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Filip Ejdus & Ana E. Juncos

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

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Filip Ejdus 🄳 and Ana E. Juncos 🄳

School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK

ABSTRACT
Since the early 2000s, the "local turn" has thoroughly transformed the field of peacebuilding. The European Union (EU) policy discourse on peacebuilding has also aligned with this trend, with an increasing number of EU policy statements insisting on the importance of "the local." However, most studies on EU peacebuilding still adopt a top-down approach and focus on institutions, capabilities, and decision-making at the EU level. This special issue contributes to the literature by focusing on bottom-up and local dynamics of EU peacebuilding. After outlining the rationale and the scope of the special issue, this article discusses the local turn in international peacebuilding and identifies several interrelated concepts relevant to theorizing the role of the local, specifically those of effectiveness, ownership, and resistance. In the conclusion, we summarize the key contributions of this special issue and suggest some avenues for further research.

Peacebuilding is at the heart of the European Union's (EU) raison d'être.[1] In addition to being a peace project itself, the EU has invested significant effort and resources in building peace beyond its borders. According to the Lisbon Treaty of 2009, the EU aims to "preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security" (Treaty on European Union, Art. 21(2)). However, while its role in conflict prevention and in development was well established during the Cold War, the emergence of security capabilities to deal with post-conflict management had to wait to the end of the 1990s, after the failure of the EU to deal with the wars in the former Yugoslavia (Juncos, 2013). With the establishment of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in 1999, the toolbox of instruments available for peacebuilding activities has expanded considerably, turning the EU into a veritable comprehensive peacebuilding actor. This has also taken place in a

CONTACT Ana E. Juncos ✉ a.e.juncos@bristol.ac.uk 🗐 School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies, University of Bristol, 11, Priory Road, Bristol BS8 1TU, UK

context where EU member states have been more interested and willing to deploy CSDP missions and operations to preserve the peace and address the roots causes of conflict in the EU's neighborhood.

The EU's ambition to become a global peacebuilder is thus not new. What is new is a shifting focus on all things "local." Inspired by the famous environmentalist adage "to act globally and think locally," the EU is increasingly interested in realizing its global ambitions by engaging with bottom-up and local dynamics. For instance, the recently adopted EU Global Strategy (EUGS), puts prime on the concept of resilience, or the ability of states and societies to reform, withstand and recover from internal and external crises (Juncos, 2017a; Wagner & Anholt, 2016). Moreover, the EU makes a commitment to "pursue locally owned rights-based approaches" to Security Sector Reform (SSR) (European Union, 2016a, p. 26) and calls for a "bottom-up approach"—or at least to "blend top-down and bottom-up efforts" (European Union, 2016a, p. 31)—to foster local agency. As put in the EUGS, "[p]ositive change can only be home-grown, and may take years to materialise" (European Union, 2016a, p. 27).

Despite this recent shift towards "the local," most of the research on the role of the EU as an international security actor has focused on EU institutions, instruments, decision-making, grand strategies, and capability development (Dijkstra, 2013; Howorth, 2014; Smith, 2017). While top-down approaches have significantly advanced our knowledge about macro drivers and obstacles affecting the implementation of CSDP, local dynamics and how the local might shape and interact with EU dynamics have been largely overlooked.

This is disappointing for three reasons. Firstly, this runs against the aforementioned emphasis at the EU level on the need to increase the involvement of the host governments and societies by promoting local ownership, building resilience, and capacities of the EU's neighboring countries. Despite the official rhetoric, we know still very little regarding whether the principle of local ownership is implemented in practice, in what ways, and with what consequences, although some recent studies have found a gap between the rhetoric and practice of EU peacebuilding (Ejdus, 2017a; Overhaus & Peter, 2012). This special issue explores in more detail this rhetoric-practice gap by analyzing whether the EU has advanced in practice its commitment to including local perspectives.

Secondly, by ignoring the "demand" side of the EU's peacebuilding interventions, scholars have failed to incorporate a crucial element when it comes to assessing the effectiveness of CSDP operations and missions: How local factors might shape EU missions and operations in terms of their design and implementation. Moreover, while effectiveness tends to be driven by the EU's own considerations (Bickerton, 2011), local views regarding what makes an operation or mission effective often remain forgotten (e.g.,

Juncos, 2013; Rodt, 2014). The special issue will contribute to this literature by examining local perceptions of effectiveness and whether and how this feeds into the EU policy-making process.

Thirdly, while the EU is frequently described as a normative power, scholarship on the EU's role as an international security actor tends to focus on inconsistencies affecting the EU's external action or on the tension between EU values and interests. The issue of whether EU norms and values are perceived as legitimate by the EU's counterparts tends to be overlooked (however, see Noutcheva, 2009). Yet, focusing on the perceptions of non-EU countries and societies can provide a better understanding of the lack of compliance with EU reforms and why the EU struggles to have a long-lasting impact beyond its borders. It is in the interplay between EU actors and local actors that the EU's international identity is formed and transformed. Hence, this special issue contributes to scholarship on the external perceptions about the EU as a global actor (De Waele & Kuipers, 2013; Lucarelli & Fioramonti, 2010), but also to the literature on resistance (Saurugger & Terpan, 2015). It is vital that we understand better how the EU interacts with local elites and populations, and more specifically, how EU-supported reforms are adopted, resisted, or simply ignored by those at the receiving end.

Considering these issues, an analytical focus on local or bottom-up perspectives on EU peacebuilding appears thus justified. By drawing on the "local turn" in peacebuilding studies, the articles in this special issue examine how the EU as a peacebuilding actor is received and experienced by the conflict-affected countries and populations. In this regard, it is also necessary to discuss in more detail first the "local turn" in peacebuilding.

The "local turn" in peacebuilding

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the "local turn" has transformed the field of peacebuilding. The roots of this fundamental shift can be found in the broadening of the peacekeeping agenda to include the task of building peace and functional liberal states that took place during the 1990s (United Nations, 1992). Nevertheless, it was in the first decade of the twenty-first century that the term "local" became all pervasive in the policy discourse on peacebuilding. The Brahimi Report, which is replete with references to "the local," postulates that "(e)ffective peace-building requires active engagement with the local parties … " (United Nations, 2000, p. 7). Soon thereafter, the UN also adopted "local ownership" as the core principle of its peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts (Von Billerbeck, 2016). The principle has been endorsed by conflict-affected states (Nussbaum, Zorbas, & Koros, 2012), international organizations (African Union, 2013; European Union, 2005; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008), and aid agencies (DFID, 2010; USAID, 2009) involved in

peacebuilding. In short, in little over a decade, local ownership has become the new orthodoxy of state- and peacebuilding.

In parallel to the above-described policy developments, the scholarship on peacebuilding has also gone through a local turn of its own. The turn developed in two phases (Paffenholz, 2015). During the first phase (Lederach, 1995; Rupesinghe, 1995), scholars mostly drew on insights from peace studies and conflict resolution theories (Freire, 1970; Galtung, 1969). The second phase started to emerge in the 2000s as a critique of the liberal peace paradigm (Chandler, 2010; Heathershaw, 2008; Richmond, 2010). Ever since, the local turn has revolved around the critical investigation of the effort to construe liberal norms, institutions, and practices, borne out of the Western political experience, as universally applicable and to export them to contexts with little social preconditions for a liberal state. Theoretically, this second phase has developed alongside a debate in International Relations (IR) between positivism and post-positivism (Lapid, 1989) and engaged with a broad range of social theories such as critical theory, postcolonialism, and poststructuralism, but also with alternative and reflexive methodologies (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 763). Empirically, the focus has shifted from headquarters and capital cities to the grassroots, local, and everyday dynamics of peacebuilding (Autesserre, 2014).

Despite its strong policy and scholarly resonance, the concept of "the local" is notoriously unclear and, because of this, perspectives on its place and importance within peacebuilding differ greatly from one scholar to the next. It is particularly difficult to clearly define who the local is in any context, as the term "usually comprises a wide range from the population at large to traditional structures, from central state government to civil society organizations, from specialized professional groups to local spoiler groups" (Narten, 2008, p. 375). From a critical perspective, Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) define the local as:

> the range of locally based agencies present within a conflict and post-conflict environment, some of which are aimed at identifying and creating the necessary processes for peace, perhaps with or without international help, and framed in a way in which legitimacy in local and international terms converges. (p. 769)

While the local is often defined apart and opposite from the international, this binary formulation has been criticized for being overly simplistic. Paffenholz (2015, p. 862) holds that "the local turn" rests on a problematic and simplistic binary distinction between the international and the local, without acknowledging that neither of them is monolithic or easily categorized in liberal/illiberal terms. Moreover, it has often been pointed out that just because solutions are local, traditional, or indigenous, this does not mean that they are necessarily just or sustainable (Donais, 2012, p. 66; Paris, 2010). Similarly, several authors have critiqued the assumption that hybrid governance structures,

instrumentalized from the outside, provide greater agency for the locals (Millar, 2016; Paffenholz, 2015).

Within this broad literature interested in bottom-up peacebuilding, it is useful to distinguish "problem solving" from "critical approaches" (Cox, 1981). Problem-solving approaches take the liberal peacebuilding project with all its institutionalized power relationships for granted and then try to make it work more smoothly by grafting the local add-on. This is a dominant mode of thinking about the local, not only among most policy-makers, but also one advocated for by many policy analysts and some academic scholars too. Paris (2010), for example, argues that liberal peacebuilding, to which in his view "there is no realistic alternative" (p. 340), can be saved if it was made to be more flexible and adaptable to the local context. The problem-solving approach treats the local as a remedy to the excesses of imposition, universalism, and rigidity of the liberal peace project. In the academic literature, this approach can be associated with liberal institutionalist approaches to peacebuilding.

In contrast, critical approaches construe the local turn outside of the institutions, ideas, and practices of the liberal peace project. To be more precise, for them the local turn should call into question the liberal peace project and expose its limitations and pathologies. Consequently, critical approaches to the local turn explore the merits of non/post-liberal forms of peace such as indigenous (Mac Ginty, 2008), everyday (Mac Ginty, 2014), emancipatory (Richmond, 2009, 2012), and hybrid peace (Mac Ginty, 2011). Authors within this camp, however, disagree on how emancipatory is the local turn in the policy discourse. While some scholars treat it as a positive step (Bendix & Stanley, 2008, p. 102; Donais, 2012), others are more critical toward peacebuilders' embrace of the language, but not the spirit of the local turn (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 772, p. 779). The most radical critics go even further and argue that the tokenistic adoption of the local-oriented policy idioms does not only mask power asymmetries hardwired into the liberal peacebuilding but additionally curbs the autonomy and freedom of the locals (Chandler, 2010).

Theoretically, these critical approaches have drawn a lot from poststructuralism and particularly from Foucault's (2007) critique of (neo)liberalism. Particularly appealing to many has been his concept of governmentality, which denotes an ensemble of liberal discourses and practices, which aim to govern populations less but better (Foucault, 2007, pp. 108–109). This has served as a basis for many to further explore not only the limits of liberal peace and its embrace of the local but also resistance to it (Chandler, 2010; Richmond, 2010, 2011, 2012). In addition to this, the local turn has also taken cues from postcolonialism and particularly its historic insights on the colonial rationality of peacebuilding (Jabri, 2013), its orientalist discourses (Kappler, 2015; Said, 1978), or ideas of hybridity (Mac Ginty, 2011).

Within the broad peacebuilding scholarship, one can identify three core concepts around which the local turn has been spinning around and which guide articles in this special issue: effectiveness, ownership, and resistance. These concepts have been addressed differently depending on the approach (problem-solving/critical) adopted. Taken as a whole, however, a focus on these issues provides a useful entry point into examining the role of the local in EU peacebuilding as it highlights the dynamics of cooperation/contestation and adaptation/resistance on the ground. While EU studies still have to properly cash in the local turn, an embryonic body of research has started to emerge in recent years offering precious local perspectives on the EU as peacebuilding and crisis management entity. In this special issue, we draw upon this literature but we aim to move these discussions further by focusing on the three key interrelated issues of effectiveness, ownership, and resistance. To that end, we have asked the contributors to address four sets of questions:

(1) Who or what is the "local" in the context of EU peacebuilding and why does it matter? How does the local interact with the EU in different policy sites? How does the local shape the EU's international identity and legitimacy?
(2) How do the locals perceive the effectiveness of EU initiatives? What are the intended and unintended local consequences of EU peacebuilding?
(3) What role does the local have on the formulation and implementation of EU peacebuilding initiatives?
(4) What are the different ways for the locals to adjust, adapt, co-opt, or resist the EU peacebuilding efforts? How does the EU deal with local resistance?

The rest of this article briefly introduces the three concepts (effectiveness, ownership, and resistance) and some tentative answers to these questions that can be gleaned from the peacebuilding and EU literatures. The discussion below also explains how the contributions to this special issue add to this nascent body of knowledge on local perspectives on EU peacebuilding.

Effectiveness of EU peacebuilding

The first concept is effectiveness and it lies at the core of the local turn in peacebuilding. In fact, it was the unsatisfactory results of peacebuilding of the 1990s that led to the shift of focus to the local in the first place (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015, p. 827). While there is a general recognition that international interventions are usually effective in ending violence (Doyle & Sambanis, 2000), the rate of failure has been unacceptably high (Autesserre, 2017, p. 3). Hence, those focusing on effectiveness have tended to adopt a

problem-solving approach whereby the inclusion of the local in peacebuilding projects was aimed at improving their success.

There is no agreement, however, on how to define effectiveness in peacebuilding. Some of the questions that make the issue of effectiveness highly contested are: Can there be an objective assessment of effectiveness or does it need to consider different perceptions of success? If the latter is the case, should effectiveness be judged from the point of view of international interveners, host states, or the local population? What is the timeframe in which effectiveness is to be judged? How to isolate the impact of one peacebuilder in a theatre where a multitude of international and domestic actors operate? Consequently, there is also little agreement on what factors contribute to the effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions. Most studies have evaluated peacebuilding interventions by looking at macro-level dynamics and its impact on national and international causes of conflict (Call & Wyeth, 2008; Doyle & Sambanis, 2006; Fortna, 2008). However, an increasing number of works have shown that peacebuilding at this macro level, even when successful, does not necessarily trickle down to the local level (see Autesserre, 2017). On the contrary, however, the neglect of local-level dynamics of violence by the international peacebuilders ultimately undermines whatever success has been made at the national and international level (Autesserre, 2014).

When evaluating the effectiveness of the EU as a peacebuilding actor, scholars have often concentrated on the policy process at the expense of actual outcomes. It is no surprise therefore that the concept of effectiveness has received little attention in the literature to date (for exceptions, see Juncos, 2013; Rodt, 2014; Zarembo, 2017). Generally defined as goal attainment, the problem of how to determine the criteria against which effectiveness of EU policy is to be evaluated remains (Niemann & Bretherton, 2013). Firstly, assessments of effectiveness depend on who sets those goals. For instance, if the goals are set by the EU itself, this might lead to a narrow conception of effectiveness which focuses of whether an initiative has achieved its declared aims or mandate. The obvious problem with this type of assessments is that modest, narrow, or ambiguously defined objectives might be declared internally effective, even when the initiative has a limited or even negative impact on the target situation itself (Rodt, 2014). While it is important to determine whether the EU's peacebuilding practice matches its rhetoric (internal effectiveness), one therefore also needs to assess the ability of the EU to prevent and manage violent conflict (external effectiveness). To paraphrase, Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall (2005, p. 317), the final criterion to determine whether EU peacebuilding has been effective or not is "the verdict of those affected by it."

A focus on the recipient end of EU foreign policy might also help avoid charges of (neo-)imperialism which can certainly damage the EU's international image and credibility. Effectiveness is thus crucially linked to

(output) legitimacy: An initiative that is effective from the point of view of the host societies is likely to be a more legitimate one. For instance, Müller and Zahda (2017) analyze local perceptions of the EU among Palestinian elites and observe that while Palestinian elites perceive the EU as a powerful actor, they also see its rule of law mission as favoring too much technical reforms, while disregarding political challenges. It is for these reasons that the articles in this issue advocate for a broader understanding of effectiveness, incorporating "external effectiveness."

While there have been some attempts at setting out objective standards or benchmarks for "successful" peacebuilding (see, for instance, Call & Cousens, 2008), these externally determined goals do not always take into account local perceptions. This is why Autesserre (2017) has called for a more inter-subjective and situation-specific understanding of effectiveness. From this vantage point, the effectiveness of peacebuilding is neither in the eye of beholder nor can it be assessed based on some objective, timeless, and decontextualized criteria. Perceptions matter, and particularly local ones, and the existing literature on peacebuilding in general, and on the EU, in particular, rarely take them seriously into consideration (but see Tartir & Ejdus, 2017; Müller & Zahda, 2017). Such an approach allows to capture both the contestedness of the notion of effectiveness and its inter-subjective, rather than purely subjective or objective character.

While the inclusion of externally defined goals can provide a much more comprehensive assessment of effectiveness, there are still challenges when it comes to determine "whose" effectiveness we are talking about. For instance, even when it comes to internal EU-based assessments, it is possible to find conflicting assessments as objectives might differ between the relevant actors, including the European Commission, the European External Action Service, and the member states. External evaluations of the EU can also vary according to the target country concerned (Lucarelli & Fioramonti, 2010). In a similar way, different local constituencies may (and often do) have diametrically opposite goals concerning particular interventions, so what is perceived to be effective by some groups may not be by others. For instance, Tartir and Ejdus (2017) show how assessments of effectiveness can be starkly different not only when the internal assessments are compared to external ones, but also between various layers of the latter. Thus, for instance, the EU rule of law mission can be seen as an effective mission from the point of view of the Palestinian Authority and its ability to police the West Bank, but not so much from the vantage point of the Palestinian people and their desire to break free from half a century long Israeli occupation.

By incorporating the local perspective, this special issue not only helps develop a better understanding of effectiveness, it also highlights the role of local politics as a factor shaping the implementation of EU peacebuilding.

Studies that have examined the performance of the EU in international politics have tended to focus on the EU level, that is, the EU's ability to reach a decision, as well as the substance/content of the decision itself (Bickerton, 2011). However, the view taken by the papers in this special issue (in particular, Tartir & Ejdus, 2017) is that effectiveness needs to be analyzed at the implementation level too. Looking at policy implementation is relevant for several reasons. Firstly, effective decision-making is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for an effective implementation of EU peacebuilding initiatives. One cannot expect that once a decision is taken, it will automatically produce the intended outputs, let alone outcomes. Implementation can deviate from what was projected by policy-makers and produce a different result. Secondly, efficient implementation (trying to achieve the objectives in the way it was planned) is not always synonymous with effectiveness. Even a fully implemented policy can be ineffective because of unintended consequences or changes in the international context. Not only the nature of foreign policy, but also the uncertainties and complexities of the international arena, make it extremely difficult to control all the variables that can affect policy implementation. Therefore, any analysis of EU peacebuilding will have to consider the impact of exogenous factors. Of relevance, in this case, is the impact of local actors. For example, Gippert (2017) shows that structural power of the local police chain of command is stronger than the power of the EU Police Mission to induce domestic change.

Finally, another point highlighted by this special issue is that "effectiveness" or "success"—as policy-makers usually refer to—constitutes a sensitive political matter in EU peacebuilding for different reasons. Given the past problems of dealing with conflict (chiefly in the Balkans), the EU has been keen to prove to others that it can effectively deploy and run a crisis management mission. Central is also the assumption that the EU's internal security is a function of its capacity to provide security beyond its borders. This is furthermore compounded by the fact that there is no agreement among the member states on the role of the EU as a security actor. Thus, a failure would even make subsequent agreement among the member states more difficult. Moreover, effectiveness contributes to legitimizing the EU's role as an international security actor. Since the EU is a relative newcomer in the field of peacebuilding interventions, each operation and mission the EU conducts becomes a test-case not only for the EU's capability to launch operations in a conflict area, but for the EU's ability to act in world politics more generally (Smith, 2017). The papers in this special issue show for instance that the lack of effectiveness can, in turn, undermine the EU's normative power and legitimacy and fuel local resistance (Mahr, 2017). Consequently, if the reforms pushed by the EU contradict the local power structure's interests, they will be resisted event if they are seen as legitimate.

Local ownership in EU peacebuilding

The second, maybe even more central, concept of the local turn in peacebuilding is ownership. Since the first statements on ownership in Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCDE) documents were made in the mid-1990s, the term has become all pervasive in the discourse of international organizations and donors (European Union, 2005, 2016a, 2016b; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1996; United Nations, 2000). The European Union (1998, 2001) started to integrate the language of local ownership into its external policy discourses in the late 1990s. Ever since, local ownership has become one of the key principles underpinning various external policies of the EU. Within the EU's development policy, where the language of local ownership was first adopted, this concept implies that "(d)eveloping countries have the primary responsibility for creating an enabling domestic environment for mobilising their own resources, including conducting coherent and effective policies" (European Union, 2006, p. 14). The latest review of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) states that greater ownership "will be the hallmark of the new ENP" (European Union, 2015, p. 2). Most importantly for us in this article and the special issue, the ownership principle has also been adopted as the core principle of the EU's approach to peacebuilding including both conflict prevention (European Union, 2001, p. 10) and crisis management (European Union, 2005, 2006).

Local ownership in the most general sense can be defined as the "degree of control that domestic political actors wield over domestic political processes" (Donais, 2012, p. 1). While the exact meaning of both "local" and "ownership" are highly contested (more on that below), there is a virtual consensus among both policy-makers and scholars that to be effective and sustainable, peacebuilding needs to be locally owned. As Donais (2012) put it, the notion of local ownership "conveys the commonsense wisdom that any peace process not embraced by those who have to live with it is likely to fail" (p. 1). Others have emphasized that without local ownership domestic reforms and institutions lack legitimacy (Jackson, 2011, p. 1816). Local ownership thus provides the crucial link in the search for both effectiveness, legitimacy, and sustainability in international peacebuilding initiatives.

Beyond this minimum common ground, the concept of local ownership is heavily contested. First, there is confusion in the literature and practice as to the question of who precisely is the "owner" or "stakeholder" in a peacebuilding process. Likewise, the notion of who constitutes the international community or the external is also controversial since often there is a multitude of international actors operating in a territory or sub-contracting tasks to other international or local actors. Local ownership could be claimed where there is a high degree of local participation in a peacebuilding program.

However, who are considered to be "the locals" and what is it they are supposed to own for local ownership to be in place, is contested.

Depending on the way they answer to these crucial questions, four different perspectives on the notion of ownership can be distinguished. Firstly, the minimalist perspective narrows down the meaning of ownership to a transfer of responsibility and a gradual buy-in of local elites into externally conceived programs. This approach is often associated with the liberal peace paradigm (Paris, 2010). From this standpoint, once liberal institutions are meticulously implanted into conflict-affected societies, responsibility to run them should be gradually transferred to "maturing" local authorities (Narten, 2008, p. 375). This view is dominant in policy circles and to great extent shapes how local ownership is being practiced. Secondly, from a maximalist perspective, which draws on communitarianism, ownership is construed as a genuine leadership and broad-based participation of locals who should firmly be in the driving seat all the way through (De Carvalho, De Coning, & Connolly, 2014, p. 6; Nathan, 2007, p. 4).

Thirdly, the middle-ground approach aims to strike a balance between minimalism and maximalist conceptions (Donais, 2012, p. 37; Hellmüller, 2014). It stresses the pragmatic need of striking a balance between international norms and local traditions; between empowering drivers and disempowering spoilers; between human rights and stability and between imposition and restraint. Donais (2012), for instance, criticized both approaches as "incomplete strategies for building stable sustainable peace" (p. 13). In his view, durable settlements require resources of both outsiders and insiders as well as a process of consensus building between locals and internationals, and among locals, that will lead to a "negotiated hybridity."

By contrast to the previous problem-solving perspectives, the fourth and critical perspective is skeptical and openly chastises local ownership either as an "overrated" concept which pushes for a premature transfer of responsibility to irresponsible actors (Joseph, 2007, p. 112) or as a "legitimizing concept" (Wilén, 2009), "rhetorical cover" (Chandler, 2011, p. 87), and "motherhood statement" that is "used to imply varying degrees of local control that are typically not realized" (Chesterman, 2007, p. 20). Poststructuralist scholars have leveled a particularly poignant critique of local ownership. Drawing on the work of Michel Foucault, some see local ownership as a form of liberal governmentality across borders and a liberal form of power that aims to govern less but better (Joseph, 2012, p. 97). Others, taking cues from the same intellectual tradition, go even further and argue that local ownership is an "illiberal" (Richmond, 2012, p. 371) or "postliberal" form of governmentality that curtails local autonomy and self-determination (Chandler & Richmond, 2015). Under such a theoretical light, far from being a tool for empowering the locals, local ownership appears to be a technique of governing them at a distance.

Concerning the concept of ownership, despite the contested nature of the concept of ownership, the existing research suggests that the EU has been struggling to match its peacebuilding practice with its proclaimed principles. Deficient local ownership, one way or another, has been registered not only in places where the EU is well known for its executive interventions, heavy footprint, and trusteeship governance as in Bosnia (Tolksdorf, 2014; Vandemoortele, 2012) and Kosovo (Collantes-Celador & Juncos, 2011; Kappler & Lemay-Hébert, 2015; Qehaja, 2017). The EU's record on local ownership has also been less than satisfactory in most other interventions launched further afield, for example, in Afghanistan (Larivé, 2012, p. 194), Congo (Rayroux & Wilén, 2014), Georgia (Freire & Simão, 2013, p. 467), or Somalia (Oksamytna, 2011). According to the EU's own lessons learned reports, one of the key weaknesses of the EU's support to SSR has been the lack of local ownership (European Union, 2016c, p. 2).

The existing literature identifies several obstacles to local ownership in CSDP interventions. First, there has been little if any local input into the very design of interventions. Under political pressure to deploy under very tight time constraints, the planning process is a rushed process that rarely includes the concerns of host governments or populations and sometimes even overlooks the views of the EU's own in-country delegations (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2016, p. 47). Second, the EU's approach has not always been context-sensitive. For example, the EU has usually prioritized the development of formal institutions, while overlooking indigenous security governance structures that often possess more local legitimacy (Oksamytna, 2011). Coupled with slow decision-making procedures, micromanagement from the European capitals has obstructed the work of the EU police training mission in Afghanistan (Dursun-Ozkanca & Vandemoortele, 2012, p. 148), but also in other cases (Grevi, Helly, & Keohane, 2009). Furthermore, CSDP interventions have mostly focused on top-echelons in host state governments and administrations (Moore, 2014). Despite the rhetorical attachment to national ownership (European Union, 2016b, p. 7), EU peacebuilding interventions have struggled to involve non-state actors even in host states with a comparatively advanced civil society organizations such as Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kappler & Richmond, 2011).

Articles in this special issue aim to build on these insights and move them further both conceptually and empirically. It should be noted, however, that they do not start from a single conceptual or theoretical understanding of local ownership. While some articles are adopting a problem-solving approach (Müller & Zahda, 2017), others draw on critical theory (Ejdus, 2017b; Tartir & Ejdus, 2017; Juncos, 2017b). For instance, Müller and Zahda (2017) show that the political nature of the EU's approach to SSR not only has an impact on its effectiveness, but it also limits the implementation of the principle of local ownership. Ejdus (2017b) draws on Foucault's

notion of political rationality to show how although coated in liberal idioms, local ownership not only in CSDP interventions but in peacebuilding more generally, is driven by the rationality of interveners (not the locals) and operationalized through a technology of responsibilization for externally designed objectives. By asking "whose ownership" is sought in EU interventions, Tartir and Ejdus (2017) foreground silenced, marginalized, and even oppressed voices and perspectives in the case of Palestine. In sum, the articles in this special issue bring to bear the diversity of views on local ownership to shed light on a novel empirical material, but also contribute to further theorization of local ownership in EU peacebuilding.

Resistance to EU peacebuilding

The concept of resistance has been less studied than those of ownership or effectiveness. As Merlingen (2012) points out "CSDP studies are inclined to ignore resistance because many researchers share the ideology underpinning CSDP, namely that EU interventions are a force for good that has nothing to do with the (neo)imperialism of earlier days" (p. 204). Several studies, however, have focused on resistance to EU peacebuilding. In the context of EU peacebuilding in Bosnia, for example, Kappler and Richmond (2011, p. 273) show that the EU has failed to recognize and positively engage with local actors resulting in these actors developing, hidden, parallel forms of peacebuilding often in tension with the EU's peacebuilding objectives. They also note that resistance does not mean rejection per se, but in some cases, it can lead to subtle co-option, resulting in hybrid forms of peace (Kappler & Richmond, 2011, p. 274). In other cases, EU efforts are openly resisted because they "are considered as obstacles to local ambitions and imaginations" (Kappler, 2014, p. 2). In the African context, for instance, local resistance has in some cases undermined EU initiatives all together. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, where the EU has launched no less than four CSDP interventions, local resistance has paralyzed SSR (Rayroux & Wilén, 2014, p. 26).

It is important to note first that the term resistance is even more ambiguous, contested, and malleable than that the concepts of ownership or effectiveness. Yet, in line with Hollander and Einwohner's (2004, p. 538) review of this field of study, resistance has two intrinsic elements to it: Resistance is an activity and it is oppositional. Firstly, resistance is not a quality of the agent, but a kind of action. Secondly, resistance is always exercised against someone/something—it is about challenging, countering, and rejecting. However, scholars identify different targets of resistance. While Antonio Gramsci's concept of counter-hegemony targets the state; Polanyi's idea of counter-movement is concerned with the market forces; and Scott is concerned with everyday domination (Chin & Mittelman, 1997, p. 34). A

related issue here is that of sources of resistance, in other words, why do local populations (whether elites or ordinary citizens) oppose international peace-building initiatives? In order to explain this, one might look into the material (e.g., electoral, professional, or economic) incentives that explain resistance by local actors or to broader cultural and/or symbolic explanations. In the first instance, one could situate resistance to the police reform by police officers in Bosnia as shown by Gippert (2017). In the second case, Mahr (2017) points at how conceptions of sovereignty shape local contestation in Kosovo.

One of the main debates about the concept of resistance revolves around the issues of intent and recognition: In other words, whether resistance needs to be visible to count as resistance and whether it needs be recognized as such (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004, p. 539). Overt resistance, also known as contestation, has for obvious reasons attracted more policy and scholarly attention. Whether in the form of public confrontations, civil wars, rebellions, riots, or demonstrations, this type of activities and their aims are more clearly identifiable, tend to be collective in nature, and are generally politically articulated. In this special issue, Mahr (2017) focuses on the local contestation of EULEX Kosovo, which is fueled not only by dissatisfaction with the mission's effectiveness, but by conflicting sovereignty claims by Albanians and Serbs. For its part, everyday resistance is concerned with how actors might undermine power through their everyday life activities and experiences. This form of resistance is generally hidden, quiet, small scale, yet it can still be an effective way of undermining repressive domination in the medium and the long term. Scott (1989, 1990) refers to this form of resistance as infrapolitics. In his work, he shows how foot-dragging, sarcasm, passivity, laziness, slander, or theft are daily tactics used by subaltern groups to both survive and resist exploitation. While these activities only require little or no formal coordination, they might evolve into "a pattern of resistance" that "rely on a venerable popular culture of resistance" (Scott, 1989, pp. 35–36). The impact of the small scale and hidden forms of resistance can be equated to a "quite unremitting guerilla warfare" (Scott, 1989, p. 49).

In relation to peacebuilding and IR, the study of resistance has been done through the lenses of critical approaches. While everyday resistance in peacebuilding can be sometimes explicit, it generally remains hidden from the view of peacebuilders (Richmond, 2010). However, its power should not be underestimated; despite their low profile, the tactics of responding "in contractual, customary, and contextual terms to external peacebuilding efforts" (Richmond, 2010), can potentially be very successful. For instance, Gippert (2017) illustrates how resistance works at the level of police officers and the way they interact with EU peacebuilders in their daily jobs.

The idea that resistance can also be implicated in some forms of power suggests a need for a better conceptualization of the relations between

resistance and power. This points directly to Foucault's work on governmentality. In one of his most well-known quotes, Foucault (1978) claims that "where there is power, there is resistance" (pp. 95–96). However, power and resistance should not be considered as two opposing poles. Foucault (2007) prefers the term "counter-conduct," meaning the "struggle against the processes implemented for conducting others" (p. 201). Far from being a total rejection of government, it is about being governed differently—by different means, techniques, etcetera—as those that resist do not cease to be governed. Counter-conduct is thus implicated within and relies upon the power relations and techniques that it opposes (Foucault, 2007, p. 357). The article by Juncos (2017b) in this special issue applies a Foucauldian approach to resistance to show how EU governing discourses and technologies are countered by local elites involved in the reform of the security forces. In the context of the EU's efforts in SSR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Juncos identifies four forms of counter-conduct—upholding European standards, using the local ownership trap, simulating reforms, and lowering the bar—which work through EU discourses and practices to both undermine and reinforce EU governmentality.

It is also worth noting here the links between ownership and resistance. In general terms, the literature on peacebuilding identifies local ownership as a means of empowering local agencies. However, others might also see it as a way to undermine it. For instance, Bargués-Pedreny (2015) argues that while local ownership is often celebrated, it achieves little in practice and even *hinders* "moral and political autonomy," which in turn "seems to permanently defer equality between internationally supervised populations and the rest of the sovereign nations" (p. 4). Rayroux and Wilén (2014, pp. 28–29) disagree, arguing instead that although local ownership as a norm is asserted from outside by the international "norm makers" and received by the local "norm takers," an essential step occurs within this interaction in that the norms are adapted and applied by those "norm takers." As illustrated by the case of Bosnia (Juncos, 2017b) and Somalia/Somaliland (Ejdus, 2017b), local actors can also resort to EU discourses of local ownership to resist EU peacebuilding initiatives.

In sum, articles in this special issue investigate in more detail sources, forms and effects of both direct and indirect resistance to EU peacebuilding efforts. In the cases of Somalia/Somaliland, Bosnia and Kosovo surveyed by this special issue (see Ejdus, 2017b; Gippert, 2017; Juncos, 2017b; Mahr, 2017), we see a mix of overt and hidden forms of resistance, which have worked to undermine but in some cases, also reinforce EU peacebuilding initiatives. By shedding light on the local contestation of EU peacebuilding initiatives, articles in this special issue reveal thus far unacknowledged frictions, both conceptual and empirical in EU peacebuilding activities.

Conclusion: Contribution and further research agenda

In the conclusion to this special issue, Mac Ginty (2017) reflects on the overall contribution of this volume and specifically on the issue of technocracy. As shown by Mac Ginty, the technocratic nature of the EU, together with the bureaucratic orientation of "the local" shape the way EU–local interactions take place in peacebuilding. As well as this broader point, it is also worth summarizing here the special issue's four-fold contribution to the nascent scholarship on local perspectives on EU peacebuilding and some avenues for further research. First, taken as a whole, the articles in this special issue contribute to building a better understanding of how the EU engages with the local, for what purposes and with what consequences. By bringing the local back in, these articles fill an important gap in the literature by providing insights into how the EU is perceived and received at the local level.

The first thing to note is that the EU is gradually paying more attention to the local, not only in its rhetoric, but also in its practice. However, this is not always consistently or sufficiently done. More often than not, local views are not adequately incorporated into the design or implementation of EU peacebuilding initiatives (Ejdus, 2017b; Müller & Zahda, 2017). Moreover, in contrast to portrayals of the EU as a normative power, local accounts tend to highlight the inability and inconsistencies of the EU as normative actor or even, its coercive nature (Müller & Zahda, 2017). Drawing on the literature about external perceptions, further studies might examine more systematically how this impacts on the EU's ability to foster peace in post-conflict areas.

Second, the articles in this special issue not only inquire the concepts of effectiveness, ownership, and resistance, but they also explore the ways, in which these three concepts interact in the theory and practice of EU peacebuilding. Despite their significance, there are still important gaps in knowledge regarding, among others, how to assess effectiveness, who "owns" peacebuilding initiatives, or how resistance to EU peacebuilding takes place. In the case of effectiveness, it is evident from the contributions in this special issue that a focus on external perceptions can provide a better understanding of the conditions under which EU initiatives are implemented, why these fail or succeed (e.g., where EU initiatives result on unintended consequences on the ground or clash with competing local perceptions of effectiveness). Moreover, shifting our focus to resistance also helps us better understand limited effectiveness of EU peacebuilding interventions as well as challenges to the establishment of higher degrees of ownership. On a more theoretical level, this move towards resistance also holds a promise of de-colonizing the study of EU peacebuilding as it decentralizes the analysis of peacebuilding dynamics from the study of what the EU can or cannot achieve to what the locals make of it.

The articles also provide evidence of the fact that effectiveness, ownership and resistance are closely interrelated. A significant insight here is that when local ownership is lacking, this negatively affects the effectiveness of EU peacebuilding operations (Ejdus, 2017b). There is also a close link between effectiveness and resistance as the lack of (perceived) effectiveness might fuel resistance on the part of local actors (Mahr, 2017). Finally, there is also strong evidence that suggests that local actors can capitalize on EU discourses of local ownership to resist EU initiatives (Ejdus, 2017b; Juncos, 2017b). In sum, this special issue opens the way for more in-depth studies of how these three concepts interact and its implications for EU peacebuilding.

Thirdly, drawing on in-depth fieldwork, the papers develop empirically rich case studies of the implementation of EU peacebuilding in a variety of theaters, but crucially, incorporating local perceptions and views on such initiatives, something which had traditionally remained an empirical "blind spot" in EU peacebuilding studies. While some of the articles in this special issue analyze original empirical material related to previously well-studied missions (e.g., EUPM Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUPOL COPPS, EULEX Kosovo), other articles investigate previously little-studied missions and operations (e.g., EUCAP Nestor). Taken together, all the contributions in this special issue make a strong call to take the local seriously in both the study and the practice of EU peacebuilding.

Where do we go from here? There are at least three avenues for further research that directly stem from the contributions in this special issue. To begin with, in order to more fully capture "the local" in EU peacebuilding, researchers should rely on extensive fieldwork which goes beyond elite interviews with EU officials. In other words, researchers should avoid the trap of building their insight solely on the basis of meetings with EU gatekeepers in the field. Instead, they should try to reach out to local stakeholders and recipients of EU peacebuilding efforts in the widest possible sense. This can be tricky, as EU interventions often target narrow sections within the local security sectors, which are quickly transforming and are often difficult to access in conflict-affected environments. However, reaching out to those actors and talking to them is of paramount importance for getting "the local" aspect of EU peacebuilding right.

The majority of articles in this special issue still rely on *elite* qualitative interviews (but see Tartir & Ejdus, 2017; Gippert, 2017). Hence, there is scope for more ethnographically oriented methods in the study of EU peacebuilding (e.g., participant observation) as a way to better grasp how these issues are experienced from the bottom up. The promise of long-term immersion and ethnographic studies of EU peacebuilding have yet to be fulfilled for the benefit of our deeper understanding of the local and the micro aspect of EU actions in the world. Other methods, such as content analysis of the local press as well as surveys among the host population can also reveal popular

sentiments about the EU's peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected societies. In order to properly cash in these untapped research potentials, students of the local aspect of EU peacebuilding will have to build stronger linguistic expertise and area proficiency.

The second direction of future research is to look beyond CSDP interventions and include European Commission-funded initiatives in peacebuilding and SSR not only in Europe, Africa, and Middle East, but also Asia and Latin America. Particularly welcome would be to conduct comparative studies that examine some of these issues across a larger number of cases (e.g., small-N studies). It would be particularly useful to compare EU peacebuilding efforts with those of other actors such as the UN or the African Union. A comparison between local aspects of peacebuilding initiatives in different geographical contexts, but also in different stages and types of conflict would be highly warranted too.

Last but not least, a turn to the "local" should not just be limited to theoretical and methodological debates, it should also comprise a more inclusive scholarly practice reaching out to non-Western academics. It could also encompass research co-produced with policy-makers immersed in the local context and EU peacebuilding initiatives. In this special issue, we bring together eight scholars from both the EU member states and from those countries experiencing EU interventions to expose local perspectives on EU peacebuilding in Africa, Middle East, and Europe. This is only the start of what we hope should be a more inclusive scholarship of EU peacebuilding.

Note

1. The term "peacebuilding" is frequently associated with the work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, although its meaning can vary depending on the context (for different definitions of peacebuilding, see Barnett, Kim, O'Donnell, & Sitea, 2007). In this article, international peacebuilding will be understood in a general sense as any external support to domestic structures and processes aimed to reduce the risk of war and promote sustainable peace. In that sense, all EU interventions considered in this special issue can be characterized as peacebuilding initiatives in a broad sense of the term.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

Notes on contributors

Filip Ejdus is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade, Serbia. At the moment of submission of this article, he was a Marie Curie Fellow at the Global Insecurities Centre, University of Bristol, UK. His main research interest is the governance of (in)security during crises and beyond borders. While he currently focuses on how the EU projects its power globally, he is also interested in how states in the European periphery cope with critical situations.

Ana E. Juncos is a Reader in European Politics at the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies, University of Bristol, UK. Her primary research interest lies in European foreign and security policy, with a focus on the development on the EU's conflict prevention and crisis management capabilities and its role in conflict resolution. She is the Consortium Co-ordinator of the H2020 funded project EU-CIVCAP (http://www.eu-civcap.net). Her previous research project examined the EU's intervention in the Bosnia since 1991 (*EU Foreign and Security Policy in Bosnia*, Manchester University Press, 2013). She is also co-editor of *EU Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management* (with Eva Gross, Routledge, 2011).

ORCID

Filip Ejdus 🄳 http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7443-1661
Ana E. Juncos 🄳 https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6913-351X

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