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9.1 INTRODUCTION

Relationships between individuals and groups flow naturally during normal times. However, this ‘natural flow’ gets disrupted when conflict takes place. Conflict is thus viewed as a disruption in relationships. So if the relationship has to become normal and healthy again, this disruption has to be resolved. This would require constructively changing or ‘transforming’ the ways of relating to each other. Proponents have suggested several ways or ‘approaches’ and ‘perspectives’ to go about ‘transformation’.

Aims and Objectives

This unit would enable you to understand

- the reasons for choosing the term ‘conflict transformation’ over other popular terms and what it means;
- the concept of ‘conflict’ in conflict transformation and its relationship with ‘change’;
- various approaches to conflict transformation; and
- The multiple perspectives on conflict transformation.

9.2 WHY ‘CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION’?

For years the idea of ‘resolution’ was a more widely recognised term. However, some individuals, theorists and practitioners were not comfortable with it. One such practitioner, John Paul Lederach referring to the idea of ‘resolution’ wrote in *Conflict Resolution* in 2006:

“Perhaps unintentionally, this term carries the connotation of a bias toward ‘ending’ a given crisis or at least its outward expression, without being sufficiently concerned with the deeper structural, cultural, and long-term relational aspects of conflict.”

Earlier in 2003 in *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, Lederach described his shift from the term conflict resolution to conflict transformation in the following way:

“I began using the term *conflict transformation* in the 1980s, after intensive experience in Central America caused me to re-examine the language of the field.

When I arrived there my vocabulary was filled with the usual terminology of conflict resolution and management. I soon found, though, that my Latin colleagues had questions, even suspicions, about what was meant by such concepts. For them, *resolution* carried with it a danger of co-optation, an attempt to get rid of conflict when people were raising important and legitimate issues. It was not clear that *resolution* left room for advocacy. In their experience, quick solutions to deep social-political problems usually meant lots of good words but no real change.

.....In my work of helping to find constructive responses to violent conflict, I became increasingly convinced that much of what I was doing was seeking constructive change. “Conflict transformation” seemed to convey this meaning better than conflict *resolution* or *management*.”

Martina Fischer & Norbert Ropers in the 'Introduction' to *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation* consider the term conflict transformation to be "the most comprehensive" in comparison to the other terms being used in the field. In 2004, they said:

"Several terms are used to describe the field as well as activities within this field, such as conflict management, conflict resolution, conflict transformation, conflict prevention, peacebuilding etc. We regard the term *conflict transformation* as the most comprehensive to cover all activities which influence inter-group conflicts with the aim of promoting sustainable peace and social justice. This understanding comprises structure- and process-oriented endeavours of crisis prevention, strategies for empowering groups and building communities, conflict management and resolution activities, as well as rehabilitation, reconstruction and reconciliation efforts in post-war situations."

Further in *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, John Paul added that the guiding questions in conflict resolution and conflict transformation are very different. The guiding question in conflict resolution is: "How do we end something that is not desired?" while in conflict transformation the guiding question is: "How do we end something not desired and build something we do desire?" Transformation thus goes beyond resolution.

9.3 ORIGIN AND CONTEXT

Conflict transformation as a concept emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the context of early conflict research and development research. The idea of conflict transformation was already present in the works of peace researchers like Senghaas and Krippendorff. In 1973, they suggested that conflicts were connected to deeper structures in society, at both the national and international level. Smaller conflicts were related to national conflicts and larger conflicts in turn were rooted in the structure of the world society and international economy. Earlier in 1971, Adam Curle had suggested the transformation of asymmetric relationships by shifting from unbalanced to balanced relationships. For Curle development plays a key role in transformation as it involves:

"restructuring of a relationship so that the conflict or alienation that had previously rendered it unpeaceful is eliminated and replaced by a collaboration that prevents it from recurring."

Yet another conflict transformation exponent who believed in the notion that conflicts are a result of the contradictions in the structure of the society is Johan Galtung. In 1996, he deliberated that incompatibilities between the parties can be removed by transcending these contradictions, which could be done in one of the following ways: by compromise;

by deepening or widening the conflict structure, or by associating or disassociating the actors. Additionally, the development of the concept of conflict transformation within the framework of peace-building was furthered by the end of Cold War and the publication of the United Nation Secretary General's report, 'An Agenda for Peace' in 1992.

9.4 DEFINING CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Martina Fischer & Norbert Ropers in the 'Introduction' to *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation* written in 2004 define conflict transformation as "a generic, comprehensive concept" which refers to:

".... actions that seek to alter the various characteristics and manifestations of conflict by addressing the root causes of a particular conflict over the longterm with the aim to transform negative ways of dealing with conflict into positive constructive ways. The concept of conflict transformation stresses structural, behavioural and attitudinal aspects of conflict. It refers to both the process and the structure of moving towards 'just peace'."

Writing in 2006 in *Conflict Resolution*, John Paul Lederach talks of the advantages of conflict transformation as such:

".... being both *descriptively* rich in regard to conflict dynamics and *prescriptively* embedded in a framework that underscores a more holistic view of conflict. Descriptively, 'transformation' suggests that conflict affects and changes things in potentially destructive or constructive directions. Conflict transforms relationships, communication, perceptions, issues, and social organization.... Prescriptively, transformation is concerned with broader social structures, change and moving toward a social space open for cooperation, for more just relationships and for nonviolent mechanisms for handling conflict, or what might be understood as dynamic and increasingly peaceful relationships."

In 2009, Laurent Goetschel defined conflict transformation in *Post-conflict Peacebuilding: A Lexicon* as referring "to a process in which parties to a conflict consciously work towards a modification of the structural dimensions of a conflict with the short-term objective of prevention of renewed violence (or a reduction in its intensity) and with the long-term objective of sustainable peace."

To conclude, conflict transformation seeks constructive change of the deep-rooted problems located at the socio-political, cultural and relational levels by working on the structural, behavioural and attitudinal aspects of conflict. It constitutes the process as well as the structure of sustainable peace.

9.5 CONCEPT OF 'CONFLICT' IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

One major distinction between the conflict transformation approach and conflict settlement, management or resolution approaches is their perspective about conflict. Within conflict transformation, the focus is on the positive aspects of conflict. For John Paul Lederach, conflict transformation means being “engaged in constructive change efforts that include, and go beyond, the resolution of specific problems.” These efforts are based on “two verifiable realities: conflict is normal in human relationships, and conflict is a motor of change.” Conflict and change both are normal and dynamic processes. Conflict impacts situations and leads to changes in four areas – the personal, the relational, the structural and the cultural. Galtung too believed that conflicts have both positive and negative—or life-affirming and life-destroying—actors.

Conflict transformation thus sees conflict as an ‘opportunity’ wherein the deep-rooted issues of injustice can be dealt with and constructive change effected by minimising the negative effects of conflict and maximising the positive ones.

9.6 APPROACHES TO CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Various types of approaches have developed over the past years in the field of conflict transformation – western approaches, non-western approaches and approaches which have a mix of western and non-western elements. This typology has been developed just for the purposes of clarity as in reality all these approaches have been influenced by western and non-western ideas and practices.

9.6.1 TRADITIONAL (NON-WESTERN) APPROACHES

In 2006, Volker Boege in the article ‘Traditional Approaches to Conflict Transformation – Potentials and Limits’, delineated the context, features, strengths and weaknesses of the traditional approaches to conflict transformation. Boege opines that many contemporary violent conflicts in the countries of the Global South are “hybrid socio-political exchanges in which modern state-centric as well as pre-modern traditional and post-modern factors mix and overlap.” In situations of violent conflict, the state here is neither an actor nor does it enjoy any framework of reference. While referring to the traditional societies generally, Boege focuses specifically on the segmentary type—which are most of the time patriarchal and may be sometimes acephalous (headless societies that have no formal political leaders and no institutionalised system of power and authority). These segmentary types of societies are “farthest away from the modern state type with regard to the organization of political order and the control and regulation of violence.” However, they are “not chaotic” but “have their own institutions of control of violence...”

The first feature of the traditional approach to conflict transformation is that there is no one way of doing it; it is actually context specific. Secondly, traditional conflict transformation aims at restoring the order and social harmony of the community generally and social relationships between conflict parties particularly, for which reconciliation based on restorative justice (as opposed to retributive justice) is necessary. Restitution and not punishment is the basis for reconciliation. It “is thus geared towards the future.” Next, although traditional approaches are oriented towards the future, it does not forget to deal with the past. There has to be some sort of a consensus within the community generally and the conflicting parties specifically about what issues/events led to the conflict in the past. This will lead to confession by the perpetrators and request for forgiveness. This usually ends in compensation instead of violence, which mostly takes the form of exchange of material goods, either “blood money” or other gifts such as cattle. All these “endeavours are pursued in accordance with the customary law” and are sealed through rituals. Moreover, in traditional approaches the various dimensions of life such as social, economic, cultural and religious-spiritual, are not separated; they are part of the whole, making it holistic. Lastly, traditional conflict transformation is best suited to small communities—“conflicts within and between families, between neighbours, within and between villages or clans”—as they all adhere to the same customary laws or ways. Thus conflict between members of the “we-group” can be addressed within these approaches but conflicts between ‘us’ and ‘them’ such as those between local communities and state authority, are difficult to tackle as they adhere to other sets of laws, which can be either customary or formal.

The strengths of the traditional approaches are: they are best suited to situations where the state is either absent or weak; they are not state-centric and thus seen to be more legitimate by the communities where it is used; they are process-oriented and take the time factor into account as conflict transformation processes can be very time-consuming; they are inclusive and participatory; and lastly, they include mental and spiritual healing, thus focusing on psycho-social as well as spiritual dimensions of conflict transformation. Moving on to the weaknesses of the traditional approaches – they may not be able to put an end to violence in the long run, as recourse to violence is seen as ‘normal’ in traditional societies; they may contravene universal human rights and democratic principles; they are applicable to a limited community – the “we”-group; they believe in preserving the status quo or the old order; and they can be abused by traditional authorities for their own selfish interests and against the disadvantaged members.

9.6.2 WESTERN APPROACHES

This section intends to discuss the structural, civil society, dialogical, step-by-step and procedural approaches. Within the structural approach, focus will be on the contingency approach, development approach, state reforms approach, and systemic approach,

9.6.2.1 STRUCTURAL APPROACH

Conflict and often violence is a result of fundamental causes. Conflict transformation aims to work on the fundamental or structural conditions or causes of conflict. There are two dimensions of the structural conditions of conflict:

- Substantive dimension: This refers to real incompatibility or discrimination (which may be in the realm of either political, social, economic or cultural or a combination of two or more of these) against conflicting parties;
- Relational dimension: This refers to perceptions, prejudices, stereotypes and impressions which are a result of present and past interaction between the conflicting parties. This dimension is based on the endogenous (i.e. originating from within) interests of the conflicting parties. Conflict transformation attempts to change these interests by using adequate tools and methods. This is what distinguishes conflict transformation from other conflict theories as the latter consider interests a given thing.

The structural approaches touch upon a wide-area of issues and can thus be further classified into several sub-approaches. The approaches discussed in the succeeding sections are a combination of the two structural dimensions mentioned above.

9.6.2.1.1 CONTINGENCY APPROACH

The contingency approach to third-party intervention in armed conflicts was developed by Ronald Fisher and Loreleigh Keashly. They believe that the substantive or the objective and the relational or the subjective elements constantly interact in a conflict. The contingency approach aims to intervene in the conflict with the appropriate third party at the appropriate time. Fisher and Keashly suggest that the right time to work on the relational dimension of a conflict is the pre-negotiation phase. But in the event of the escalation of conflict, power mediation (substantive dimension) should be used. However, once a peace accord is in place, it is time to go back to relationship building (relational dimension). Thus the contingency approach involves various third party actors, making coordination among them a necessary prerequisite for effective conflict intervention.

9.6.2.1.2 DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Development assistance or aid plays an important role in the structural aspects of peace-building. It brings in the necessary funds needed for infrastructural development and provides economic opportunities to the masses, which can lead to their development and empowerment. If attention is paid to the equal distribution and proper channeling of

development aid it can promote participation and inclusive citizenship, which has the potential for conflict transformation.

9.6.2.1.3 STATE REFORM APPROACH

These approaches stress on state reform as a means of transforming war-torn areas. This is very critical especially for fragile states. Gunter Bachler in *Conflict Transformation through State Reform* written in 2004 laid out three strategic approaches to state reform and conflict transformation:

- participatory strategies, which will enhance social and political stability (democratisation, strengthening of civil society etc.);
- all forms of institution-building and institutional reform, which will contribute to a stronger societal fabric (decentralisation, constitution, justice system etc.); and
- security needs and demands (human rights and human security).

Bachler emphasizes on democracy as an essential condition for stable peace.

One institution which plays an important role in building a stronger societal fabric is the judicial or justice system. Justice is a prerequisite to peace. Gunnar Theissen in the article *Supporting Justice, Co-existence and Reconciliation after Armed Conflict* written in 2004, explored the judicial approach to conflict transformation especially in investigating and regulating injustices in the post-armed conflict phase. Amnesty, reparation and grassroots initiatives for reconciliation can contribute to conflict transformation. Tribunals, community courts and truth commissions set up by the state have some positives but there are certain risks involved in them as well and therefore local initiatives and institutions should be encouraged to develop ways and means to deal with the past injustices. Dealing with the past and reconciling is a long-term process but it is something that cannot be forced on former adversaries. If past atrocities and injustices are not investigated properly, victims can refuse to reconcile.

9.6.2.1.4 SYSTEMIC APPROACH

Systemic approach to conflict transformation is based on the systemic perspective, which arose as a reaction to separating and atomising things with a view to controlling the course of events. This fragmentation led to the loss of key features of the “whole”. The “whole” is more than the sum of its parts.

The systemic approaches were applied to conflict resolution in the 1980s and 1990s to analyse conflicts and conceptualise interventions. However, in most of these applications only few elements were used and the difference between “systemic” (holistic efforts for intervention) and “systematic” (comprehensive efforts for intervention) was blurred. John Burton, influenced by the general systems theory, emphasized that “first-order learning”, i.e. learning *within* a given order, as well as “second-order learning”, i.e. learning which

questions the values, principles and structure of this order, both are necessary to address protracted conflicts.

The concept of multi-track diplomacy was developed by John McDonald and Louise Diamond in 1996. They stressed on the need of transforming protracted conflicts on several “tracks” of engagement at the same time. They also emphasized on either ensuring complementarity of the tracks or to build strategies to balance difficulties on one track with activities on other tracks.

In 2006, Peter Coleman introduced the “dynamical systems” approach to address protracted conflicts in a comprehensive manner. Coleman argued that the main purpose of conflict intervention should be to change the overall *patterns of interaction* of the parties and not to foster one particular *outcome* such as a peace agreement. These modifications in interactive patterns could make social change sustainable.

Researches have been conducted by organisations to further develop the potential of systemic conflict transformation especially to assess and evaluate peace-promoting interventions. One such organisation is CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (earlier named Collaborative Development Action) which initiated a project called “Reflection on Peace Project”. The CDA uses systemic conflict analyses to identify potentially useful strategic variables for conflict transformation. Oliver Wils *et al* explored the potential of systemic thinking under the aegis of the Berghof Foundation for Peace Support. They focused more on outlining main elements for applying systemic thinking to designing and implementing peaceful interventions, which are in the form of following clusters: Systemic Conflict Analysis and Monitoring; Strategic Planning of Systemic Interventions; Engagements with Key Stakeholders; Mobilisation of Agents of Peaceful Change; and Creativity in Imagining Alternative Peaceful Futures.

The main features of systemic conflict transformation are as follows:

- All conflict analyses are assumed as mental models, which are linked to the interests and interactions of the parties involved including the third parties.
- Systemic approaches make use of multiple tools to analyse conflicts and also accept different narratives and perspectives as essential parts of a conflict.
- Complex social changes are rarely linear.
- Peace processes in particular are likely to be confronted with a series of setbacks and resistance. Systemic approaches try to explain the inherent fragility of peace processes such as why well-intentioned actions have counterproductive effects.
- Any constructive peace initiative must take into account all “like-minded” as well as “unlike-minded” forces with interest in the peace efforts.
- Mobilisation of “internal resources” is the best way to resolve problems.

- Interaction with and among the conflicting parties and other stakeholders in the conflict region is a “learning space”. This space has the following three parameters as mentioned by Oliver Wils *et al* in *The Systemic Approach to Conflict Transformation: Concept and Fields of Application*, written in 2006: “multipartiality in elaborating and reviewing processes & structures; constructive-critical engagement with the stakeholders; and envisioning multiple peaceful futures.” These parameters are useful in the context of long-term processes.

In conclusion, two advantages of the systemic approaches are that first, the tools of system dynamics provide new insights into the self-production of protracted conflicts and secondly, the tools focus on addressing the analysis of solutions as well as the analysis of problems.

9.6.2.2 CIVIL SOCIETY APPROACHES

The World Bank uses the term civil society organisations to refer to:

“non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations. This includes a wide array of organizations: community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), labour unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations.”

Civil society organisations generally occupy a place of prominence in contemporary times especially in the field of peace-building and conflict transformation, wherein they are expected to contribute positively to the post-conflict scenario.

Martina Fischer in her article *Civil Society in Conflict Transformation: Ambivalence, Potentials and Challenges*, written in 2006, gives an overview of the civil society approaches to conflict transformation. Civil society groups can work in the area of reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration of refugees and displaced people. Moving from reconstruction towards conflict transformation would require a combination of “development approaches, economic perspectives, empowerment of local actors for civil society issues, peace-education and social work.” However, such wide-range of activities will need to be coordinated in order to be effective. Civil society actors can thus play a positive role in peace efforts but they can also play a negative role in mobilising people for war efforts. Moreover, mere presence of civil society is not a guarantee of positive contribution to peace efforts. Besides, civil society organisations cannot compensate for the deficits of state-building.

9.6.2.3 DIALOGICAL APPROACH

Norbert Ropers emphasizes on the role of dialogues in dealing constructively with conflicts. Track II diplomacy, as opposed to classical diplomacy, gives centre-stage to “communication, direct encounters and mutual understanding.” In the article, *From Resolution to Transformation: The Role of Dialogue Projects*, written in 2004, Ropers delineates four practical forms of dialogue projects based on the objectives they pursue:

- Dialogue projects as grassroots peace-building and interpersonal reconciliation efforts: They relate to the local or neighbourhood level and bring together people who have similar interests or are caught in similar situations. “The central elements are personal encounters and the elimination of barrier to communication”.
- Dialogue projects combined with individual capacity building: These projects are a “combination of training and conflict management” and “enhance participants’ skills in interacting with one another.” Such “encounters provide an ideal setting to try out dialogue skills.”
- Dialogue projects combined with institution building, networking, and practical projects: These dialogues are “only possible after the successful conclusion of a fairly-long process of confidence-buildingThe task in many cases is either to institutionalize the dialogue in the form of inter-ethnic advisory bodies, reconciliation commissions, or NGO networks, or to set up or build the capacity of individual NGOs.”
- Dialogue projects as pre-negotiation: These projects are designed “to exert influence on the management of the conflict at the political leadership level.” Interactive conflict resolution and problem-solving approaches intend to do just that by having confidential workshops with influential participants of the conflicting parties with the aim of generating ideas that will “later facilitate and give new life to the official negotiations.”

To conclude, dialogue projects can contribute the most by promoting a dispute culture based on dialogue, which can be used by individuals, groups and organisations to deal with conflicts constructively.

9.6.2.4 STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH

Conflict results in mistrust and suspicion between conflicting groups. Thus small but coordinated steps are required for transforming the conflict from war to the negotiation stage. The step-by-step approach is mostly about ‘confidence-building measures’. Talking about this approach in the edited volume on *Conflict Resolution*, John Paul Lederach wrote in 2006:

“The strength of this approach lies with building momentum based on clear and mutually understood signs that indicate that the people involved are moving

toward change. However, the approach is vulnerable, placing so much emphasis on the interpretation of and need for verifying the good faith of the enemy.....Further, the focus is short-term, on the immediate, and may become myopic as it attempts to verify what can easily appear to be insignificant signs in order to move forward. Nevertheless, it does highlight several key aspects of any endeavor in the transformation of armed conflict: At some point, concrete steps must be taken.”

9.6.2.5 PROCEDURAL APPROACH

The procedural approach as laid out by John Paul focuses on peace efforts that aim at clarifying with each side to the conflict what process would be acceptable to each of them. These are referred to as ‘talks about talks’. The positive aspect of this approach “lies in the transformation that comes with achieving a clear and mutually defined process.” But the downside is that it does not guarantee or assume the sincerity of either side to the conflict.

9.6.3 MIX OF WESTERN & NON-WESTERN APPROACHES

Both western and non-western inputs have contributed to the development of these approaches. One example is the non-violent approach.

9.6.3.1 NON-VIOLENT APPROACH

Non-violent approaches believe that peace is *created* by establishing a social order which manages conflict in a non-violent manner. In 1918, Alfred Fried formulated the doctrine of causal pacifism wherein the main purpose was to establish “a new world order” or a new form of global governance. This intention was “inspired by a purposeful spirit of peace.” Abolition of conflict is not the main feature here but conflict transformation, which in the words of Fried, will consist of “the shaping of international relations in a way which will imbue conflicts with a character which frees them from violence and makes them entirely suitable for management by legal means.”

Within non-violent approaches, non-violence is a value wherein injustice and violence are opposed, whatever the context – individual, organisational, social, national or international. Injustice and violence has to be opposed here through an active resistance without taking recourse to violence in that struggle. Non-violence thus is not just an ideology but rather a stance that is adopted in all walks of life, i.e. in what one does and how one lives. Gandhi was one of the major exponents and practitioners of this approach. Non-violent approaches are participative, interactive and based on experience. These approaches work on attitudes as well as behaviours and explore the connection between them. Again, this kind of an initiative will be marked by progress as well as set-backs and thus the time line here is not linear.

Johan Galtung's TRANSCEND approach is also based on non-violence. He believes that much violence occurs because conflicts are mishandled. At the root of conflict is *contradiction*; *attitudes* and *behaviour* come in later forming a triangle. The three corners of the triangle stimulate each other. The TRANSCEND approach focuses on peaceful conflict transformation based on four pillars of activity: action, education and training, dissemination, and research. Writing in 2002 in *Searching for Peace: The Road to TRANSCEND*, Johan Galtung *et al* mention the mission statement of TRANSCEND as "peace by peaceful means". They further elaborate:

"By *peace* we mean the capacity to transform conflicts constructively and without violence; a never-ending process.

By *transforming conflicts* we mean helping bring about a situation so that the parties can proceed in a participatory, mutually acceptable, and sustainable manner.

By *constructively* we mean channeling conflict energy towards new, innovative ways of satisfying basic human needs for all.

By *without violence* we mean that this process should avoid:

- any threat or use of direct violence that hurts and harms,
- any use of structural violence that demobilizes the parties."

9.7 PERSPECTIVES ON CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

There are various perspectives on conflict transformation – political, economic, socio-cultural, relational, psychological, short- and long-term. Some of these have already been touched upon in the approaches section, for instance the political and economic perspective touches on issues that fall within the structural approach (e.g. state reforms and development approaches). Therefore this section will briefly focus on perspectives that have not been explicitly discussed in the earlier sections. Psychological approach is a case in point. Conflict transformation believes that it is important to focus on trauma issues that arise in the wake of violent conflict situations and leave individuals, groups and communities traumatised. Trauma work should thus be an integral part of conflict transformation. Another important perspective is the socio-cultural. Communities and groups need to process the events and results of conflicts as a community. They can choose as a community, the events they want to remember and the events they wish to forget. Symbols, rituals, ceremonies, stories, norms, healing practices, which could be religious and/or spiritual, do play an important role in this connection, especially in traditional societies. Thus the culture of a given society or community does contribute to conflict transformation. On the other hand, John Paul Lederach talks of a long- and short-term perspective in the article *Conflict Transformation in Protracted Internal Conflicts; The Case for a Comprehensive Framework*, written in 2006. The short-term perspective

is about immediate issues of the conflict such as ceasefire while the long-term perspective is about agenda such as electoral or constitutional reforms. However, John Paul opines that these perspectives are not contradictory. He suggests a comprehensive framework wherein both the perspectives can be incorporated as legitimate concerns.

9.8 SUMMARY

Conflict is a disruption in relationship. Overcoming conflict would mean transforming the ways of relating to each other. The field of conflict transformation suggests various approaches to bring about transformation. These approaches range from traditional to western to a mix of traditional and western. They touch upon a wide range of issues such as structure, which includes state reforms, economic and systemic aspects; civil society, dialogue projects and non-violence as a guiding factor. Other approaches touch on issues such as small steps like confidence-building or the complete procedural framework. Conflict transformation touches on several perspectives which individuals and communities encounter in the course of a conflict – political, economic, socio-cultural, and psychological. The key aspect in the various approaches and perspectives on conflict transformation is relationship-building.

9.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What guided the shift of terminology from ‘conflict resolution’ to ‘conflict transformation’?
2. Define conflict transformation and enumerate its origin and the context in which it originated.
3. How is ‘conflict’ conceptualised in the field of conflict transformation?
4. Describe briefly the various approaches used in conflict transformation.
5. Write a note on the structural approach to conflict transformation. Briefly, discuss the main features of the systemic approach to conflict transformation?
6. What is the civil society approach to conflict transformation? What are its strengths and weaknesses?
7. What are the various kinds of dialogues possible within the dialogical approach to conflict transformation?
8. Distinguish between the step-by-step approach and the procedural approach to conflict transformation.
9. Discuss the non-violent approach to conflict transformation.

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