Opening to the World: Translocal Post-War Reconstruction in Northern Sri Lanka

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The world turned its attention to Sri Lanka when the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) decided to sign a ceasefire agreement in February 2002. The peace process, brokered by facilitators at the initiative of the Norwegian government, gave rise to a glimmer of hope that a lasting solution might be found for the almost twenty year old conflict. It opened up new perspectives for the entire country in political, social, and economic terms. The Ceasefire Agreement brought about considerable prospects for relief and reconstruction in the war-devastated North and East of the country.

The Jaffa peninsula in the far North deserves special attention among the war-affected areas in the North and East of Sri Lanka. For the first time after twelve years, this almost exclusively Tamil-inhabited region regained a connection to the world. Linked to the mainland by only a small strip of land called "Elephant Pass", the peninsula was isolated in terms of infrastructure. For civilians, Jaffna remained inaccessible and people living there had to face severe troubles when leaving the peninsula. Ship and flight services sometimes operated only to a very limited extent, and illegal land/sea routes were extremely dangerous. Telecommunication and electricity were defunct for several years. After the Ceasefire Agreement, the parties decided to open the land route. This was the A 9 highway crossing the LTTE-controlled Vanni region. Despite several security-related obstacles civilians were able to travel between Jaffna and Sri Lanka's South and all kinds of essential and luxury goods could be transported into the devastated peninsula.

The reopening constituted a unique momentum in Jaffna's history. Access to Jaffna was regained, and translocal relations that made Jaffna a space for social change and development were established. This reopening constituted the moment at which Jaffna began to have access to all kinds of globalised knowledge. Of outstanding significance were the various efforts made by various actors with regard to post-conflict reconstruction and development. The need to rebuild and

"develop" the peninsula activated different actors in the realm of formal development cooperation and reinforced the massive commitment of the globally dispersed Tamil diaspora.

This chapter aims at exploring the various dimensions of translocal interactions related to post-conflict development. It attempts to show how the reopening has intensified translocal interactions which constitute an important feature of Jaffna's integration into world society. With "world society" I refer to the integratedness of the world as a whole, as a single social system which is thought of as one single entity (Wobbe 2000: 10). The peace process in Sri Lanka marks an event in the world society (*Weltereignis*), because it was recognised globally and the relevant actors in Sri Lanka were well aware of this. There has been a reciprocal recognition of the event and its protagonists on the one hand, and the global public (*Weltöffentlichkeit*) on the other. On this basis I argue that the development and reconstruction process in Jaffna led to its re-integration into world society. This re-integration was realised through the proliferation of flows of goods, knowledge and information, images, and people between Jaffna and other parts of the world. At the same time, these flows lead to processes of closure and a reaffirmation of boundaries, localities and identities (Meyer/Geschiere 1999). These processes of closure will be discussed in the latter part of this article.

I first present a rather general introduction into the background of the conflict. The recent history of Jaffna will be followed by a description of the main actors and of their commitment to Jaffna's reconstruction. This leads us to the analytical framework, which helps me to explore the inclusion of Jaffna's reconstruction and development process into world society. The concept of the arena, as it has been used in development sociology (Long 2000, 2001), is a useful tool to capture the various relationships between localised settings, and a place targeted by development efforts certainly is a locality.[1] Secondly, I will map the positions of the various actors who participate in the localised development project. The Tamil diaspora has emerged as a considerably strong and diversified actor. Various organisations, associations, and individuals interact with local stakeholders according to different rationalities. These actors have their own ideas and aims, and they use diverse networks, relationships, organisational belongings, and so forth for the realisation of initiatives and projects. Another cluster of very important actors are those representing international development cooperation. All kinds of multilateral, bilateral, and non-governmental organisations (funded by governments in the so-called developed world) contribute to the process in different ways. Here I will limit myself to a rather narrow introduction into their positions within the arena of Jaffna. Finally, I will show how these diversified in-

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1   A number of scholars have argued that localities are relational and contextual categories and are constructed according to the very different rationalities of those involved in the process (Appadurai 1996; Pfaff-Czarnecka 2005) How Jaffna is constructed as a locality by various actors is beyond the scope of this paper and is explored elsewhere (Gerharz 2007; 2008).

teractions lead to local processes of social change which are beyond the rather technical aims of reconstructing and developing.

The Field: A Translocal Development and Reconstruction Arena in Sri Lanka's North

Almost 20 years of war (1983-2002) between the Sinhala-dominated government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were mainly justified on the basis of insurmountable boundaries between different groups. Sinhala, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers[2] speak different languages and belong to different religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity.[3] Consecutive ethnicisations in the process of state and nation building before and after independence can be regarded as the main trigger for the bloody ethnic conflict. Fernando (1999: 77) notes in this context that "the state has become not only a field of ethnic conflict but also its main instrument". Resulting from unequal access to education and administrative posts during colonial rule, which benefited the Tamil minority, the Sinhalese majority collectively suffered from a minority complex (Wilson 2000: 5). Thus, immediately after independence, ethnic difference was already a decisive identity marker in politics and everyday-life. This led to an increasing polarisation between Sinhalese and Tamils. Different exclusionary political moves by the Sinhala-dominated government, such as the "Sinhala Only Policy" introduced in 1956, reinforced anti-state resentments among the Tamil minority living predominantly in the northern and eastern parts of the island. The LTTE emerged out of a youth movement based in Jaffna as a result of increasing marginalisation and frustration over limitations of their rights as citizens and as a minority.

Three so-called Eelam Wars were fought between the government forces and the LTTE between 1983 and 2002. Various aspects, such as its initially productive relationships to various important supporters in neighbouring India, intensified relationships with other insurgent groups worldwide and a strong, autocratic leadership allowed the LTTE to grow into a mature military force. Most supportive has probably been the formation of a globally dispersed Tamil diaspora consisting of those who emigrated for educational and economic reasons before the war and those who have left Sri Lanka as refugees since the early 1980s. At least 400,000 Sri Lankan Tamils live in European countries and North America[4]

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2 Burghers are Sri Lankans supposedly of European descent.
3 According to the census of 1981 Sri Lanka's population consists of 74 per cent Sinhala, 12.7 per cent Sri Lankan Tamils. 5.5 per cent Indian Tamils, and 7 per cent Moors. The rest constitute Burghers, Malays and others. A more recent census for Sri Lanka including the war-zones is not available.
4 Gunaratna states that the Sri Lankan Tamil population living in North America, Europe, India, Africa, Middle East and Australasia numbers an estimated 770,000 people (Gunaratna 2001: 2).

(Cheran 2000: 186) and Oceania, Africa, the Middle East and India. The LTTE and its various aligned organisations have created a global support network. They have done so by exploiting and perpetuating the collective consciousness of being a Sri Lankan Tamil on the basis of language, ethnicity, caste and religion (Cheran 2001: 9). Constructing history and memory through practices such as media work, public meetings, rallies, and ritual performance, the LTTE could exert social and political control in the diaspora communities (Cheran 2001: 15). This opened up the possibility of interlinking these practices with fundraising for the war activities, but also for humanitarian purposes and relief. Apart from these so-called collective remittances, sending individual remittances to relatives at home was an essential practice making survival possible. In Northern Sri Lanka, especially Jaffna, large parts of the population depended on remittances. According to Sri Lankan government estimates, LTTE overseas fundraising amounts to 80 million US$ annually (Wayland 2004: 421). But the process of diaspora formation has not only led to effective funding, it has also reinforced a collective feeling of emotional attachment and shared responsibility for the "homeland". As we will see later, this is an important prerequisite for translocal development initiatives.

By the end of 1999, the arms race among the Sri Lankan Army (SLA) and the LTTE led to a no-win-situation. Both sides, and the international community observing the conflict, realised that no military solution is possible. Norwegian mediators supported the negotiation of the Ceasefire Agreement of February 2002. The international community greatly appreciated the newly opened space for a peaceful settlement and attempted to support this by providing positive incentives. Various multi- and bi-lateral development cooperation partners provided huge amounts of money for reconstruction and development in order to create a "peace-dividend" for the war-affected Sri Lankan populations. This, however, aimed at stabilising the ground situation for sustainable peace.[5] As a result, the CFA period saw ample planning and implementation efforts in the field of development cooperation especially in the North and East, but also in other parts of Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, this strategy did not prove successful. The initial enthusiasm for peace declined and from 2004 onwards a "shadow war" determined the fragile situation (Hellmann-Rajanayagam 2007: 124). The space for sustainable peace diminished successively and fighting broke out alongside a number of political killings. The road to Jaffna was closed again in August 2006. In January 2008 the government unilaterally declared the Ceasefire Agreement to be defunct.

Within the period of the Ceasefire, the peninsula Jaffna was regarded as a prime location for development and reconstruction efforts for various reasons. First, the towns and villages of the peninsula were severely damaged during the conflict and large parts of the infrastructure, including schools, health facilities,

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5   This strategy was called "Kilinochchi consensus" by Sriskandarajah (2004) who argued that the idea was also to demonstrate international support.

public building, power and telephone supply were destroyed. The local economy was in a state of almost complete ruin. About 80,000 houses were damaged or completely destroyed (Halbach 2003: 171). Large parts of the population suffered and still suffer from war-related trauma (Somasundaram 1998). There was an urgent need to start reconstruction, rehabilitation and development as soon as possible. Secondly, the peninsula inhabited almost entirely by Tamils has always been the capital of Sri Lankan Tamil culture and heritage. It was, at the same time, the centre of advanced education from which the Tamils have benefited since colonial times. This reinforced the emergence of Jaffna as the centre of a Sri Lankan Tamil educated class and, in the light of increasingly limited minority rights and access to resources, as the place of origin of about 90 per cent of the Tamils living abroad (Gunaratna 2001: 2). Thirdly, due to its isolation, Jaffna was difficult to access for the humanitarian and development organisations operating in the other parts of Sri Lanka. After 1995, a UN Emergency Task Force was established to monitor the situation. In 1996, there was a major initiative to provide assistance to Jaffna (Foster 2003: 157). At that time, donors pledged a lot of money for humanitarian assistance. Only after 1999 did intensified fighting break out again in Jaffna and most organisations withdrew from the peninsula. The re-opening in April 2002, however, offered the possibility of operating in Jaffna relatively unhindered.

Jaffna's situation after the 2002 CFA, however, was characterised by very particular conditions. The interplay between previous isolation for twelve years, its significance as the main locality of reference for the globally dispersed Tamil diaspora and its prominence among the donors invites us to investigate the emergence of translocal interactions. The fact that these interactions were made possible "all of a sudden" creates an interesting research perspective. This appears to be especially true considering that Jaffna was cut off from the processes of globalisation which the other parts of Sri Lanka have faced from the late 1970s onwards (Hettige 2000).[6] Since the 1990s the lives of most Sri Lankans have changed with the import of fridges, washing machines, computer facilities, satellite TV, tourists, and associated globalised culture and lifestyles. Jaffna remained almost untouched by this integration into world society. The re-opening created a fascinating situation of catching up with the rest of the world. Very soon after April 2002, mobile phones were operating in Jaffna, satellite TV was broadcast, internet cafes mushroomed, globalised brands like Coca Cola, Nestle and Maggi were available everywhere. The first supermarkets emerged next to shops for computers and electronic devices. People were talking about the latest events in the war against the Iraq in 2003. Huge crowds of foreigners entered the peninsula

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6   In the 1977 elections the United National Party with its liberalisation programme came into power. The related economic reforms led to the intensification and diversification of Sri Lanka's external links which affected the significance of the nation-state as the dominant framework for identification and ideological orientation for many people (Hettige 1998: 8).

which led to the growth of guesthouses and hotels. Not just researchers, but also journalists, business people, and tourists started to travel to Jaffna. The 2004 edition of the "Lonely Planet" even promoted Jaffna as the latest hottest spot in the Sri Lankan tourism paradise and provided an extra section on it. Apart from the changes related to everyday-life, contact with foreigners, consumption and access to globalised media, a number of significant changes in the field of development took place.

Given this diverse landscape of the actors shaping the process of integrating Jaffna into world society, it is necessary to define a clear analytical framework which enables the observer to understand the complex dynamics of interaction leading to various societal changes. The concept of an arena as developed by development sociologist Norman Long (2001: 59), appears to be useful:

"arenas are social locations or situations in which contests over issues, resources, values, and representations take place... That is, they are social and spatial locations where actors confront each other, mobilise social relations and deploy discursive and other cultural means for the attainment of specific ends, including that of perhaps simply remaining in the game".

The concept of arena allows us to take a look at social relations and interactions. It provides an analytical tool for ordering the material, for setting action into context. It is open enough to bring very different dimensions into focus. Goetze (2002: 58) argues in this context:

"it is the notions of domain and arena that permit the analysis of the processes of ordering, regulating and contesting social values, relations, resource utilisation, authority and power".

Recognising the fact that we are particularly interested in interactions which transcend the boundaries of the locality of Jaffna, it is necessary to re-think the nature of the interactions since these are embedded into the context of world society. We regard world society as a global space because world society refers to a perspective which encompasses the totality of all social relations[7] and it is constituted by all kinds of flows of commodities, people, capital, technologies, information and images (Long 2001: 214). These flows cross territorial boundaries. This entails constant processes of social change on a global scale.

At the same time, it is important not to forget that the "local" dimension is still highly relevant when analysing the development and reconstruction processes in Jaffna: Development is regarded as a local project because it is the local infrastructure which has been destroyed and it is the local "Jaffna Tamil society" who are the beneficiaries of this project. It is the clearly defined locality of Jaffna

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7   See the introduction of this volume for a more concise discussion of the term world society.

which is the reference point for everything, the Tamil diaspora coming from Jaffna and calling themselves "Jaffna Tamil" (Wilson 1994) and the development organisations which contribute to the construction of the locality by defining their project as locations and naming their projects. All activities taking place in the realm of development and reconstruction target concrete, localised objects, be it schools, hospitals, roads, and NGOs members as areas of intervention. Therefore, it is necessary to look at interactions as inter-linkages between global and local spaces. Robertson (1995) introduced the term "glocalisation", which nicely captures the interrelatedness of the local and the global scale. This also means that the local is to a large extend shaped by flows at a translocal or super-local level (Robertson 1995: 26).

Using the concept of "translocal" rather than the more familiar and well elaborated concept of the "transnational" (Bash/Glick Schiller/Szanton Blanc 1994; Faist 2003; Pries 2001 among others) has several conceptual advantages in this specific case. It also diverts our attention to a slightly different perspective (see Gudrun Lachenmann's contribution in this volume). Instead of highlighting the significance of flows transcending the boundaries of the nation-state, I see the locality as the major unit of analysis. This is of special importance in the context of Jaffna, because the integration of the peninsula into the nation-state remains contested, even after the CFA (Ceasefire Agreement). The translocal perspective also takes into account the critique of methodological nationalism elaborated by Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002).[8] Translocality, however, opens up the possibility of applying a more encompassing research perspective but allows us to focus on a specific object of research. These phenomena transcending all kinds of boundaries are at the centre of attention (Freitag/von Oppen 2005).

Focussing on development and reconstruction efforts Jaffna, the concept of arena has great analytical value. The arena is a space for interactions between all the kinds of actors who participate in the project of reconstructing and developing Jaffna. This arena is embedded into translocal space, because it is constituted by negotiations of a variety of actors who are not confined to the locality. In focus, however, are the relational and processual aspects which cross the territorial and symbolic boundaries of the locality. We can thus speak of a translocal development arena which is constituted by flows, interactions and negotiations of whatever the actors consider to be development.

Diaspora Commitment to Development

Research on diaspora-local relations before the CFA has shown that the Tamil diaspora was organised systematically with the goal of supporting the armed resist-

8   The focus on national societies as it has been applied in social sciences has also been especially criticised by those who have worked on the notion of world society in the German context. See for example Schimank (2005).

ance of Tamil organisations fighting for the Tamil cause (Radke 2004: 248). Fundraising and actions expressing solidarity were at the core of these transnational activities and were centralised by the LTTE especially. At the same time, various scholars have described how organisations and groups were formed by members of the diaspora. Some of them provided humanitarian assistance to the Tamils remaining in the homeland and who were being affected by the war.[9] The landscape of these organisations is quite diverse. Individuals and organisations concerned with development and reconstruction of the homeland can be categorised according to different dimensions of interaction.

The first dimension consists of interactions in the field of religious institutions. Not all Sri Lankan Tamils believe in Hinduism. Some follow different forms of Christianity, particularly Catholicism. Christian Tamils have formed groups which raise funds and generate support for the physical reconstruction of religious institutions and development of related social institutions such as orphanages or other organisations aiding weaker segments of the local society. By interacting closely with religious institutions, such as the local branch of Caritas for example, development projects are financed by diaspora members. Research has shown that personal contacts play a very important role in the manifestation of such projects, but belonging to the Church as a global institution is also very relevant. There are examples of Christian Tamils living abroad who have established contact with churches in their town of residence. In these cases "native" volunteers work together with Tamils to provide assistance for the reconstruction of social institutions in Northern Sri Lanka.

These established structures did not change much after the Ceasefire. At the same time it could be observed that, among the Hindu communities, practices of exchange and support were transformed considerably. Hindu Tamils in the diaspora formed associations to support temples in their home villages. These contacts link them to those who have stayed behind as well as to those who have migrated. After the Ceasefire, such spontaneous initiatives greatly increased. Diaspora members collected money to aid the reconstruction of temples and related social projects. This increase can partly be explained by the rise of communicative linkages between the homeland and the diaspora. After 2002 it was possible to communicate via media such as telephone and internet. The hope, that the peace process would be successful, created the impression that the invested resources would not get lost in renewed fighting. Religious events like festivals also attracted diaspora Tamils to make personal visits. The temple festival in Jaffna's most important temple in Nallor was attended by thousands of visitors during the Ceasefire. Transport facilities to Jaffna were fully booked far in ad-

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9   These activities are strongly tied to processes of safeguarding memory and preserving identity, which have been analysed for the Canadian Tamil diaspora by Cheran (2001; 2000), the Swiss Tamil diaspora by McDowell (1996) and for the Norwegian context see Fuglerud (2001). As such, these processes are a feature of "diaspora" itself (see for example Clifford 1994 and Brubacker 2005).

vance. Temple festivals are always fundraising occasions. Another important temple attracting diaspora members was the one in Tellipillai. This temple is devoted to Durga Devi and said to help in cases of infertility and in finding suitable marriage partners. After the Ceasefire, the numbers of visitors and the funds donated on these occasions rose considerably. Although the temple always had an extraordinarily good income due to its multiple translocal linkages to diaspora groups[10] worldwide, its financial situation was greatly enhanced and various new projects were initiated during the time of this research.

Diaspora support for school reconstruction was a second important dimension in the reconstruction process. Education has a high value among the Jaffna Tamils. This can be explained by the peninsula's historical position as Sri Lanka's educational centre.[11] So-called Old Boys Associations (OBA)[12] for almost all higher level schools follow the British tradition of maintaining contact with one's school by forming alumni networks. OBAs provided primarily financial support. Especially the OBAs bigger schools have become translocal and maintain branches in Colombo and overseas. Some Old Boys are so numerous in particular places that they form networks and comprise branches in several different countries. Others are quite dispersed and primarily maintain contact with their school without relying on institutionalised structures in their country of residence. After the CFA the commitment of OBAs to support Jaffna's schools exploded. Having the opportunity to visit Jaffna primarily for family reunions, many Old Boys also paid visits to their former schools. Confronted with the large-scale destructions and the many shortages, Old Boys immediately organised financial and material support. Several schools received IT equipment, sports kit, funds for re-building class rooms, science labs, sports grounds, and scholarships for individual students. One school received money to buy the land necessary for expansion. Several schools discovered the potential of the internet and other forms of long-distance communication. Numerous web-pages can be found introducing the schools, their OBAs, the persons involved in these as well

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10 I had the chance to interview the management president and chairperson of the temple society intensively and learned that she used to travel to different diaspora centres in Australia, Great Britain and Canada to deliver speeches and to network with Tamil Hindu communities.

11 Various authors have shown that education has great significance in Jaffna. This is a result of the impact of Christian missionaries during the colonial period. These missions started to establish a high-quality school system, which let to the emergence of competition between Christians and Hindus (Gunasingham 1999; Hellmann-Rajanayagam 1990). The importance of education was also emphasised by numerous interviewees during fieldwork.

12 I use the term Old Boys Associations because it was used by the interviewees and is, in many cases, also the official designation used by the associations themselves. There are also Old Girls Associations, but only from a very few schools. Most schools have been mixed and the old girls have been absorbed under the term "old boys".

as their projects.[13] Although a "jungle" of internet-based presentations has emerged during recent years, the main goal seems to be the initiation of support and finance from other globally dispersed Old Boys and Girls. This is done through spreading information, announcing events, telling stories about the school's history, providing photo-galleries, and discussion forums. This process of networking has strengthened the bargaining position of the local actors in the reconstruction processes. In some cases, overseas OBAs were formed at the initiative of the school principal who visited the community abroad. In other cases, local OBAs and School Development Societies actively encouraged funding by sending "wish-lists" to Tamil organisations abroad.

So-called home village associations (HVA), having gained much attention in the current debate about migration and development (Guarnizo/Smith 1998), function according to a similar logic. Like diaspora branches of OBAs HVAs are formed as an expression of solidarity. Cheran describes how charity and philanthropy are the main motivation for establishing Canadian Tamil HVAs. Many started to function as social clubs and were transformed into development organisations after the Ceasefire Agreement (Cheran 2007: 288). Some of these organisations, which quite often employ the suffix "friendship society" in addition to the village's name, use print and electronic media to inform others about their activities and to network. They use funding strategies similar to those of OBAs and temple societies. In practice they sometimes overlap, but since they are not related to a particular type of insitution, they can easily switch roles depending on the needs in the respective village. Examples of HVA support which I came across during fieldwork, were based on fisherman societies and rural development societies, the organisation of private tuition classes, provision of scholarships for students, and the reconstruction of community centres. Like OBAs HVAs mainly rely on personal networks. Following the CFA, solidarity with the village was expressed through personal visits, even if no family members were living in the village any longer. This resulted in many initiatives by diaspora Tamils.

The forms of translocal interaction established by institutions such as Home Village Associations, Old Boys Associations and Temple Societies were highly localised and place-based. They were rooted in the maintenance of emigrants' solidarity with their place of origin, which might be related to a sense of nostalgia and the desire to assist people in the villages back home who struggle during and after war (Cheran 2007: 288). This is in contrast to the LTTE-dominated development initiatives, which are rooted in translocal interaction as well, but which follow a different rationale.

Support for local NGOs is a widespread phenomenon among the Tamil diaspora, but very much dominated by a particular organisation. Nevertheless, it could be observed that representatives of local NGOs in Jaffna attempted to raise

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13 See for example the very detailed page of the Jaffna Hindu College, December 10, 2007 (http://www.jhcobajaffna.com).

funds in the diaspora. All the representatives interviewed reported that this is a difficult task. As a result, they developed innovative strategies to realise diaspora commitment either by utilising personal networks, or by linking these to other fields. One NGO representative reported that she utilises the yearly temple festival for fund-raising, which was easy for her as a member of the temple society in her village. After the CFA many villagers living in the diaspora visited the temple festival and it is compulsory in these circumstances to donate money. Since the temple had already been rebuilt, this NGO representative campaigned for her organisation's projects by arguing that the temple was rich enough at that point and that people should do something for children and the other beneficiaries of the NGO. This empirical case shows religious based charity becomes interlinked with "professional" development work of NGOs which is rather uncommon. Though several NGOs tried to gain access to diaspora funds, they faced severe difficulties because this particular field had already been occupied by the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO).

Established as the LTTE's developmental and humanitarian wing, TRO is the largest NGO in Sri Lanka's North-East and the organisation with the best translocal organisational set-up. According to Gunaratna (2001) there are fifteen TRO offices throughout the world, the headquarter in Kilinochchi and a branch in Colombo. The overseas offices provide information about the situation in Sri Lanka and raise funds for TRO's development and reconstruction projects. According to TRO's Annual Report of 2002 the organisation received more than half of its budget, a share which is labelled as "foreign income", in the form of material and financial donations. TRO organises a range of activities in the receiving countries in order to attract Tamils to donate for community work in the North-East. These activities are strongly influenced by LTTE's political ideology (McDowell 1996). At the same time, TRO pioneered a new development in the translocalisation of development and reconstruction which has been discussed as knowledge transfer in the recent migration-development debate. Diaspora volunteers helped in various fields such as management and capacity-building of the organisation and engineering in infrastructure projects. Social skills and language skills for translation purposes were also in demand. Other local NGOs discovered the usefulness of diaspora knowledge. In some interviews I was told that networking aids local NGO workers in asking diaspora Tamils for advice in questions related to the implementation of projects where engineering skills for example are required.

Another phenomenon which emerged after the CFA is comparable, and closely related to the integration of skilled migrants in the reconstruction work of NGOs. Diaspora professional have formed networks and organisations on the basis of their profession and support local institutions. The most significant are diaspora Tamils who are medical professionals. Organisations like the Tamils

Health Organisation (THO), the Medical Institute of Tamils (MIOT)[14] and the Tamil Medical Institute (TAMMED) encourage Tamil medical doctors in diaspora countries to network.[15] MIOT, for example, has branches in Canada and the UK. These associations collect money and other donations in the countries were diaspora Tamils live through charity events, or other forms of fund-raising and they support medical institutions in Sri Lanka's North and East by providing cash and material donations. They also send members to different places in North East Sri Lanka (see also Cheran 2007: 291). During fieldwork I met several medical doctors who spent their holidays working as volunteers in Sri Lanka's North. These professionals help to reduce waiting lists for surgeries in existing hospitals, provide training for local staff in specialised areas in which local capacities are lacking or are engaged in developing new or rebuilding old medical institutions which have been destroyed during the war.

Although these medical associations also function like HVAs and OBAs on the basis of solidarity and commitment to Sri Lanka's war-ravaged North-East, there are certain important differences. Medical associations may network with local actors in Sri Lanka on the basis of personal and professional relationships. One example was cooperation between MIOT and a local NGO, which came into existence because the NGO director's sister worked at the MIOT office in London. But generally, I observed that the medical associations paid little attention to their members' place of origin. This may be related to the fact that they were formed by professionals and not on the basis of common roots in one locality. This makes them more flexible in choosing their project locations and is also related to political loyalties. Attracting these non-locality based associations is important for the LTTE which attempts to integrate diaspora development initiatives into their nation-building project. Since Jaffna did not belong to the LTTE-controlled area and it was unlikely that it could be regained, the LTTE concentrated on the Vanni located south of Jaffna in their state-building efforts. But because most diaspora members come from Jaffna and concentrate their commitment on projects in Jaffna, the LTTE faces the challenge of attracting diaspora funding for the Vanni. OBAs and HVAs have been formed on the basis of memory of their members' sensory experience in the place and childhood memories. Often a feeling of obligation to the institution where the individual gained the opportunities which enabled him/her to become successful after migration also plays a role. One interviewee for example expressed: "I love this place although I have lived abroad for 34 years. I got free education here from kindergarten onwards and I need to give something back". With regard to temples interviewees also mentioned that the obligation derives from the hope

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14 For detailed information see MIOT's webpage December 12, 2007 (http://www. miotyf.org/contents).

15 There are many other organisations based in different diaspora countries. Some are more specialised like the Cancer Aid in North & East (Sri Lanka) UK, and the Jaffna General Hospital Development Organisation (which is based in Jaffna).

that donating to the temple is thought to aid personal salvation. Networks and organisations like those run by medical doctors under contract are less motivated by the importance of a specific place or the place based institution, but rather related to the ethos of professionals in the field of medicine combined with a non-place-based Tamil identity. This also explains the strong emphasis on the TRO as a dominant NGO in translocal networking, which is also related to the fact that the LTTE, as a non-state actor is not eligible to receive funds for donor organisations directly because it is not an officially recognised partner.

The analysis so far has been concentrated on flows of financial support, know-how, people, and ideas, but this does not mean that the interactions were always smooth and uncomplicated. Although the transfer of funds was largely unproblematic, there were also disappointed local actors who felt deprived, and there were conflicts over priorities chosen. The NGO representative, who diverted the funds meant for the temple, to the NGO projects managed to avert conflict over the deployment of resources.

In other cases local actors were discouraged by the ideas of their diaspora counterparts. Several interviewees complained that diaspora Tamils had counter-productive plans and were not sensitive to the needs of the people. One person complained about diaspora plans to construct a swimming pool for the school, although Jaffna is surrounded by beaches where the students could go to swim and enjoy recreation opportunities. In hospitals, local staff complained that diaspora doctors would occupy their time unnecessarily. Quite often, it became clear that diaspora Tamils had different visions of what was meant by development and the local actors felt that their priorities were wrongly set. Another dimension in which processes of resistance and closure took place as a result of flows was the realm of identity and cultural practices. Especially the "Westernisation", that many locals observed among diaspora Tamils, caused resentments. This became particularly obvious in inter-generational encounters. Many children had been born in the diaspora, and some of them did not speak proper Tamil any longer. Some of them were regarded as behaving like Westerners, especially when girls wore blue jeans or tight clothes. This led to processes of closure and reinforced alienation among those who were committed to sharing an inclusive, common Tamil identity.

Increased diaspora-local cooperation in the realm of development marks an important step in Jaffna's reintegration into world society. By analysing the various dimensions and fields of interaction, a number of negotiation processes takes place, which reflect Jaffna's positioning vis-à-vis the world. The interactions lead to the formation of translocal spaces in which globalised ideas of development are negotiated and in which the different actors shape the local development and reconstruction process. The formation of migrant-local relations in translocal spaces enable them to jointly organise, plan and implement reconstruction and development measures in different fields while they remain in contact. As a consequence, local reconstruction becomes a project embedded into the ideas and

norms perpetuated within world society through translocal flows. At the same time the formation of translocal spaces allocates agency to local actors to understand themselves as being part of an integrated world society. Through reflecting their own identity and their localised development project against the background of their images of the world, local development also means that normative ideas such as modernity and identity are negotiated at the interface with diaspora Tamils. But this is also strongly related to the increased significance of formal development cooperation after the Ceasefire. Not only the flow of large sums of money, but also the presence of a large number of international staff has reinforced renewed negotiations of local identities and development in the context of an integration into world society.

Development Cooperation in Jaffna

Hoping to support the peace process through initial and immediate reconstruction efforts, the "donor community" pledged immense sums for Sri Lanka in two donor meetings. After the second meeting in June 2003 in Tokyo, the donor community stated that a sum of US$ 4.5 billion would be allocated over a four year period. Jaffna, which is formally controlled by the Sri Lankan government and which suffered severe destruction became subject to extensive reconstruction efforts. Many organisations, like the so-called UN family, had already initiated support after 1996 but were forced to withdraw during a major military offensive in 2000. Most of these came back after the Ceasefire Agreement in 2002 and re-established offices and relationships with local institutions. As a result, donor agencies attend to a broad variety of these fields ranging from demining and assistance for returning refugees and IDPs, to aspects of food security, employment generation, education, health, housing, water and sanitation and transport, infrastructure reconstruction. Agencies involved are among others: various members of the UN family, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, different bilateral agencies such as British DIFD, Japanese JICA, USAID and German GTZ. There is a broad variety of strategies for providing assistance, ranging from basket funding, implementation via national or international NGOs, implementation via state institutions such as local government or ministries to, in a few cases, implementation in cooperation with local community groups or local NGOs.

Apart from enabling finance to flow, the bi- and multilateral cooperation was especially oriented towards globalised strategies of conflict management.[16] As part of a larger policy formulation based on structural stability within the coun-

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16 Different, rather confusing terminologies exist with regard to interventions in (post)conflict settings. See Reimann (2004) for an extensive discussion of the various approaches related to the terminologies. For simplification I use the term conflict management because it seems to be the most comprehensive term in this context.

tries of intervention, conflict management and related terms pinpoint, among many other aspects, the establishment and consolidation of stable institutions within the state. These function in order to avoid the outbreak of violence and hence stabilise the ongoing development process. Behind this logic rests the assumption, that violent conflict obstructs development and that inadequate development perpetuates conflict.[17] Therefore, development cooperation attempts to contribute to both: on the one hand, it needs to reinforce societal and economic development processes, on the other hand conflict prevention measures have to be employed in order to stabilise a post-conflict society. According to the most important policy document of recent years, the "DAC Guidelines on Conflict. Peace and Development Cooperation on the Threshold of the 21st Century", two major pillars are at the core of conflict preventive development policy. First, "structural stability" is based on the presumption of good governance, democracy and decentralisation, which can be ensured through reforms of state and bureaucracy. Second, a strategy called "local capacities for peace"[18] should ensure that civil society actors gain competence to enhance peace on the level of society.

The policy for mainstreaming conflict management as formulated in the DAC guidelines, however, suggests a two-fold approach, including partners in the civil society as well as governmental institutions. In Jaffna, this policy was implemented in the rather peculiar situation in which civil society (in this case, NGOs) and governmental institutions are embedded. There has been a shift in the global development debate from supporting civil society to institutions and public goods, especially those of the state, since the state is regarded as the most "neutral" actor in development. This is in contrast to civil society actors who may follow particularistic interests. The highly contested nature of Jaffna in the course of conflict has reinforced an anti-NGO policy on the part of the state. NGOs have always been considered as under LTTE control and generally sympathetic with the movement. The two aspects, that NGOs in Jaffna are considered to be politically non-neutral and that global development policy is based on an emphasis of the state as a partner in development, have reinforced cooperation with state-institutions.

Development cooperation is concentrated basically on infrastructure reconstruction and development. The bigger multi-lateral agencies have pledged large sums for water and irrigation (World Bank), and community restoration (Asian Development Bank) including construction of small roads, schools, community centres and private housing. The various UN agencies have been engaged in the tasks for which they are specialised. Various bilateral donors participated in joint

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17 The conflict development nexus was discussed extensively during the 1990s both in academia and practice (for Sri Lanka see Sriskandarajah 2004; Culbert 2005). The relationship between conflict prevention and development strategies including institutional capacity building was also intensively discussed by von Braun/Grote/Jütting (2000).

18 This term is strongly related to the "do no harm" approach as developed by Anderson (1999).

basket-funding or channel funds through international non-governmental organisations which established their own structures for reconstruction and development. The German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) had implemented a rehabilitation project since 1996 and changed its focus to support for the institutional capacity building of local governance institutions after 2002.

Setting up development cooperation with state institutions, local institutions and also through their own implementation structures reinforced the formation of translocal space at yet another level which is embedded into the everyday-lives of the people in Jaffna. This dimension beyond professional working relationships is comprised of the various ways in which foreign employees of development and relief agencies interact with the local population. As soon as the isolation was lifted, herds of consultants and new foreign staff entered the peninsula. The devastated infrastructure was not able to accommodate the needs of all these foreigners, who were lodged in guesthouses run by the offices of the agencies. The UN and GTZ ran their own guesthouses, which provided accommodation for many of these foreigners. The UN also started to provide an internet connection by establishing the first internet café for locals and foreigners in Jaffna. Local stakeholders reacted quite quickly to the influx of foreigners. Local entrepreneurs established guesthouses and hotels to meet the exploding needs. Persons started businesses serving foreigners, such as renting cars. Local shopkeepers enlarged their range of products and sold imported products to attract foreign consumers. Also quite soon the "Palm Beach Restaurant", opened by some returned migrants, was offering pizza, ice cream and other Western-style food. This restaurant was among the most popular lunch places for foreign visitors. Some UN employees established a bar to meet the recreation needs of the international staff. Similarly, employees of international organisations organised parties at their homes. Such occasions alerted more conservative Jaffna residents to the fact that the Western visitors might expose local people to immoral behaviour. It was reported that some locals threw stones over the courtyard walls of the bar, when the music was too loud. Others reported that they found it funny when girls drank beer and danced with men at the parties.

Local people also reported that they found the impact of foreign agencies' capital on the local economy disturbing. The offices and residences of the agencies were mainly located in Jaffna's suburb Chundukuli, especially in and around Temple Road. In this suburb, virtually every second house had a signboard placed in front, indicating the office of a foreign or, in a few cases, local organisation. Some of the foreign organisations rented several houses as offices, and as accommodation for the international staff. Illustrative in this regard was the junction of Temple Road and Racca Road, which was dominated by ICRC buildings and facilities at each corner. Locally, this junction has become known as "ICRC junction". The international organisations did not pay much attention to the local prices for housing. Quite often they paid exacerbated rents to the owners who either live in other, often smaller, houses or abroad. Several interviewees claimed

that they did not appreciate this impact of international organisations because it caused a horrendous rise in the cost of renting houses in the area. Local people were almost unable to afford living in these areas, which is especially critical considering the large numbers of displaced people and others who lost their homes during the periods of fighting.

Re-negotiating Local Development and Identity

Jaffna's integration into global development has led to a number of significant and complex local changes in the developmental, economic and cultural sphere. The analysis has shown that interactions between local actors and international actors produced increased efforts to reconstruct Jaffna and support the rehabilitation of its infrastructure in various ways. But the increased interactions also led to significant changes in the images Jaffna Tamils have of the foreigners representing the Western world for them since they are located within their local context and thus, subject to direct relationships and face-to-face contact. At the same time, it could be shown that the flow of international agencies and their staff also had, apart from being subject to moral critique, unintended consequences on local economic relations as well as on the already severe housing situation of Jaffna's inhabitants. These different aspects of interactions came together in the Jaffna arena and produced new images of the world. These were represented by the foreign visitors. These images were not only taken over but became subject to renegotiations and re-positionings at the levels of localisation and local identity.

In globalisation studies it has been pointed out that globalisation, in the sense of continuous global flows, reinforces the constitution of boundaries on various levels. These scholars contributed a great deal to a rather flawed debate about homogenisation through the diffusion of globalised goods, commodities, ideas and values. Notable in this context are Appadurai's works on the production of locality (1995; 1996), and also on the relationship between global processes and ethnic violence described in his article on dead certainty (Appadurai 1998). These ambivalent and complex processes of inclusion and exclusion, which seem to be inherent in the constitution of world society result from what Meyer/Geschiere (1999) called "dialectics of flow and closure". Although focusing predominantly on the relationship between globalisation and identity, the dialectic moment they seek to capture is rather broad in analytical scope. However, it captures the entire uneasiness we have with processes of globalisation and translocalisation based on the popular misconception that these processes might lead to the constitution and integration of a more or less uniform world society.

Jaffna's experience of being re-opened and becoming subject to development and reconstruction efforts is illustrative because it is such a particular case of globalisation. Through the constitution of a translocal arena, space for negotiating the local vis-à-vis the world has been created. All of a sudden Jaffna saw it-

self exposed to the flows from outside which led to demarcations in the realm of culture and identity. Through the influx of foreign visitors a space emerged, in which local Tamils could reflect upon their own moral norms and cultural particularities and reaffirm these by degrading the behaviour of immoral Westerners. Jaffna Tamils faced similar experiences, when their relatives from abroad visited them after an absence of several years, when they discovered that their Tamil relatives' daughters wore tight blue jeans and drove cars by themselves. The re-integration into world society through flows and the formation of translocal spaces constituted by face-to-face contacts and proximity reinforced local "closure" and the fixing of a local, authentic culture.

Similar processes happened in the realm of development. Through the constitution of the development arena, a number of different development ideas came together. Development agencies tried to implement their recently developed policies of sustainable development, in the sense of enhancing capacity and building state institutions, while diaspora Tamils transported their lived personal experience of Western economic wealth and values into the development arena. As part of the negotiation of an appropriate notion of development people in Jaffna (and to a certain degree also diaspora Tamils) discovered their own ideas of how Jaffna should be reconstructed and developed. The import of new ideas of development and visions of society reinforced processes of closure at yet another level and led to an accentuation of specifically local development ideas, constituted by a glorification of the pre-war past and a return to Jaffna Tamil "culture" and "tradition". What has been understood as a project of development and inherent betterment of the state of the post-war society by those living on the outside, has produced sentiments of alienation, boundary-drawing and closure.

In this article I attempted to show that translocal flows and interactions are features of and processes leading to the constitution of world society in a sense that makes it possible today to think of the world as one single construct. As Appadurai (1996) points out, the world is an interactive system with strikingly new features such as mobility of goods and information. Against this background, my aim was to investigate social interactions and processes in order to make contributions to how this world (society) might look like in a particular context. Or, in Appadurai's words: "we will need to ask not how these complex, overlapping, fractual shapes constitute a simple, stable (even if large-scale) system, but to ask what its dynamics are" (Appadurai 1996: 46). Therefore I have drawn together various dimensions of interaction between development actors in the context of Jaffna's reconstruction. By showing the different patterns of negotiation I argued that the embeddedness of these leads to both, to an integration but also to demarcation and localisation. Only through detailed empirical research is one able to draw assumptions on social realities and continuous processes of social change which characterise and shape world society in both, a structural and processual sense. From this perspective, Jaffnas reconstruction and development process ap-

pears to be embedded into world society and, at the same time, as happening in very specific locality which is constantly reproduced by the actors constructing it.

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