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Affective recognition: examining the role of affect in education for peacebuilding in Cambodia and Kosovo

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ABSTRACT

In this article I develop the conceptualisation of affective recognition as a means of deepening understandings of education's contribution to peacebuilding and social justice in conflict-affected contexts. Scholars have highlighted that one of the crises in peacebuilding education today is the failure to understand and harness the role of the transrational and the affective. I therefore bring together feminist theories of social justice and affective economies to analyse non-formal education programmes with young people in Cambodia and Kosovo and develop the concept of affective recognition. I contend that affective recognition demonstrates the central role of affect in enabling processes of peacebuilding and social justice through educational programmes.

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Introduction

Through this article, I propose the concept of 'affective recognition' as a means of deepening understandings of education's contribution to peacebuilding and social justice in conflict-affected contexts. There have long been calls to better comprehend the role of affect and emotions in education; indeed, Cremin, Echavarría, and Kester (2018, 300) argue that one of the crises facing peacebuilding education is 'the dominant reliance on rational forms of learning often inconsistent with the transformative and inclusive purposes of peace education'. I contend that affective recognition demonstrates the central role that affect can play in enabling processes of peacebuilding through education and, in so doing, develop an understanding of this specific articulation of recognition for social justice and peacebuilding.

I establish this conceptualisation of affective recognition by drawing on feminist theories of social justice and affect. I adopt Nancy Fraser's approach to social justice, which argues for the importance of transformative change. Specifically, Fraser's understanding of recognition as status subordination

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describes how misrecognition is perpetrated through institutionalised social patterns, and thus points to the importance of transforming these patterns for peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts (Fraser 1995, 1996, 2000, 2005, 2008a, 2008b, 2017). To understand affect, I draw on the work of Sara Ahmed in particular (Ahmed, 2004). Affect understands emotions and feelings as causal, structuring embodied experiences (Schaefer 2019), and Ahmed identifies that affect has economies that move and circulate, accumulating value over time.

The concept of affective recognition developed organically, through research with young participants in Kosovo and Cambodia who were engaged in non-formal education (NFE) programmes that adopted participatory arts methodologies. The intention of the original research was not to investigate the role of affect, yet these participants frequently referred to developing a visceral, emotional connection with the past through the programmes. This affective engagement enabled a deeper and contextualised recognition of the lived experiences of different groups during conflict – including groups whose narratives are often marginalised or excluded from mainstream 'political and cultural memorial structures' (Hirsch 2012, 33).

Following Ahmed's notion of affective economies, I found that economies of affective recognition in these programmes worked to promote peacebuilding, by deconstructing victim-perpetrator and intergenerational binaries and empowering young people to engage in past, present, and future imaginaries of their respective countries.

This article will develop the conceptualisation of affective recognition and its economies. It will begin with an overview of the literature examining recognition, affect and peacebuilding education. It will then lay out the research context and methodology, before presenting the key findings of this research and developing the notion of affective recognition. Finally, the economies of affective recogntion in the programmes studied will be unpacked, to understand the role of affect in peacebuilding education.

Recognition in social justice and peacebuilding education

In order to examine processes of social justice and peacebuilding, I adopt Fraser's three dimensional conceptualisation of social justice to make the 'presently chaotic scene [of justice and injustice], surveyable and intelligible' (Olson 2008a, 8). This approach centres on notions of redistribution, recognition and representation. Redistribution reflects the economic sphere of (in)justice, which Fraser argues 'is rooted in the political-economic structure of society' (Fraser 1995, 70). Redistributive injustice, or maldistribution, includes exploitation, economic marginalisation and deprivation, and disparities in wealth, income, and leisure time. Recognition reflects the socio-cultural dimension of (in)justice 'rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication' (Fraser 1995, 71). Misrecognition includes cultural domination, non-recognition,

disrespect, and 'institutionalized value patterns that deny some people the status of full partners in interaction – whether by burdening them with excessive ascribed "difference" or by failing to acknowledge their distinctiveness' (Fraser 2001, 29). Representation reflects the political sphere of justice. Fraser highlights two distinct levels of political injustice: Firstly, 'ordinary' political misrepresentation occurs when some people are denied the possibility to participate equally with others in society (Fraser 2008c, 19). Secondly, misframing occurs when the boundaries of a political community are drawn in a way that excludes people from participating in contests over justice and denies the possibility of them pressing justice claims in the political community.

These three dimensions are held together by the normative core of participatory parity, which stipulates that social justice ' ... requires social arrangements that permit all (adult) members of society to interact with one another as peers' (Fraser 1996, 30). Maldistribution, misrecognition and misrepresentation all prevent participatory parity from being achieved. Central to Fraser's argument is the idea that social justice (as participatory parity) necessitates transformative change; a disruption and deconstruction of the underlying structures and frameworks which result in injustices. This differs from affirmative change, which deals only with unjust outcomes, and not the underlying causes of injustice (Fraser 1995, 1996, 2005, 2008c). When applied as a lens to analyse post-conflict initiatives, these notions of affirmative and transformative action draw close parallels with Galtung's (1976) distinction between peacekeeping, focusing on negative peace (the absence of violence), and peacebuilding, focusing on positive and sustainable peace.

Fraser's conceptualisation of recognition is particularly valuable. Whereas many other scholars interpret recognition as a form of group-based identity stigmatisation, focussing on forms of collective identity, Fraser instead conceptualises recognition as a question of social status and status subordination (Feldman 2008; Fraser 2000; Olson 2008b; Zurn 2008). This framing shifts understandings of (mis)recognition away from 'identity, stigma, and self-esteem' (Feldman 2008, 225), which can actually promote misrecognition through imposing a 'single, drastically simplified group-identity' that disregards the complex nature of humans (Fraser 2000, 112). Instead, Fraser focuses on examining institutionalised social subordination, where, through entrenched notions of cultural value, certain actors are rendered 'inferior, excluded, wholly other, or simply invisible – in other words, as less than full partners in social interaction' (Fraser 2000, 113). Misrecognition is therefore perpetrated through social patterns which might be institutionalised through the judicial system, through governmental policies or professional practice, or informally through 'pattern[s] of cultural value' (Fraser 2000, 114).

This approach allows for understandings of misrecognition between groups in the same way that identity-centred approaches to misrecognition can. However, uniquely, it also opens up spaces to understand

misrecognition within groups (Feldman 2008; Zurn 2008) and thus has the potential to better articulate intersectional understandings of misrecognition. In post-conflict societies, an intersectional articulation of (mis)recognition can highlight, for example, the importance of moving beyond state-based narratives of conflict to the lived experiences of individuals through conflict. It reveals the need to push beyond victim-perpetrator binaries to understand the lived realities of individuals and groups that crosscut these binaries, particularly women, during and after conflict. Furthermore, the focus on institutionalised social subordination highlights the state's role in (re)producing subordinated statuses and therefore misrecognition. The conceptualisation of misrecognition can therefore help us to question what, and why, the narratives of certain groups are excluded from a society's 'political and cultural memorial structures' (Hirsch 2012, 33), and how educational and arts initiatives can facilitate or mediate this misrecognition.

Despite the advancements that Fraser's conceptualisation of recognition as social status can offer for exploring social justice and the role of education in post-conflict contexts, it has received criticism for failing to identify exactly what it means to be recognised (Anderson 2008; Kompridis 2008). Kompridis (2008, 260) highlights that there are still uncertainties over the social and political meaning of recognition, that is 'what it means to be "recognized," and so what it is that we are purportedly doing when we are "recognizing" individuals or groups or asking to be "recognized"'. Fraser keeps the definition of recognition broad, advocating for 'different recognition strategies [. . .] depending on the form of injustice encountered' (Feldman 2008, 224). Yet while Fraser's work has been adopted by numerous scholars to explore social justice in and through education, there is a limited understanding of what 'recognition strategies' might apply to different educational contexts. I will argue below that affective recognition is an articulation of a recognition strategy within post-conflict education, that can lead to processes of social justice and peacebuilding.

Fraser's conceptualisation of social justice has been used extensively to examine educational initiatives. Specific to education in post-conflict contexts, it has been adapted by Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, and Smith (2017) into the 4 R framework. In this framework, redistribution refers to addressing inequalities including resource allocation, recognition refers to respecting difference, policies surrounding the language of instruction and recognising cultural and religious identities, and representation refers to ensuring the participation of all groups in education and educational governance. The framework introduces a fourth 'R'; reconciliation, which deals with past, present, and future injustices through education. The authors incorporate reconciliation into their framework as 'postconflict societies may demand putting greater focus on education's potential to address inequalities and prioritize interventions that favor the promotion

of social cohesion and reconciliation[. . .]' (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, and Smith 2019, 4).

The 4 R framework is key to demonstrating the role that education can play in peacebuilding. However, the addition of the fourth R of reconciliation can, in some contexts, be problematic. Findings from a study into art and reconciliation in the Western Balkans found that some groups were extremely reluctant to engage with the concept of 'reconciliation' which was considered an external imposition assuming moral equivalence between actors in conflict (KCL 2018). Thompson, Balfour, and Hughes (2009) highlight that there can be direct tensions between notions of reconciliation and justice, with calls for reconciliation sometimes requiring justice claims to be suspended. Indeed, in this research the notion of reconciliation was used frequently in Cambodia, yet in Kosovo I actively avoided the term as the partners I worked with themselves avoided, and at times admonished, the concept of reconciliation; considering it a Western imposition by which countries in the Global South are held to a higher account than countries in the Global North. I will argue below that conceptualising affective recognition enables an understanding of the ways in which education can contribute to peacebuilding, including through the processes of empathy and attitudinal change highlighted by Novelli et al., whilst retaining a focus on justice that reconciliation may elide.

Affect and peacebuilding education

Affect as a concept is widely used across cultural studies, with a range of definitions. Schaefer (2019, 1–2) argues that there are two 'divergent, and perhaps incommensurable, definitions' of affect. The first 'like unstructured protosensation', separates affect from the realm of consciousness and emotion. The second draws on 'blends of feminism, queer theory, emotion psychology, and phenomenology' that views affect 'as the felt emotional textures structuring our embodied experience'. In this latter perspective affect is causal, allowing for 'an easy interchangeability of affect with terms such as emotion and feeling' (Schaefer 2019, 2). Here, according to Kathleen Stewart, the significance of affect 'lies in the intensities they build and in what thoughts and feelings they make possible' (Stewart 2007, 2–3).

To conceptualise affective recognition, I use the latter of these approaches, borrowing the definition of affect developed in queer studies and feminist cultural studies. I draw strongly on Sara Ahmed's notion of 'affective economies' (Ahmed 2004), which demonstrates that affective responses – those visceral, intense emotions and feelings that individuals experience – *do* something. Affect moves and circulates; this circulation creates possibilities through affect and means that affective value accumulates over time (Ahmed 2004, 120). As Ahmed writes;

> emotions do things, and they align individuals with communities – or bodily space with social space – through the very intensity of their attachments. Rather than seeing emotions as psychological dispositions, we need to consider how they work, in concrete and particular ways, to mediate the relationship between the psychic and the social, and between the individual and the collective. (Ahmed 2004, 119)

Affect therefore needs to be understood not (just) for the affective, emotional, moment itself: adopting Ahmed's approach of affective economies demands exploration of what affect *does*, and how it mediates individual and collective relationships.

Such an approach enables an understanding of the relationship between affect and the formation of power (Schaefer 2019) and is therefore most useful in understanding affect in relation to social (in)justice. In particular, it is best suited to Fraser's conceptualisation of recognition as institutionalised social subordination. Moreover, this conceptualisation is most aligned with the participants of this study's own affective experiences.

There have for a long time been calls in educational scholarship to take emotions seriously as 'an object of educational concern' that themselves are 'ways of knowing, being, and doing' (Boler 1997; Trofanenko 2014, 24). However, these calls have often not found their way into educational practice and such a focus is widely absent from the literature specifically exploring peacebuilding education. Whilst a focus on the psychological, interpersonal relations, and empathy are central to peace education and critical peace education (as opposed to peacebuilding education), this is often at the expense of understanding the structural causes of conflict and violence. Higgins and Novelli (2018, 48) argue that 'by locating the key challenge of peacebuilding in [individual] psyches and personal prepositions, there is a danger of diverting attention away from structural issues of injustice' that drive conflict in a country. This results in programmes that are focussed more on 'pacification than transformation'; peace education initiatives often focus on attitudinal change without learners developing critical skills to challenge and transform the status quo (Higgins and Novelli 2018). Moreover, even within peace education initiatives, there continues to be a reliance on the 'analytic, rational, and psycho-social' (Cremin, Echavarría, and Kester 2018, 299), for instance a focus on equipping learners with new skills and promoting new values.

Peacebuilding education was developed in response to the failure of peace education to engage with structures, as well as in recognition of the negative faces of education in relation to conflict (Bush and Saltarelli 2000; Seitz 2004). Peacebuilding education seeks to address the deeper, structural causes of violence (Bush and Saltarelli 2000). It deals with the manifestations and causes of violence, whilst promoting critical thinking and critical engagement with the past and the present (Lopes Cardozo et al. 2015). Peacebuilding 'involves working towards an environment of inclusivity based on social justice and equity' (Millican et al. 2021, 574).

However, in moving away from the psycho-social and empathy-based approach of peace education, peacebuilding education has continued to focus on the rational, and exclude transrational, embodied and emotional understandings of learning for peace (Cremin, Echavarría, and Kester 2018). In a systematic literature review on youth agency, peacebuilding, and education, for example, Lopes Cardozo et al. (2015) only reference two works which refer to notions of affect and emotion directly in relation to education: Barton and McCully (2012) who advocate for encouraging emotional engagement and empathy in order to encourage curiosity amongst students in Northern Ireland, and Weldon (2010) who discusses how teachers' emotions and trauma impact their teaching in the classroom. This absence has led Cremin et al. (2018, 295) to argue that one of the crises facing peacebuilding education today is 'the dominant reliance on rational forms of learning often inconsistent with the transformative and inclusive purposes of peace education'. The authors argue, therefore, for a transrational approach to peacebuilding education that places greater emphasis on the 'emotional, embodied, and metaphysical aspects of peace learning' (Cremin, Echavarría, and Kester 2018, 299), not least because peace itself 'has embodied, emotional, and spiritual dimensions' (Cremin, Echavarría, and Kester 2018, 300). Trofanenko (2014, 37) similarly writes that notions of affect are 'often neglected within the existing scholarship in history education. There remains a need to investigate the role of emotions/affect and the complexity it holds for learning'.

As the proceeding sections demonstrate, these notions of emotions and affect came to the fore in this research in Kosovo and Cambodia, through young participants frequently and consistently describing the visceral and emotive reactions and connections elicited in the programmes, demonstrating the necessity of developing understandings of the affective in education.

The work of Michalinos Zembylas highlights how affect can be integral to learning and peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts. Zembylas (2006, 308) argues that 'educating toward an understanding of affect opens up possibilities that may cultivate political and ethical sensibilities with transformative and affirmative potential for thinking, feeling, and relating in the classroom'. Zembylas uses affect theory to explore the idea of witnessing in the classroom. Analysing how Greek Cypriot teachers can engage with, and encourage the critical witnessing of, historical trauma resulting from the ethnic conflict between the Greeks and Turks, Zembylas draws on affect to understand witnessing as an 'affective encounter'. Zembylas argues that affective witnessing has the potential to move beyond acts of recognition that might 'other' groups in a society. Instead, affect can enable students to 'become a transformative agent of awareness and reception of Others' trauma' (p.315), demonstrating the importance of understanding affect in and through education for transformative societal change and social justice. Zembylas' pivotal work is the exception

to the rule that affect is currently underexamined and poorly understood in the education and conflict scholarship.

The importance of emotions and affect is, however, embedded more concretely in literature examining the role of the arts in conflict affected contexts. Scholars argue that arts methodologies open spaces for participants to communicate their emotions and in doing so, evoke empathy, which enables the healing of pain and the communication of the harms perpetuated through conflict (Cin et al. 2022; P. Cooke et al. 2022; Lehner 2021; Taylor et al. 2022). Scholars also express the value of arts-based practices in allowing for forms of communication that move beyond language, drawing further parallels with the concept of affect. The arts enable people to express unspeakable events and uses a non-exclusionary form of dialogue that goes beyond the written and spoken word (Pruitt 2011), thus enabling the communal development of new forms of knowledge (Senehi 2002). Harvey, Cooke, and Bishop Simeon Trust (2020, 7) conceptualise this wider form of dialogue as 'transrational voice', exploring how communication and voice takes place beyond spoken or written language, through the arts, play, gestures and objects. However, despite these wider conceptualisations of the transrational and affective, specific understandings of the contribution of affect to social justice and peacebuilding remain difficult to find in the literature analysing arts-based practices in conflict-affected countries.

Research contexts and methodology

The concept of affective recognition expounded in this article was developed through PhD research into programmes working with young people in conflict-affected contexts. The research sought to examine how programmes that work at the intersection of formal education and arts-based programming (understood as articulations of NFE) contribute to processes of social justice and peacebuilding. The drivers of this research focus were two key gaps in the literature: Firstly, whilst there is plentiful literature discussing the role of formal education in peacebuilding, there is a limited understanding of the role that non-formal education plays in peacebuilding (Datzberger 2017). Secondly, there are also limited understandings of how different types of education interact with one another; how, for example, what a young person learns in formal education affects their engagement in NFE programmes and vice versa. Whilst the conceptualisation of affective recognition derived from examining this intersection, an analysis of the wider findings on the intersection of educations is beyond the scope of this article.

The research was based on and embedded within Changing the Story (CTS), a Global Challenges Research Fund Network Plus project that ran from October 2018 – September 2022. The aim of CTS was to support youth-centred approaches to civil society building in conflict-affected countries. CTS

comprised 22 individual projects across 12 conflict-affected settings. This research is based on three of these projects, in two countries: Kosovo and Cambodia. This research received approval from the from the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures Research Ethics Committee at the University of Leeds (Ref: FAHC 18–080). Verbal informed consent was obtained from participants.

In Kosovo, two projects were examined; 'Arts, Critical Thinking and Active Citizenship' (ACT) and 'The Making of the Museum of Education' (MME) both of which engaged students from the University of Prishtina. The ACT programme ran BOOM Zine, a multi-day participatory action research workshop. Participants researched and studied Kosovo's BOOM rock concerts of the 1980s, which, at the time, provided a crucial space for young people 'communicating their message and representing the qualms of their generation' in a period of increasing instability and uncertainty (Krasniqi 2019). Participants co-created either a soundscape, song, animation, or literary text that both interpreted and represented the concerts. These outputs were later combined to create an online zine. MME examined the parallel education system of Kosovo in the 1990s, where Albanian Kosovans, who had been forced out of the formal education system, developed their own education system which was run in people's private homes – or 'house schools'. Participants were taken on a tour of a house school and then collaborated in researching and archiving information about the parallel education system through both archival research, and by conducting interviews with former students and teachers of the schools. The participants reflected on this process through blogs and video diaries, which were combined to create a film about the project. Importantly both projects examined a period of time before the 'official' outbreak of conflict in Kosovo in 1998. They thus engaged students in a history that is not represented in their formal education and provided key insights into the events leading to the outbreak of violent conflict.

In Cambodia, the Anlong Veng Peace Tours programme was examined. Here, CTS worked with a pre-existing programme of the Documentation Centre of Cambodia. The Peace Tours ran in Anlong Veng, the last stronghold of the Khmer Rouge regime and the location of key historical sites including Pol Pot's cremation site, Ta Mok's houses, and a hospital and school built by Ta Mok. Students from teacher training colleges were engaged in participatory filmmaking through the project; they toured Anlong Veng and were then trained in interview and filming techniques and conducted filmed interviews with Anlong Veng's residents, the majority of whom are former lower-level Khmer Rouge cadre, the rest survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime. Lower-level Khmer Rouge cadre are understood as occupying 'politically complex positions as often both "victims and perpetrators" of the Khmer Rouge regime' (Cooke, Hodgkinson, and Manning 2023, 1224), and whilst a national narrative of reconciliation with the group exists in Cambodia, they continue to be ostracised in society (Cooke, Hodgkinson, and Manning 2023; Mayer 2017).

In Cambodia, the young participants were born after the Khmer Rouge regime. In Kosovo, they were either born after the conflict, or were very young children during it; none had directly experienced the periods of time being studied. Marianne Hirsch (2012) refers to this as the 'post-memory generation'; those embedded in political and cultural memory structures that shape both the past and present, whilst often being disconnected from the lived experiences of that past.

In both contexts, the data used to form my analysis derived from document analysis of project documentation, semi-structured in-depth interviews (which were primarily held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic), analysis of existing survey data, and participant observation of project meetings, events, and workshops. In Kosovo, 50 project participants had been asked to complete before and after evaluations of the project, which were analysed. All project participants were then invited to interview, and 13 participants accepted and were engaged in online semi-structured interviews. All participants were students from the University of Prishtina, reflecting the make-up of participants on both projects. Online interviews were also held with four members of the project team.[1]

In Cambodia, all programme participants were asked to complete surveys before, during and after taking part in the programme in the form of pre- and post- tour surveys and daily reflections over the three days of the programme. 196 of these surveys and daily reflections were analysed for this research. In addition, I contacted 40 participants who had been engaged in the most recent trainee-teacher focused peace tours for a follow-up interview. Six agreed to take part, all were working as teachers at the time of the interview. 4 interviews were also held with members of the project team.

Finally, data were also generated through participant observation of numerous meetings, events and workshops in which the Kosovo and Cambodia programme teams have discussed and presented their work. This included in-person and online conferences, in which research was presented publicly, as well as project management meetings and planning meetings, in which the team spoke more openly about their work on the projects.

The data analysis process for this research developed iteratively. An initial analysis of programme documentation and observation of programme meetings informed the development of interview guides for the project teams and project participants. Thematic notes were kept of key issues arising in individual interviews, and themes that overlapped across multiple interviews. These notes were then used in an iterative process to inform the follow-up questions asked in the remaining interviews, as well as to refer back to the programme outputs to analyse connections between the different data sets. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, and inputted alongside programme documentation, surveys and fieldnotes into NVivo. In NVivo the data was coded using open and axial coding. The initial codes were developed based on the original research

questions and open coding of all of the documents was conducted – using the predefined codes, and developing emerging codes through the process. This practice of open coding ensured that unexpected themes and findings could emerge from the data. Indeed, it was as a result of this open coding that the importance of affect was revealed: I consistently found myself coding, in both the surveys and the interviews, data in relation to young people's feelings, their ability to see or imagine the context being discussed, their experiential understandings of the project, and how this contributed to notions of peacebuilding.

Research findings

Participatory methodologies and spaces for knowledge

In the three projects studied, participatory arts were used as a pedagogical tool to engage participants in experiential and participant-led learning. In both contexts, the focus was on micro-level lived experiences of the periods studied. In the surveys and interviews, the young participants discussed that this focus and the participatory process enabled them to learn things that they were not taught through their formal education – where both personal experiences of conflict and political constraints effect what teachers are able to say about the past, and where structural constraints including over-crowded classrooms limit the possibilities of teaching nuanced histories. Crucially, the participatory nature of the projects meant that young people weren't passive learners but were actively engaged as researchers to develop knowledge of these underrepresented experiences and histories, which the participants themselves argued were not part of the 'collective memories' of their country (Interview 1619 MME, Interview 2520 MME).

Positioning young people as knowledge producers through the programme had key implications. Firstly, it enabled the participants to ask questions about the conflicts and lead up to the conflicts in their respective countries. For some young people, it was an opportunity to 'ask them the questions that I want[ed] to know for a long time' (Daily Reflection 2007 PT). For others, particularly for those in Kosovo where many participants reported having little to no awareness of the BOOM concerts and the parallel education system prior to the project, it created the space for questions to emerge. One participant, for example, explained that 'before the project I didn't know what to ask; I didn't know what was going on and I couldn't create questions out of nowhere' (Interview 1311 ACT).

This space and freedom to ask questions meant that young people were also able to reflect on issue that continue to impact their lives today, notably – in both contexts – the actions and experiences of women. This is particularly important because of the heavy focus on the masculine 'heroes' in many conflict-affected contexts. The experiences of women are often 'subsumed

under the grand narrative of the 'whole nation', with a focus on how the nation suffered under conflict (Asavei 2019, 619). Violence therefore continues against women through this lack of acknowledgement of their experiences, often pushing women into spaces of silence. In Cambodia, participants addressed this silence by creating films in which interviewees discuss forced marriages under the Khmer Regime and their lasting effects. Other films reveal the role women played during the conflict – for example carrying artillery and messages across Cambodia. In Kosovo, ACT participants researched the 1980s rockstar Vivien, and discussed feeling 'sad' (Interview 1917 ACT) that they had not known of female rock bands prior to the project but valued the project as 'an outlet to make it [gender] a part of this activism' (Interview 2026 ACT).

Secondly, the process resulted in young people developing a considerably greater understanding of their countries' past. Young people became more aware of the lived experiences of different groups during conflict, as one young person in Cambodia noted; 'firstly I thought that learning history by just reading a book or watching a documentary was enough, but after I participated on the trip, I learn one more thing, and it's the connection with the people, with the living history'. (Interview 1412 PT). They were also able to critically engage in understandings of events that led to conflict and, in line with peacebuilding education, reflect on how 'history might repeat itself if we don't take care of it if we don't promote good stuff and if we promote hate and if we promote propaganda populism' (Interview 2520 MME). In Kosovo, participants noted that the approaches made it 'easy for me to absorb everything that happened and to really make sense of it' (Interview 222 MME). It 'brought the history more, you know, more concrete more pragmatic, and we could actually see that' (Interview 1619 MME).

Strikingly, engaging participatory methodologies to examine the lived experiences of (the lead up to) conflict resulted in an emotional connection with this past. The majority of participants explained engagement in the programme elicited a visceral sense of what it may have felt like to live in Kosovo and Cambodia at the time. In Kosovo, participants stated that engaging in the project 'was like reliving this era again', 'it was like we were there' (Interview 1417 ACT) it 'made it more real' (Interview 1113 ACT). In Cambodia participants expressed that 'I feel as if I have gone through the period. He narrated the hardship and starvation. I am so shocked . . . ' (Daily Reflection 2015 PT). Here we can see that young people developed *affective* responses through engaging with the project.

Affective economies, recognition, and peacebuilding

Reflecting Ahmed's notion of affective economies, the affective responses that the programmes elicited mediated the relationship between the individual participants on the programme and the collective, through promoting

processes of socio-cultural recognition. Participants frequently discussed that, through affectively experiencing the 'realness' of the periods they were studying, they began to better recognise and understand what it meant for different groups to have lived through conflict and violence. Participants, remarked, for example:

> After I talked to them I feel sympathy for them having gone through such hardship in that regime. I feel like I could see what happened when they told me. I am sad for the many lives that was lost. (Daily Reflection 0810 PT)

> So, when they would show pictures and videos and the music and everything, I would just kind of see what my parents had to go through at that time . . . It was so real to see normal people in those videos. And then I would kind of link those videos with stories that I heard from my parents or somebody else that went through that time. And they would just link up so suddenly . . . (Interview 1113 ACT)

Participants in Kosovo explained that the projects enabled them to reflect on what it meant to experience the conflict and fostered intergenerational understanding. They critically engaged with how the conflict might have affected, and continues to effect, the generations who had lived through conflict, how they themselves were raised, and the lasting effects of conflict on their society In Cambodia, these affective encounters began to problematise and disrupt victim-perpetrator binaries. In the pre-tour surveys, many young people discussed feeling 'afraid' and 'angry' about the thought of meeting former members of the Khmer Rouge. However, the majority of young people in the post-tour surveys described this perception changing after interviewing Anlong Veng's residents: participants began to perceive former lower-level Khmer Rouge cadre as complex victims. As one participant explained:

> For me, from the beginning, and before meeting with the Khmer Rouge soldier, I think that he perhaps is the extreme cruel person who had killed the people without compassion. But, after asking and talking with him, then I understood that in reality he is the same as the common people who survived in Khmer Rouge regime . . . (Post-Tour Survey 1409 PT)

This quote exemplifies the experience of many participants in Cambodia, who began to problematise the dichotomy between victims and perpetrators of the Cambodian genocide. Participants described the suffering that lower-level cadre experienced under the Khmer Rouge, and the idea that the cadre were unable to say no to the tasks they carried out, for fear of harm to themselves or their families. One young person explained that they 'could take a breath of relief' having understood that the former cadre 'could not refuse to do any assigned tasks. This act was to save the lives of oneself and family members.' (Post-Tour Survey 1510 PT). Another noted that it became 'hard for me to separate these two groups – victims and cadre' (Post-Tour Survey 0805 PT).

In line with Fraser's definition, the programmes therefore worked to promote socio-cultural recognition. This includes recognition of groups who have experienced social subordination, both in society generally, and in participating in constructing narratives of the past. But more specifically, the programmes enabled what I coin as *affective recognition*; young people affectively recognised the lived experiences of conflict.

Affective recognition in the programmes resulted in young people taking ownership of narratives of the past, with a desire to use these to contribute to continuing struggles for social justice. In Kosovo, participants discussed the importance of embedding these experiences into the collective narratives of the country, and of younger generations learning these histories. They hoped to use the outputs they had created on the projects to achieve these aims, as one participant noted; 'I think animations are a very good way to reach the people, making [it] more simple to explain the history with them that. You can't get that from schools where you actually should have got in the first place' (Interview 1917 ACT). In Cambodia, participants discussed wanting to embed what they had learnt into their teaching and within their communities, stating for example that 'I will share it to the people around me . . . to reach out to each community to know about this' (Post-Tour Survey 2611 PT), and 'As a teacher I will try to teach this history to my students' (Daily Reflection 1720 PT). The programme participants therefore wanted to translate what they had learnt into their own acts of peacebuilding.

Indeed, some participants discussed the importance of affect, and their desire to elicit affective recognition through the outputs they created. In Kosovo, having found photos through their archival work of students who were poisoned, commented: 'It got me so so emotional and maybe I thought if I get emotional, maybe a lot of other people would feel bad, would feel sympathy for the students' (Interview 1619 MME). In Cambodia, another participant explained, when describing the process of creating the short documentaries:

> we wanted them [the residents of Anlong Veng] to express their feelings, their hurt, we really wanted the exact evidence, the exact feeling. And it's really important to take a video and let the young generation see that, because it's really touching . . . they can feel how people who survived from the Khmer Rouge felt. (Interview 3019 PT)

Participants intended for their audiences to affectively learn from the past in order to improve the development of society; not only to prevent violence, but also to recognise and respond to signs of political injustice and therefore contribute to positive peace.

The negative face of affect

As with Bush and Saltarelli's (2000) notion of the positive and negative faces of education, it is important to note that this research demonstrated affect also has

the potential to promote (affective) misrecognition. On the Peace Tours in Cambodia, participants were sometimes presented with problematic versions of history that painted the leaders of the Khmer Rouge, including Pol Pot and Ta Mok, as generous leaders and 'good' people. This is because residents of Anlong Veng still remember Ta Mok as a 'benevolent leader who brought much-needed improvements to the lives of his followers; a sharp contrast to his ruthless reputation as "The Butcher" arising from when he directed several purges prior to and during the DK era.' Mayer (2017, 65).

Hearing such narratives is not bad in itself; it has the potential to open up critical spaces of reflection for young people to question why such narratives exist and who they benefit. Many participants started this process of reflection in their survey responses. However, the affective response that the participatory activities evoked resulted in a handful of young people accepting these narratives at face value. In their post tour surveys, a small number of participants expressed their admiration for Ta Mok's leadership and their perception of him as a 'a good person who was easy-going towards his followers' (Post-Tour Survey 0921 PT). Young people, through affective economies, therefore began to adopt these highly problematic accounts of history. Rather than opening spaces for the recognition of the intense suffering that was experienced through the Khmer Rouge regime, these narratives have the potential to promote deeper misrecognition.

Discussion: affective recognition and peacebuilding

Given the importance of notions of affect in understanding processes in both education and the arts, and as a result of my empirical findings in which young participants discussed their own affective responses to the programmes, I propose the necessity of drawing on affect theory to understand social justice at the intersection of these educations. I argue that affect is a key un(der) examined dynamic at the intersection of education and the arts, that can enhance understandings of the process of social (in)justice and peacebuilding.

As the above section demonstrates, the programmes elicited the multifaceted aspects of affect that can be 'experienced as a pleasure and a shock [. . .] as a sensibility that snaps into place or a profound disorientation' (Stewart 2007, p.2). In particular, they created intense and visceral connections with the past which – borrowing from notions of post-memorial theory – worked to reactivate 'more distant political and cultural memorial structures' (Hirsch 2012, 33); that is, memory structures that focus on the lived experience of (marginalised) groups through conflict. Through the projects young participants developed an *affective recognition* of the socio-cultural experiences they were examining.

This notion of affective recognition enables an understanding of the 'recognition strategies' (Feldman 2008, 224) that might apply in post-conflict education programmes, responding to critiques that Fraser's work fails to clarify 'what

it means to be "recognized"' (Kompridis 2008, 260). It is particularly pertinent to understanding processes of recognition in post-conflict societies where young people are often disconnected from the lived experiences of conflict, and yet live in societies that are deeply shaped by this conflict (Hirsch 2012).

Ahmed's theorisation of affect reminds us to examine the economies of affect; what affect does, and how it mediates relationships. Stewart's definition also reminds us that the power of affect lies in what the elicited feelings make possible. This research demonstrates that the economies of affective recognition in post-conflict education can contribute to transformative social justice and peacebuilding. Ahmed (2004, 119) writes that emotions 'bind subjects together' they 'work by sticking figures together (adherence), a sticking that creates the very effect of a collective (coherence)'. This process of adherence and coherence is reflected in the role that affective recognition played in disrupting socially constructed binaries through the programmes. Affective recognition also worked to bind young people to new collective narratives about the past. These narratives moved away from governmental accounts that often focus on the suffering of a country as a whole, or on the role of (usually male) combatants or 'heroes'. Instead, they explored the day-to-day lives and experiences of people, including marginalised groups. Binding through affective recognition resulted in a desire amongst the participants to create and embed new collective narratives that centred on the promotion of socially just and transformative recognition.

Participants themselves wanted to elicit (affective) recognition in the audiences of their outputs, as they saw its potential in contributing to processes of peacebuilding. This process highlights the role that affective recognition played in politically empowering young people as peacebuilders: It resulted in them taking ownership of narratives of the past, understandings of the present, and conceptualisations of the future in their respective countries. The economies of affective recognition in the programmes therefore worked to mediate wider societal narratives about the past, embedding greater recognition. This demonstrates that affective recognition can contribute to transformative change; working to correct 'inequitable outcomes [. . .] by restructuring the underlying generative framework' (Fraser 1995, 82) which produces these outcomes and in which certain histories and experiences are marginalised.

This economy of affective recognition does draw parallels with ideas of reconciliation, which Novelli et al. (2017, 24) argue is an important factor, alongside redistribution, recognition and representation, in the 'potentially transformative role education can play' in post-conflict contexts. As above, Novelli et al's notion of reconciliation is based on 'addressing conflictual and fractured relationships', which includes 'Changes in how people relate to, and their attitudes towards, one another'. In Cambodia, the problematisation of victim-perpetrator binaries pertinently demonstrates this process, and how it was reached through affective recognition. Conceptualising affective

recognition and its economies therefore enables an understanding of how processes akin to reconciliation can be achieved through educational initiatives, and thus their specific contribution to peacebuilding. However, it also demonstrates that rather than reconciliation being considered a part of the transformative or peacebuilding process, reconciliation should be conceptualised as being a *result* of transformative social justice. In the programmes, affective recognition complicated narratives of identity and contributed to cultural and attitudinal change, *enabling* processes of peacebuilding and reconciliation: processes of reconciliation were achieved as a result of transformative affective recognition.

Turning to the negative face of affective recognition, it should not be surprising that affective economies in post-conflict contexts have negative as well as positive faces. Indeed, Ahmed's (2004) conceptualisation of affective economies examines how affect works to 'other' groups in society and spread fear and hatred. The adherence and coherence that Ahmed describes creates 'us' and 'them' distinctions based on race, religion, and borders. Whilst these specific dynamics were not present in this research, the use of the arts to promote emotive, affective, responses in audiences that work to other, demonise, marginalise, and ultimately promote violence against a particular group, or groups in society through propaganda is well understood. In Cambodia, for example, the Khmer Rouge indoctrinated followers with songs and theatre performances that denounced enemies of the revolution, and portrayed peasants as the only rightful group within society (Delano and Knottnerus 2018). Whilst affective recognition can be an articulation of socially just recognition in post-conflict countries, it can also have a negative face and manifest as affective misrecognition when the narratives that promote affective responses are themselves unjust.

Conclusion

In this paper I have argued for a conceptualisation of affective recognition, drawing together Fraser's 3-dimensional framework of social justice, Novelli's et al. (2017) application of this for peacebuilding education, and feminist affect theory. I have demonstrated that affective recognition develops key insights into the processes that enable education to contribute to peacebuilding and social justice. Following Cremin et al. (2018), affective recognition demonstrates the importance of attending to the transrational, alongside the rational and cognate, for peacebuilding in and through education. It highlights the interconnected nature of the structural and the affective and, in doing so, extends the focus of (critical) peace education on interpersonal relationships to demonstrate how, through affective recognition, individuals' relationships with the collective can be mediated for transformative (and structural) social change and peacebuilding.

Affective recognition therefore develops existing understandings of the articulation of recognition for social justice and peacebuilding in formal and non-formal education and reveals how processes of social justice and peacebuilding are achieved in these settings. Affective recognition allows an analysis of peacebuilding in and through education that creates space to examine the positioning of reconciliation, by arguing that reconciliation is an outcome, and not a cause, of transformative social change. This ensures that peacebuilding education remains centred on understandings of social justice.

Adding a cautionary note to this conclusion, it is worth questioning whether affective recognition would lose its radical, transformative nature if it became an end goal in projects. Reflecting on the idea of the 'tyranny of participation' is useful here. Scholars argue that participatory approaches – initially considered as locally driven interventions – are increasingly being co-opted by international organisations, who adopt the terminology of participation whilst continuing to push top-down, neoliberal, status-quo agendas (B. Cooke and Kothari 2001; P. Cooke and Soria-Donlan 2020; Flower and Kelly 2020). This results in projects 'circumnavigating rather than changing powerful political structures that generate inequality' (Flower and Kelly 2020, 225). It is worth questioning whether the notion of affective recognition might have this same internal paradox. In other words, perhaps the transformative potential of affective recognition lies in its organic production from interactions between different groups. It seems plausible that if organisations co-opt the processes that lead to affective recognition, the dominant narratives within a society, or dominant international practices, could continue to be the focus of programmes, and attempts to promote 'affective recognition' could instead result in continued, or exacerbated, misrecognition.

Note

1. The online interviews with young people in Kosovo were conducted with a PDRA, Mary Drosopoulos, who had been hired by the project teams for a separate but related 'consolidating learning project' to ensure young people did not need to be interviewed twice given the constraints on their time during the pandemic.

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