borders

This paradoxical extension of power brings with it many issues pertaining to livelihood security and potential conflict. While this paradoxical idea can be difficult to wrap one's head around, this, in and of itself, is not the real issue in establishing peace parks. The actual problem is that these border regions have already been 'transnationalised' for purposes that are closely tied to globalisation (Duffy, 2001, pg 16; Neuman, 2000). In reality, when border regions are joined together, a world of previously unknown and unregulated business and trade is unveiled, much of which could be categorised as illicit activity (Duffy, 2005). Under the guise of a peace park, these border regions, which were formerly far out of reach for law enforcement, are quickly placed under state control and regulation. The actors, who are then part of an international arrangement, generally work under the radar as most of their business and activity involves the unlawful trading of animal products, endangered species, humans and much more across loosely regulated international borders (Duffy, 2006; 2005).

Peace park initiatives, therefore, represent a mode of extending state reach and law enforcement over the thinly populated border areas where these activities take place. Therefore, this presents a direct threat to, not only the interest groups in those areas, but also to those within the state systems who are involved in and benefit from these illicit activities. Presently, border regions are hugely fluid and allow easy movement across boundaries. These are characteristics on which these interest groups rely and peace parks, once implemented, will effectively end that fluidity and movement (King, 2010; Ramutsindela, 2007; Duffy, 2005). Aside from these illicit activities, other

border issues exist. When combining multiple nations under a cause which aims for the dismantling of international borders, the political and economic climates of those nations cannot be ignored.

Border regions function not only as scenes for illicit and illegal acts, but also for the illegal migration across national lines. In a place known as 'Crooks Corner', Zimbabweans illegally jump the border to work in the gold mines and earn a living in South Africa (Duffy, 2001). In situations like this, where one country's economy is much stronger than the other, the blurring of national borders presents a large risk (Ramutsindela, 2007). Prior to the implementation of the GLTP, South Africa voiced great concerns about the number of illegal immigrants that could use the bioregion as a way to easily immigrate into South Africa without being found (Duffy, 2001). No recent studies have been done on the effects that the implementation of the GLTP had on the amount of illegal immigration in Crooks Corner.

Due to the currently lax law enforcement in most border regions, especially in the developing countries, it is understandable that some states and local peoples would greatly oppose the institution of an international peace park. In fact, doing so could have hugely negative effects on livelihoods for the individuals in those regions. Some would claim that political borders are simply remnants of historical conflict and, therefore, can be removed when necessary (Godwin, 2001). Simply labelling conservation areas as ecological and not social, does not remove the political factors that have shaped their creation and continue to shape their maintenance because the origins and functions of borders are indistinguishable from the national and regional histories, cultures and livelihoods that surround them (King and Wilcox, 2008; Ramutsindela, 2007). Here, again, it is apparent that at the local level, peace parks have more potential to decrease livelihood security and safety than they do to increase positive peace.

Summary

In this era of globalisation and environmental collapse, transboundary conservation areas seem a promising alternative to some of the more dated ways of taking and preserving the natural environments around us. At their core, they have the capacity to create and maintain healthier ecological habitats and animal populations which would preserve global biodiversity. They also have the potential to improve international relations across borders by bringing nations and communities together in the name of the environment, on which we all rely for life. These attributes are cause for celebration as it seems that, when implemented, international peace parks will assist in creating increased livelihood stability for those involved and, by so doing, render the positive peace aims of the peace and security fields more attainable.

However, much is pushed aside, and many are left wanting when these parks are implemented. First and foremost, the economic incentives underpinning the creation of peace parks has been criticised as being the latest in a line of market-based and top-down environmental interventions by international agencies such as the World Bank. Similarly, the colonial undertones of peace park conservation areas is detrimental to the culture and livelihoods of local and indigenous peoples. As the lifestyles and ecological necessities of these individuals are increasingly seen as 'othered' from the environment, their rights to land are stripped away and, in some cases, they are forced to relocate outside of the conservation areas (Burnham 2000; Neumann 2004). These ideals perpetuate the removal of indigenous peoples from their local and ancestral homes based on the money-making potential of that land. This, in turn, decreases livelihood stability and often displaces locals which breaks communities and cultures apart.

Just as international organisations can be seen as responsible for the issues discussed above, they too are involved in the great paradox of peace parks in a globalised world. Under the disguise of relinquishing power to intranational bodies, state control is extended to regions that were previously out of reach for law enforcement (Duffy, 2001). While advantageous for the state, those whose livelihoods rely on the border regions for illegal trade or migration, are put at great risk. Though the peace park paradox itself does not negate the potential for positive peace, the repercussions of increased national control and border dismantling could prove devastating to local livelihood stability and border security. Here, again there is greater potential for the destruction of livelihoods and culture than there is for the advancement of positive peace.

Conclusion

Peace parks have great potential for building positive peace through environmental and increased local livelihood stability. The antiquated ideals of colonial conservation and the neo-liberal ideals of commodifying nature are the means by which peace parks have been implemented up to this point. Unfortunately, these ideals combined with the effects of increased national power in the border regions and the depoliticised nature of transnational frontiers create situations that are more threatening to local livelihoods than they are helpful. On the other hand, bioregions, the idea on which transnational conservation is based, emphasize the biota of the areas targeted instead of the economic, political and cultural systems of that region (Smith, 2001). Through this idea, national politics are restrained in favour of the incorporation of ecological systems at the local and national levels and the economic and environmental factors are often prioritized over the political circumstances of the regions. This could be beneficial to the implementation of peace parks because it supports international cooperation in post conflict zones, as seen in the Balkan Peace Park plan.

However, as described above, ignoring the political and economic climate of the nations and communities involved has potential for negative impacts on communities and countries.

Peace parks, implemented as they are today, may work well on the national and international stage as they can be portrayed as peace building and environmentally friendly by powerful corporations like the World Bank and international NGOs. However, on the local level, people are often experiencing the opposite as their livelihoods are changed, their homes uprooted, and their cultures commodified. If peace parks are to supply the positive peace building for which they have potential, the ideals underpinning their implementation must shift. Though community conservation is not fool-proof, it has more potential on an international stage than does any other top-down market approach. Locals should be involved at every stage, from scientific development, to decision making, to implementation. Though this process is lengthy, in the long run, it provides more sustainable solutions and increased livelihood stability, and therefore, positive peace building. Until local livelihoods become the focus for peace park implementations, positive peace will not be achieved via the peace park dream.

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