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Spoilers in Peace Processes

A Comparative Study

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Spoilers in Peace Processes: A Comparative Study

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*To the ones I love,
Thanks for being always by my side*

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Abstract

Lo scopo di questa tesi è di analizzare il ruolo degli spoilers nei processi di pace. In primo luogo, tenterò di definire cosa sono gli spoilers, partendo dal dibattito teorico che circonda questo concetto ed esaminando come gli studiosi lo riportano; spiegherò la loro relazione con politica e mediatori e successivamente osserverò come essi agiscono e quali strategie sono state attuate, o sono suggerite, per gestirli adeguatamente. In seguito, investigherò due processi di pace, in cui differenti tipologie di spoilers furono gestite attraverso l'adozione di diverse strategie: il processo di pace Cambogiano e il processo di pace Nord-Irlandese. Infine, userò il processo di pace che portò alla firma degli Accordi di Oslo del 1993 tra Israele e Organizzazione per la Liberazione della Palestina come esempio di fallita gestione degli spoilers.

Pacificare un conflitto è una questione rischiosa, in cui la principale fonte di pericolo deriva dagli spoilers (Stedman, 1997), definiti come leaders e fazioni che ritengono che la pace emergente dalle negoziazioni possa risultare in una perdita di potere e in una minaccia ai propri interessi, e sono dunque pronti ad usare la violenza per minare ogni possibile tentativo di giungere ad essa.

Nel mondo attuale, gli spoilers e i comportamenti ad essi associati costituiscono un tema sempre più rilevante: il successo nella risoluzione di un conflitto è una questione pressante, considerando i costi e le perdite materiali e di vite umane coinvolti. Fallire nell'ottenere la pace può comportare un aumento nel senso di insicurezza e incertezza della cittadinanza, un rischio considerevole per i leaders politici e una minaccia per la stabilità internazionale. Inoltre, a causa della globalizzazione, la gente comune è più consapevole che in passato delle devastazioni e delle conseguenze negative dei conflitti violenti. Esempi di possibili spoilers nei processi di pace includono gruppi armati, partiti politici o fazioni al loro interno, forze di sicurezza, capi religiosi o tradizionali, movimenti popolari radicali, attori economici, mass media e molti altri.

Gli spoilers portano con sé numerosi problemi che devono essere tenuti in considerazione quando si cerca di negoziare la pace. Pertanto, un'efficace identificazione dei possibili spoilers è fondamentale per trattare con essi.

Nonostante il concetto di spoiler sia ampiamente sconosciuto al grande pubblico, gli studiosi offrono un gran numero di definizioni di spoiler: Aggestam (2006), in linea con Stedman, suggerisce che gli spoilers sono "leaders e fazioni che vedono una particolare

pace come opposta ai propri interessi e sono intenzionati ad utilizzare la violenza al fine di minarla”. Wanis-St.John (2006) li definisce come “parti che possono sfidare ciascun lato della disputa e che potrebbero avere un interesse nel mantenere lo *status quo* del conflitto”, in cui, per *status quo*, si intende la situazione in cui l’accordo di pace non è ancora stato raggiunto o implementato, così che uno spoiler potrebbe ancora essere in grado di far deragliare le negoziazioni; infine, Newman e Richmond (2006) asseriscono che essi sono “gruppi che cercano attivamente di ostacolare, ritardare o minare un accordo sul conflitto attraverso una varietà di metodi e per varie ragioni”.

La molteplicità di definizioni rende una cosa particolarmente chiara: il concetto di spoiler è tuttora molto sconclusionato e identificare uno spoiler per quello che realmente è può rivelarsi un compito molto complicato per le parti coinvolte nelle negoziazioni. Gli studiosi devono ancora giungere ad una definizione comune e inequivocabile del concetto di spoiler, risultando le loro interpretazioni diverse specialmente in tre aspetti: i comportamenti messi in atto dagli spoilers, quali attori vanno presi in considerazione come possibili spoilers e quali sono le ragioni per cui un gruppo o una fazione diventa uno spoiler.

Per di più, il concetto di spoiler è strettamente relazionato con la politica; questo perché una delle principali caratteristiche degli atti di spoiling consiste nella loro componente di soggettività: richieste considerate legittime da una parte possono essere percepite come una forma di spoiling dall’altra. In aggiunta, i processi di pace avvengono spesso all’interno della cornice di pace liberale (Newman e Richmond, 2006), un concetto teorico e filosofico introdotto per la prima volta da Immanuel Kant che si riferisce principalmente agli stati democratici e include, tra gli altri, valori tradizionali occidentali, come la democratizzazione, il ruolo della legge e il libero mercato. La pace liberale è l’implementazione delle funzioni democratiche come basi per la pace mondiale; Newman e Richmond (2006) e Mac Ginty (2008) in particolare, ammoniscono che questa tipologia di cornice normativa non è sempre desiderabile e un giudizio prematuro basato su questi valori specifici potrebbe rivelarsi essere un grande errore, poiché i principi democratici non sono sempre appropriati per diagnosticare correttamente gli spoilers in alcuni contesti. Riguardo al quadro costituito dalla pace liberale, un importante contributo viene dato da Dalsheim (2014): essa sostiene che gli spoilers sono l’indicazione di un malfunzionamento sistemico all’interno del concetto di stato-nazione e le costruzioni

secolari dello storicismo, perché, nella sua opinione, i processi di *conflict resolution* e diplomazia partecipano in realtà alla costruzione di entità nemiche, concludendo che le peculiarità tipiche della pace liberale, quali giustizia sociale, diplomazia e risoluzione dei conflitti, contribuiscono in realtà alla creazione di spoilers; inoltre, concentrandosi sul conflitto israelo-palestinese, essa pone particolare attenzione a come le forme narrative e il nazionalismo limitino le possibilità di risolvere pacificamente la guerra.

Oltretutto, collegati ai processi di pace ci sono spesso importanti interessi politici in gioco: ciò può creare problematiche e limitare il ruolo dei mediatori, i così-detti “custodi della pace”, poiché forti poteri politici potrebbero agire come veri spoilers e intervenire per rallentare o addirittura distruggere il processo di pace, nel caso in cui questo non vada nella direzione da loro voluta. Un esempio che verrà approfondito in questa Tesi si riferisce a come l'ex Segretario di Stato americano Condoleezza Rice interferì nei negoziati di pace durante il conflitto tra Israele ed Hezbollah in Libano nel 2006.

Un'ultima rilevante relazione è quella tra spoilers e la società e i suoi leaders; Bar-Tal (2012) esamina come gli spoilers possano avvantaggiarsi dalla situazione di transizione tra guerra e pace, caratterizzata da una società polarizzata, nella quale anche coloro a favore della pace possono avere difficoltà ad adeguarsi al nuovo modo di pensare: Bar-Tal (2012) ritiene che in tali circostanze, in cui gli spoilers potrebbero ottenere vantaggi dal contesto post-guerra persuadendo ed incitando la società polarizzata per delegittimare l'accordo di pace, la figura del leader è fondamentale nel guidare la propria società attraverso la trasformazione, minimizzando pubblicamente le azioni degli spoilers e rinforzando il loro impegno verso la pace.

Stephen Stedman (1997) afferma che gli spoilers possono essere sia interni che esterni al processo; uno spoiler interno di solito firma un accordo di pace, segnala la propria volontà di implementare l'accordo, ma fallisce nel soddisfare obbligazioni chiave dell'intesa, mentre uno spoiler esterno è una parte esclusa dal processo di pace e che usa la violenza per attaccarlo. Spoilers interni ed esterni possono avere differenti prospettive e interessi, ma hanno in comune il fatto di vedere una particolare forma di pace derivante dal processo di pacificazione come non profittevole, e sono dunque incentivati ad opporvisi.

I Khmer Rouge (KR) in Cambogia sono un tipico esempio di spoiler interno, mentre la Coalizione per la Difesa della Repubblica (CDR) durante il conflitto in Rwanda (1994) può essere descritta come uno spoiler esterno. Come appena notato, spoilers interni ed

esterni tendono ad usare differenti strategie per inseguire i propri interessi: strategie “furtive” i primi, frequente ricorso alla violenza i secondi. Per “strategie furtive”, Stedman (1997) intende quelle tattiche per cui gli spoilers interni nascondono la loro minaccia e minimizzano la propria violenza, al fine di continuare a far progredire il processo di pace fintantoché i suoi risultati consentono loro di ottenere vantaggi a discapito dei propri avversari.

Inoltre, Stedman esegue un'altra cruciale differenziazione; secondo lui, ci sono tre categorie di spoilers: limitati, avidi e totali. Questa differenziazione è principalmente basata sugli obiettivi e la dedizione degli spoilers. In breve, spoilers “limitati” hanno obiettivi limitati, come riconoscimento e sicurezza di base, anche se ciò non implica necessariamente che la loro dedizione sia limitata. Al contrario, spoilers “totali” inseguono il potere e un riconoscimento esclusivo della propria autorità: i loro obiettivi non cambieranno durante i negoziati e la loro visione del mondo è del tipo “tutto o niente”. Gli spoilers “avidisti” si posizionano tra gli spoilers limitati e gli spoilers totali e sono caratterizzati dal fatto che i loro obiettivi si contraggono o espandono in base al calcolo di costi e rischi.

Il *locus* in cui gli spoilers si trovano e il loro numero sono altri aspetti che Stedman analizza e che verranno brevemente esaminati in questa Tesi.

Stedman fornisce diverse strategie che possono essere attuate nella gestione degli spoilers, dipendentemente dalla categoria a cui appartengono: esempi di queste strategie sono l'*incentivazione*, nel caso degli spoilers limitati, la *socializzazione*, nel caso degli spoilers avidi e la *coercizione*, nel caso degli spoilers totali. Importante è comunque notare come diverse versioni di queste strategie possono essere applicate e che la giusta strategia dipende da numerosi fattori e deve essere implementata solo dopo aver adeguatamente diagnosticato le caratteristiche di ogni caso.

Il contributo di Stedman è stato criticato da molti studiosi che sostengono il suo fallimento nell'identificare spoilers latenti e non manifesti, notano la mancanza di un'analisi dei fattori strutturali e sottolineano numerose ambiguità che riducono l'utilità della sua categorizzazione: tra questi autori, Cochrane (2008), Zahar (2008-2010) e Greenhill e Major (2007). Tutte queste critiche verranno sviluppate ed esaminate successivamente in questa Tesi.

Un altro fattore cruciale che verrà esaminato è il coinvolgimento di terze parti: la loro influenza è chiaramente molto rilevante per una conclusione positiva del processo di pace; nonostante il fatto che essi non siano mai neutrali, la loro determinazione nel porre un fine al conflitto (oppure, in casi negativi, di provocarne un'escalation) è solitamente di fondamentale rilevanza. Generalmente, è possibile suddividere le parti terze in tre categorie: ufficiali (stati ed organizzazioni internazionali), le Nazioni Unite e non ufficiali (organizzazioni non governative).

In alcuni casi, un possibile modo di gestire gli spoilers consiste nelle così-dette Back Channel Negotiations (BCNs), ovvero l'instaurazione di canali di comunicazione segreti tra le parti coinvolte, che dovrebbero essere atte a permettere loro di negoziare escludendo il disturbo degli spoilers.

Al fine di esaminare in maniera migliore il ruolo degli spoilers e le strategie per la loro gestione, in questa Tesi esaminerò due conflitti scoppiati negli ultimi decenni del ventesimo secolo e, conseguentemente, i loro processi di pace: Cambogia ed Irlanda del Nord.

I casi di Cambogia ed Irlanda del Nord differiscono in numerose dinamiche, come localizzazione, background, tipi di spoilers e parti coinvolte, ma sono due grandi esempi di processi di pace caratterizzati dalla presenza di diverse tipologie di spoilers e in cui diverse tattiche furono adottate per la loro gestione.

Dopo una breve analisi del background dei conflitti, esaminerò quali tipi di spoilers erano presenti nei due scenari, come essi hanno agito per minare il processo di pace e come essi sono stati gestiti, sia con successo che con insuccesso.

Nel caso della Cambogia, furono due gli spoilers che agirono contro la pace: i Khmer Rouge (KR) e l'Organizzazione dello Stato della Cambogia (SOC). I primi erano considerati dalla comunità internazionale come la più grande minaccia per la pace e la parte più pericolosa coinvolta nel conflitto: i KR avevano firmato gli Accordi di Pace di Parigi il 23 ottobre 1991, per poi successivamente adottare una tattica di rifiuto dell'implementazione di tali accordi. Contro i KR, l'UNTAC, l'Autorità di Transizione delle Nazioni Unite in Cambogia, applicò la così-detta strategia del "*departing train*": essa consisteva nell'escluderli dalle elezioni nazionali che si sarebbero svolte nel 1993, lasciando loro, allo stesso tempo, la porta aperta per ricongiungersi al processo. Questa strategia fu coronata da successo, in quanto riuscì a suscitare un consenso a livello

internazionale atto a delegittimare le istanze dei KR e ad appoggiare la continuazione del processo di pace anche in loro assenza.

La seconda agì come *greedy spoiler* dopo le elezioni del 1993, contestando il risultato delle elezioni e cercando di prendere il potere; sin dall'inizio del processo di implementazione degli Accordi di Pace di Parigi, l'UNTAC si era principalmente focalizzato sui KR come minaccia alla pace e, conseguentemente, era impreparato quando la SOC cominciò i suoi tentativi di danneggiare il processo di pace. La SOC era stata in realtà rafforzata dal fatto che la sua partecipazione alle elezioni fosse necessaria per mantenere in vita l'intero processo e la strategia di *inducement* portata avanti dall'UNTAC fallì nell'ottenere qualsiasi risultato significativo; la SOC riuscì a manipolare un processo di pace negoziato e implementato a livello internazionale, portando il paese ad un colpo di stato nel 1997 in cui i suoi avversari furono attaccati ed eliminati.

Nel caso dell'Irlanda del Nord, il processo di pace portò a due distinti accordi che vanno entrambi presi in considerazione: l'accordo di Sunningdale (1973) e l'accordo del "Venerdì Santo" (1998). L'accordo di Sunningdale fu supportato dal governo britannico, in un tentativo di dare una diversa forma di governo all'Irlanda del Nord e fallì a causa delle azioni di spoilers sia Unionisti che Repubblicani; il fallimento dell'accordo di Sunningdale non portò comunque alla creazione di basi per qualsivoglia forma di cooperazione tra le parti.

Da questo fallimento, sia il governo inglese che quello irlandese impararono un'importante lezione: per garantire il successo del processo di pace, era necessario un approccio inclusivo. Una componente chiave che guidò all'accordo del Venerdì Santo fu la diplomazia back-channel, che fornì un mezzo di comunicazione alle parti e aiutò lo sviluppo di reciproca comprensione e riconoscimento. I negoziati back-channel in Irlanda del Nord durarono per più di una decade e fornirono la struttura per l'inclusione nelle negoziazioni di attori precedentemente considerati estremisti, quali l'*Irish Republican Army (IRA)*.

L'approccio inclusivo seguito al fallimento dell'accordo di Sunningdale si rivelò vincente: il corretto uso delle negoziazioni back-channel permise l'entrata nel processo dell'IRA, considerata un possibile *greedy spoiler*, la creazione di uno spirito di fiducia tra le parti e la costruzione di un consenso generalizzato, fondamentale all'implementazione

dell'accordo. Gli spoilers furono prevalentemente gestiti attraverso la diplomazia segreta a lungo termine, che, escludendo le fazioni più estremiste e includendo l'IRA, aiutò a creare le fondamenta per la cooperazione e ad emarginare le richieste delle parti opposte alla pace, come il Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA).

Inoltre, il referendum che si svolse sia in Irlanda del Nord che nella Repubblica di Irlanda nel maggio 1998 confermò l'accettazione dell'accordo tra la popolazione e ne rafforzò la validità. L'approccio inclusivo restò in essere negli anni seguenti: il Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), per esempio, che si era precedentemente opposto all'accordo, fu infine inserito in un esecutivo partecipato insieme allo Sinn Féin, l'ala politica dell'IRA, a seguito della maggioranza ottenuta alle elezioni dell'Assemblea nordirlandese del 2003. Infine, nell'ultima sezione della Tesi, esaminerò il processo di pace che portò all'Accordo di Oslo del 1993 tra Israele e Organizzazione per la Liberazione della Palestina; questo processo è spesso dipinto come esempio di cattiva gestione degli spoilers, rendendolo un grande esempio da mettere in comparazione con i due casi precedentemente menzionati: le negoziazioni back-channel furono essenziali nel processo, verosimilmente apportando risultati migliori che le contemporanee negoziazioni a livello front-channel, ma, in questo caso, il loro uso finì per rafforzare gli spoilers, che furono in grado di bloccare l'implementazione dell'accordo.

Al contrario di quanto accaduto nel processo di pace in Irlanda del Nord, l'utilizzo di riunioni segrete non portò a fiducia e riconoscimento reciproci, fu limitato ad un numero ristretto di rappresentanti e non fu in grado di presentare l'accordo di Oslo come un'efficace soluzione al conflitto ai rispettivi elettorati interni, creando una sorta di circolo vizioso in cui le parti, limitate dalla segretezza, non furono capaci di preparare in maniera adeguata le rispettive opinioni pubbliche; il fatto che l'intero processo di negoziazione fu tenuto segreto, l'eccessiva dipendenza verso il back-channelling e l'incapacità degli attori di sviluppare una "broad central coalition" (Pruitt, 2005), furono tra le principali ragioni per cui la pace non fu ottenuta. I maggiori spoilers di ambedue le parti, Hamas e i coloni israeliani, furono facilmente in grado di mobilitare le popolazioni contro l'implementazione dell'accordo di Oslo, portando a termine attacchi terroristici che ebbero l'effetto di incrementare l'insicurezza, il sentimento d'odio e il senso di scetticismo riguardo la reale possibilità di porre fine alle violenze.

Questi casi mi aiuteranno a verificare l'utilità e la veracità della definizione e della categorizzazione di Stedman, esaminando l'intero set di fattori che l'autore considera nel suo studio riguardo gli spoilers. Inoltre, questa analisi sottolineerà come questa categorizzazione possa essere applicata sul campo e quali differenze e adattamenti devono essere aggiornati per farne un uso corretto ed appropriato.

Introduction

The goal of this Master Thesis is to analyse the role of spoilers in peace processes. First, I will try to define what spoilers are, starting from the theoretical debate surrounding this concept and analysing how scholars report it; I will explain their relationship with politics and mediators and then I will examine how do they operate and which strategies have been carried out, or are suggested, in order to properly manage them. Later, I will investigate two peace processes, in which different types of spoilers were managed with different types of strategies: the Cambodian peace process and the Northern Ireland peace process. Finally, I will use the peace process that led to the 1993 Oslo Agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization as an example of failed management of spoilers.

Peacemaking is a risky business, in which the greatest source of risk comes from spoilers (Stedman, 1997), defined as leaders or parties believing that peace emerging from negotiations will result in a loss of power and in a threat to their interests, and are thus ready to use violence in order to undermine attempts to achieve it.

In today's world, spoilers and spoiling behaviours are an increasingly relevant topic: successful conflict resolution is an urgent matter, considering the costs and the material and human losses involved. Failing in making peace can mean an increasing in citizens' insecurity and uncertainty, a major risk for political leaders and a threat to international stability. Moreover, because of globalization, common people are more aware than in the past of the devastations and negative consequences of violent conflicts. Examples of possible spoilers in peace processes include armed groups, political parties or factions within political parties, security forces, religious or traditional chiefs, radical peoples' movements, economic actors, mass media and many more.

Spoilers bring along several problems that need to be taken into account when trying to negotiate peace. Therefore, an effective identification of possible spoilers is fundamental to deal with them.

Even if the concept of spoiler is largely unknown by the large audience, scholars offer a number of different definitions of spoilers: Aggestam (2006), in line with Stedman, suggests that spoilers are "leaders and factions who view a particular peace as opposed to their interests and who are willing to use violence to undermine it". Wanis-St. John (2006)

defines them as “parties who can challenge each side in the dispute and may have an interest in maintaining the conflict’s status quo”, as, for *status quo*, is intended the situation in which a peace agreement has not been reached or implemented yet, so that a spoiler may still be able to derail negotiations; lastly, Newman and Richmond (2006) state that they are “ groups that actively seek to hinder, delay or undermine conflict settlement through a variety of means and for various reasons”.

This variety of definitions makes one thing particularly clear: the concept of spoiler is still very disjointed and identifying a spoiler for what it actually is may prove to be a really uneasy task for the parties involved in the negotiations. Scholars still have to find a common and unambiguous definition of spoiler, as their interpretations differ especially in three respects: spoilers’ behaviours, actors taken into consideration as possible spoilers and reasons why a specific party becomes a spoiler.

Moreover, the concept of spoiler is strictly related with politics; this because one of the main characteristics of spoiling is its component of subjectivity: demands considered legitimate by one party may be perceived as a form of spoiling by the other. In addition, peace processes often take place in the framework of liberal peace (Newman and Richmond, 2006), a theoretical and philosophical concept first introduced by Immanuel Kant which mainly refers to democratic states and include, among others, traditional Western values such as democratization, the rule of law and free market. Liberal peacemaking is the implementation of democracy functions as the basis for global peace; Newman and Richmond (2006) and Mac Ginty (2008) in particular, admonish that this kind of framework is not always fitting and a premature judgment based on these specific values may turn out to be a huge mistake, as democratic principles are not always appropriate to correctly diagnose spoilers in some contexts. Regarding the liberal peace framework, an important contribution is made by Dalsheim (2014): she debates that spoilers are an indication of a systemic malfunction within the concept of nation-state and the secular constructs of historicism, because, according to her, processes of conflict resolution and diplomacy actually participate in constructing enemies, concluding that features typical of liberal peace, such as social justice, diplomacy and conflict resolution, actually contribute to the creation of spoilers; furthermore, focusing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, she pays particular attention to how the narrative form and nationalism limit the possibilities to peacefully resolve the war.

Equally, combined with peace processes there are often important political interests at stake: this may create problematics and limit the role of mediators, the so-called “custodians of peace”, as strong political powers may act as real spoilers and intervene to slow down or even dismantle the peace process, if the this is not going in the direction they want. An example that will be addressed in this Thesis refers to how former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice managed to interfere with the negotiations of peace during the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon in 2006.

A final relevant relation is the one between spoilers, society and its leaders; Bar-Tal (2012) examines how spoilers may take advantage from the transitional situation from conflict to peace, characterised by a polarized society in which even the ones in favour of peace may have difficulties to adapt to the new way of thinking: Bar-Tal (2012) affirms that in such circumstances, in which spoilers could exploit the post-conflict context by persuading and inciting the polarized society to delegitimise the peaceful settlement, the figures of the leaders are fundamental in leading their societies through the transformation, by publicly minimising spoiling actions and reinforcing their commitment towards peace.

Stephen Stedman (1997) argues that spoilers can be either internal or external to the process: an inside spoiler usually signs a peace agreement, signal a willingness to implement a settlement, but yet fails to fulfil key obligations to the agreement, whereas an outside spoiler is a party excluded from the peace process which use violence to attack it. Internal and external spoilers may have different perspectives and interests, but, in common, they have the fact that they both see a specific peace emerging from a peace process as not beneficial and, therefore, they are incentivized to oppose it.

Khmer Rouge (KR) in Cambodia are a typical example of inside spoiler, while the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) during the conflict in Rwanda (1994) can be addressed as an outside spoiler. As just noted, inside and outside spoilers tend to use different strategies to pursue their interests: strategies of stealth the former, frequent use of violence the latter. For “strategies of stealth”, Stedman (1997) means those tactics by which inside spoilers hide their threat and minimize their amount of violence, in order to keep the peace process moving forward until its results allow them to gain advantages over their adversaries.

Furthermore, Stedman makes another crucial differentiation; according to him, there are three categories of spoilers: limited, greedy and total. This differentiation is mainly based on spoilers' goals and commitment. In brief, limited spoilers have limited goals, such as recognition and basic security, even if this does not necessarily mean that their commitment is limited. On the contrary, total spoilers pursue total power and an exclusive recognition of authority: their goals will not change during the negotiations and their vision of the world is in an all – or – nothing terms. Greedy spoilers lie between limited spoilers and total spoilers and are characterized by the fact that their goals contract or expand on the basis of calculations of costs and risks.

Locus of the spoilers and their number are other concerns that Stedman analyses and that will be briefly examined in this Thesis.

Stedman provides different strategies of spoilers' management that can be carried out, depending on the spoiler's category: examples of such strategies are inducement, in the case of limited spoilers, socialization, in the case of greedy spoilers, and coercion, in the case of total spoilers. It is important to note, however, that different versions of these strategies can be applied and that the right strategy depends on several factors and must be chosen after having correctly diagnosed the characteristics of each case.

Stedman's work has been criticized by many scholars that sustain his failure in identifying latent and non-manifested spoilers, note the lack of an analysis of the structural factors and underline many ambiguities that reduce the usefulness of his categorization: among these authors, Cochrane (2008), Zahar (2008, 2010), Greenhill and Major (2007). All these criticisms will be developed and examined later in this Thesis.

Another crucial factor which will be analysed is the involvement of third parties: their influence is clearly very important for the positive outcome of the peace process; despite the fact that they are never neutral, their will to put an end to the conflict (or, in negative cases, to escalate it) is usually of fundamental relevance. Generally, it is possible to divide third parties into three categories: official (states and international organizations), the United Nations and non-official (Non-Governmental Organizations).

In some cases, a possible way to manage spoilers consist in the so-called Back-Channel Negotiations (BCNs), that is the establishment of secret channels of communication among the parties involved, which should allow them to negotiate excluding the disturbance of spoilers.

For the purpose of better examining the role played by spoilers in peace processes and the strategies of spoilers' management, in this Thesis I will consider two conflicts that broke out during the last decades of the twentieth century, and, subsequently, their peace processes: Cambodia and Northern Ireland.

The cases of Cambodia and Northern Ireland differ in many dynamics such as localization, background, typology of spoilers and parties involved, but they are two great examples of peace processes in which different spoilers were involved and different strategies were used to manage them.

After a brief analysis of the background of the conflicts, I will examine which spoilers were involved in the two scenarios, how they acted in their attempt to undermine the processes and how they were, both successfully and unsuccessfully, managed.

In the case of Cambodia, two were the main spoilers that worked against peace: the Khmer Rouge (KR) and the State of Cambodia (SOC). The former was considered the biggest threat for peace and the most dangerous party involved in the conflict by the international community: the KR had signed the Paris Peace Accords on October 23rd 1991, but had later tactically refused to implement the accords. Against the KR, the so-called "departing train" strategy was adopted by the UNTAC, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia: it consisted in excluding them from the national elections to be held in 1993, leaving, at the same time, the door open for them to re-join the process. This strategy proved to be successful, because it was able to create international consensus to delegitimize KR demands and to approve the strategy of continuing the peace process in its absence.

The latter acted as a greedy spoiler after the 1993 elections, disputing the election results and attempting to grab power; from the beginning of the process of implementation of the Paris Peace Accords, the UNTAC had mostly focused on KR as a threat for peace and, consequently, was unprepared when the SOC started its attempts to undermine the peace process. The SOC had been actually strengthened by the fact that its participation in the elections was necessary to keep the whole process alive and UNTAC's strategy of inducement failed to achieve any significant result; the SOC succeeded in manipulating an internationally negotiated and implemented peace process, leading to a coup in 1997 in which SOC's opponents were attacked and eliminated.

In the case of Northern Ireland, the peace process led to two distinct agreements and both must be taken in consideration: the Sunningdale Agreement (1973) and the Good Friday Agreement (1998). The Sunningdale Agreement had been supported by the British government in an attempt to reshape government in Northern Ireland and its implementation failed because of the action of both Unionist and Republican spoilers; however, the failure of the Sunningdale Agreement did not create the basis for any kind of cooperation between the parties.

Both British and Irish governments learnt an important lesson from this failure: to guarantee the success of the peace process, an inclusive approach was necessary. A key component of the process that led to the Good Friday Agreement was back channel diplomacy, which provided a means of communication between the parties and helped the development of reciprocal understanding and recognition. Back channel negotiations in the Northern Ireland conflict lasted for more than a decade and provided the framework for the inclusion in the negotiations of more extremist actors such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

The inclusive approach pursued after the failure of the Sunningdale Agreement was a winning one: the correct use of back channel negotiations allowed the inclusion in the peace process of the IRA, considered a possible greedy spoiler, the creation of a spirit of trust among the parties and the building of a general consensus, fundamental for the implementation of the agreement. Spoilers were mostly managed through secret diplomacy on a long-term basis that, excluding the most extremist parties and including the IRA, helped to build a foundation for cooperation and to marginalize the demands of parties opposed to peace like the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA).

In addition, the Referendum held in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in May 1998 confirmed the acceptance of the agreement among the population and strengthened its validity. The inclusive approach continued also in the following years: the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), for example, which had opposed the agreement, was eventually brought into a power-sharing executive with Sinn Féin, the political wing of the IRA, having won a majority in the 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly election.

Finally, in the last section of the Thesis, I will examine the peace process leading to the 1993 Oslo Agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization; this process is often described as an example of bad spoilers management, making it a great

instance to compare with the two above-mentioned cases: back channel negotiations were essential in the process, arguably leading to better achievements of the contemporary front-channel negotiations, but, in this case, their use ended up strengthening the spoilers, that were able to stop the implementation of the agreement. On the contrary of what happened in the Northern Ireland peace process, the use of secret talks did not build reciprocal trust and recognition, was limited to a strict number of representatives and could not present the Oslo Agreement to the respective internal constituencies as an effective solution to the conflict, creating a sort of vicious cycle in which parties, restricted by secrecy, were not able to finally prepare their popular opinion; the fact that the whole negotiating process was kept secret, excessive reliance in back-channelling and the incapacity of the actors of developing a “broad central coalition” (Pruitt, 2005) necessary to effectively support and explain the results to the public, were the main reasons why peace was not achieved. The main spoilers on both sides, Hamas and the Israeli settlers, were easily able to mobilise populations against the implementation of the Oslo accords, carrying out terroristic attacks which had the effect of increase insecurity, hate and a sense of scepticism about the actual possibility of ending violence.

These cases will help me to assess the usefulness and veracity of the definition and categorisation of Stedman, by examining the whole set of factors the author considers in his work regarding spoilers. Additionally, this analysis will enhance how this categorisation may be applied on the ground and which differences and adaptations should be actualized to properly make us of it.

1. What are spoilers?

Peace processes are an ensemble of truly complex and uncertain negotiations towards the achievement of a peace settlement; in many of them, the sign of an agreement saw a successive return to violence that destroyed every previous effort for peace. Peace processes are usually characterised by the presence of actors engaged in undermining the negotiations which Stephen Stedman (1997) first classified as “spoilers” (Stedman, 1997: 5). The concept of spoiler is very debated among scholars, but is still relatively unknown by the large audience. Within the scientific community, scholars have a general idea of what spoilers are, but the specific distinguishing features and attributes are different from author to author. The debate on spoilers is of great relevance both on the political and practical fields, as spoiling is an issue that policymakers and peacemakers continue to battle in diverse conflicts around the world. In this respect, it is interesting to observe how much effort is an international institution such as the United Nations putting in planning strategies to counter spoilers, particularly after some devastating failures and tragic events in the ‘90s, as the troubles in Haiti, Iraq and Yugoslavia (Boucher and Holt, 2009); in this context, an UN Peacebuilding Commission has been established, as well as UN Panels of Experts, to monitor the effectiveness of the targeted sanctions imposed (Newman and Richmond, 2006; Boucher and Holt, 2009). In literature there is a variety of definitions of spoilers: these descriptions, however, have significant differences on a number of points of fundamental importance and this can have a great impact on what particular groups of people or individuals can be named spoilers. The lack of a specific and unambiguous definition of the term spoiler is a particularly important issue to address, especially in planning strategies to deal with them. Correctly identifying spoilers and their reasons to spoil is crucial to avoid a sequence of mistakes that could lead to the failure of the entire peace process; moreover, setting explicit standards of what is a spoiler and what not can help to avoid party bias. Because of the sensitivity of the word spoiler, a complete understanding of what it means and to whom it applies is a notable factor. In situations of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, what can be defined as spoiling or spoiling behaviours largely depend on the point of view of the parties involved: what for a particular group is perceived as spoiling, may be seen as legal resistance in the eyes of a

different group. Since the concept of spoiler is very complex, dissimilar definitions that can be interpreted differently may arise some problems.

Introducing a theoretical debate on the concept of spoilers is thus an essential step to fully appreciate its main aspects. Therefore, in this chapter I will make an analysis on the contents of some of the principal definitions of spoilers, examining, in particular, the aspects that could head to ambiguities and unclear interpretations. The main purpose is to present some of the most important critical aspects of the dispute, primarily focusing on the leading researches, as well as illustrate the main peculiarities of the contexts in which spoilers act.

The core of any definition of spoilers is that their actions and behaviours are intended to undermine the agreement of a peaceful settlement. The second relevant point is that spoilers exist only within some sort of peace negotiation going on: without a possible peace to spoil, spoilers have no reasons to exist.

1.1 A theoretical framework

1.1.1 Stedman's definition and its critics

The first considerable contribution to the concept of spoilers was made by Stephen Stedman (1997); according to him spoilers are: “[...] leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it.” (Stedman, 1997: 5). The emphasis Stedman put on the use of violence, or, as he later states, the will to make use of it, is somehow a quite ambiguous point that has been critically discussed by other authors such as Newman and Richmond (2006), who prefer a rather broader description of spoilers and their spoiling methods; Stedman himself has later changed his definition, as we will see below (Stedman, 2008). In the cases I will consider later in the Thesis, it is indeed possible to note that not every spoiler assumed violent behaviours: some of them, especially the ones included in the negotiations, resorted to more diplomatic efforts to achieve their goals. Moreover, Stedman stresses that spoilers represent the greatest source of risk in peacemaking. Although Stedman was not the first scholar to examine the problem or the first who tried to resolve it, his contribution is widely recognised as one of the most

important in this field: in fact, Stedman was the first who actually made a categorisation of the possible spoilers, based on their goals and means of spoiling. Stedman's work has been subject of numerous critiques; his definition has been criticized by many authors: among them, Greenhill and Major (2007) found faults in the fact that Stedman's interpretation was missing, at least originally, certain parties that can be generally seen as spoilers. According to them, Stedman's model is limited in the analysis of potential spoilers, because it only pays attention to already manifested spoilers and not to so-called possible spoilers. Stedman has later changed his definition, including all the parties that are willing to use violence, but not necessarily will; moreover, he has added that spoilers' strategies change depending on their location, asserting that spoilers inside the process may use different strategies other than violence (Stedman, 2008). There are, according to some critics (Cochrane, 2008; Zahar, 2008, 2010; Greenhill and Major, 2007), also limitations and ambiguities that need to be explained: for example, Stedman's thesis implies that only groups are addressed as possible spoilers, but historically also single individuals (not necessarily leaders) have acted as spoilers (Rosler, 2016; Bar-Tal, 2012; Fendius Elman and Goren, 2012). Despite these critiques, Stedman's definition, and subsequent categorisation, of spoilers is largely used during conflict resolution processes as a mean to identify different types of spoilers and the strategies to deal with them. Still, as Zahar (2010) notes, there are three major causes that may prevent its use for mediators and custodians of peace: first, it offers only a few leads as the determinants why spoilers change preferences over outcomes and actions. Second, his definition of spoilers brings together the behaviour of using violence with the objective of derailing peace, while there are no logical reasons why spoilers should necessarily recur to violence to thwart the peace process. Third, one of the types of spoilers that Stedman depicts in his paper, that is the "total spoiler" type, assumes that there are certain actors with no logical and irrational behaviours; however, Zahar remarks that extremists, on some occasions, have proven to be reliable partners during the negotiations.

The critics on Stedman's work will be further analysed in more detail later in the Thesis.

1.1.2 Narrow and broad interpretations of spoiling

Other authors have expressed their definitions: Aggestam (2006) affirms a point of view which is similar to Stedman's assertions, suggesting that spoilers are "leaders and factions who view a particular peace as opposed to their interests and that are willing to use violence to undermine it".

Wanis-St. John (2006) argues that spoilers are: "parties who can challenge each side in the dispute and may have an interest in maintain the conflict's status quo". He supposes that spoilers can also be "civil society groups that could have a significant role in undermining an agreement or fomenting instability in the peace building phase" (Wanis-St. John, 2006a).

Finally, Newman and Richmond (2006) offer a broader perspective; they address spoilers as "groups that actively seek to hinder, delay or undermine conflict settlement through a variety of means and for various reasons." Among them, Newman and Richmond also include actors geographically external to the conflict, but that have interests in influencing the peace process by supporting spoilers within it: states, political allies, ethnic or national diaspora groups, multinational corporations and many others. As they point out, the capacity to spoil belong, in different phases, to all actors with interests in the process. However, Nilsson and Soderberg Kovacs (2011) somehow criticize this broader approach, highlighting the ambiguities concerning the definition and the applicability of the concept of spoiler that, they argue, has been stretched beyond its original meaning. They indicate that spoilers can be both key individuals and parties within an armed conflict that use several methods, violence included, to jeopardize and therefore destroy peace efforts. However, they mainly focus on the parties inside the process, arguing that is rarely useful to rely on a wide definition of actors because if almost any actor with a stake in the process, including diaspora groups, multinational corporations and civil society groups, may be viewed as a possible spoiler, it becomes difficult to see the real value of using the concept.

An important question that may rise at this point is whether spoilers are against peace in general or only against a particular peace that they feel to threaten their power; this issue is investigated by Fendius Elman (2012), who notes that in most cases of armed conflict,

the preferred outcome of warring parties is not a negotiated reconciliation, but the imposition of their own terms on the final agreement.

On the basis of these definitions, it appears to be particularly clear that it is really difficult to come up with a distinct explanation of what spoilers and spoiling behaviours truly are. It is possible to note that some authors, such as Stedman and Aggestam, are very specific in their definitions, whereas Newton and Richmond and Wanis-St. John state broader concepts.

These descriptions share some common features: they imply that spoilers exist only within peace processes and they point out the fact that, if spoilers succeed, the peace process fails.

Unclear and ambiguous definitions can lead to doubtful situations and uncertainties that could harm the entire process of peacebuilding. When it comes to the definition of spoiler, there are three main concerns to consider: first, in literature, there is a substantial difference on the behaviour a spoiler could hold and, specifically, on the use of violence, which characterise the descriptions of Stedman and Aggestam.

Second, there is disagreement among authors on which parties should be taken into consideration when examining the role of spoilers in a peace process: some scholars focus only on the parties within the process, whereas others broaden the analysis to actors with an interest in its outcome, but located outside the negotiations. Third, an aspect that, in some situations, may not be clearly defined and explained by these definitions and, therefore, may cause some confusion, is the reasons why a group (or individual) become a spoiler.

1.1.3 The use of violence

One of the most controversial notion in the definitions of Stedman (1997) and Aggestam (2006) is the use of violence that is necessary for a group to be marked as a spoiler. According to them, a specific group can be considered a spoiler only if it uses violence or, as Stedman later stated, is willing to do so. This involves that groups and parties that operate against the peace process attempting to undermine it without using violence cannot be labelled as spoilers. Moreover, the idea of “willingness to use violence” introduced by Stedman in his second definition might be a very difficult matter to

demonstrate, as it is complicated to establish when and if a group is willing to use violence, without ever using violence.

This issue raises another ambiguity: later in his paper, Stedman argues that spoilers, depending on their position towards the peace process, can resort to “strategies of stealth” (Stedman, 1997: 8), implying that the use of violence is not necessarily needed to be labelled as spoilers.

Other scholars have argued that spoilers can use both violent and non-violent strategies; Zahar (2008) states that violence is just one of several tactics spoilers may use to undermine a peace process. Wanis-St. John (2006) and Newton and Richmond (2006) provide a broader vision of the conducts of a spoiler, suggesting that a spoiler can also use non-violent acts and behaviours in order to stop or delay a peace process. Examples of non-violent spoiling consist of the systematic refusal to negotiate at all and the action of entering in the negotiations never fulfilling promises and accords. Another instance of non-violent spoiling happens when parties within the peace process are not seriously interested in committing to a peaceful settlement: they may use the cover of the process to gain some advantages, as legitimacy, time or material benefits, or simply to avoid international sanctions. This peculiar type of spoiler is what Newman and Richmond (2006) collectively call “devious objects”.

Fendius Elman (2012) adds that the use of violence is more likely to happen in democratizing and quasi-democratic countries in which political institutions are weak and do not exert a complete monopoly on the use of force. In this situation, actors have less trust in democratic values and, consequently, may consider violence as a valuable spoiling option. She also argues that in more mature democracies, spoilers are more likely to undermine peace by working within the process. Obviously, violence can be part of a peace process, especially when spoilers with total goals are involved and use it to destroy the negotiations: however, Newman and Richmond (2006) argue that violence is not always a signal that the peace process is weak or under a particular menace. According to them, the use of violence or its increasing may reflect the fact that conflict settlement is having success and that violent groups see this as a threat to their position. Zahar (2010: 267), in line with Newman’s and Richmond’s thesis, cites a report of the UN Secretary-General that asserts that spoiling is “particularly likely when talks are making progress or when an agreement is near, since internal divisions within rebel movements or

Governments become more pronounced and lead to hard-line break-away factions that are opposed to the process”.

Finally, Stepanova (2006) recalls that violence is not alien to peace processes, it often accompanies them and tend to increase especially before, during or immediately after their key turning points.

1.1.4 Which parties should be taken into account

As anticipated, in literature there are two principal ways of thinking about which parties need to be considered as possible spoilers during a peace process. The first recognizes that only actors within the process have the ability to spoil: Stedman’s definition, for example, is limited to what Nilsson and Soderberg Kovacs (2011) call “warring parties”, namely the key actors to the armed conflict and their factions. This logic is rational: it involves that parties that have a clear stake in the armed conflict and that may recur to violence in order to shape its outcome (Nilsson and Soderberg 2011). Among this school of thought, some scholars primarily concentrate on non-state actors, like militias, rebels and insurgents, while others also include more official possible spoilers, such as decisionmakers and armies. Stedman’s work has been subject to critics because of its narrowness and its complexity in identifying spoilers which have yet to manifest themselves (Greenhill and Major, 2007).

The second have a much broader vision, enlarging the range of possible spoilers. Newman and Richmond (2006), for instance, state that other groups acting independently from the warring parties should be included in the analysis in order to make it more complete: diaspora groups, multinational corporations, civil society groups and, in general, all the parties that could gain advantages from undermining or blocking the peace process.

The ability to correctly identify spoilers in a peace process is of great importance to deal with them; potential and manifest spoilers should always be taken into consideration with great care. As Nilsson and Soderberg (2011) point out, the most critical danger is to stretch the concept of spoiler too much, endangering to undermine the concept itself. This would cause a series of problems and may potentially be very counterproductive for the peace process.

In addition, it is also useful to settle in which phases of the peace process is exact to talk about spoilers; Stedman (2008) stresses that in the absence of a public commitment between at least two warring parties the term spoiler should not be used. According to him, spoilers can exist only where there is a peace process to subvert, so only after a public commitment to peace. He suggests that combatants in a war can be identified in various ways, for example rebels, terrorists, bandits, but not spoilers. In his paper, he specifies that an actor involved in the negotiations may transform into a spoiler only after a peace agreement is stipulated, taking as example the conflict in Cambodia, where, despite years of previous negotiations, the real Cambodian peace process began only after the parties formally committed themselves to the Paris Peace Accords (Stedman, 1997). Others have adopted a wider approach, including peace negotiations in general, even without an explicit commitment (Aggestam, 2006; Greenhill and Major, 2007). Newman and Richmond (2006) suggest that the concept should be employed when some form of peace process is ongoing and at least one of the parties have committed itself to the peace process.

1.1.5 Reasons to become a spoiler

One aspect that may not be particularly clear in certain situations is why spoilers spoil, what are their goals and what are they really trying to achieve by undermining the negotiations; one thing on which all definitions agree is that spoilers are moved by the fact that they see a specific peace as dangerous for their interests and power. Obviously, this does not necessarily mean that, during a conflict, spoilers already have a significant amount of power, as certain actors may fight precisely because they want to gain some authority; as Greenhill and Major (2007) assert, spoilers with the power to alter the balance of negotiations are likely to do so, while those with less power are likely to keep taking legal actions to maintain their positions. What may indeed be complicated to understand is that they do not necessarily fight against peace itself: it might be possible that a group or individual which is spoiling do actually want peace, just in another form: they might not agree with the current agreement or they might desire a peace in which they are more represented, in which they have more power, in which they are assured that their interests and safety will be respected. For example, Nilsson and Soderberg (2011)

think that is useful to exceed the dichotomy of successful versus failed peace process, suggesting that actors do not always mean to completely destroy efforts for peace, but are sometimes looking for different outcomes.

Zahar (2010) lists another reason why parties within the peace process may not comply with a possible agreement, i.e. the “credible commitment problem”, when insiders, while interested in peace, are yet not able to trust each other to keep promises.

Spoilers can have two objectives. The first is the complete collapse of the peace process: this happens when spoilers do not want peace and is successful if the peace process fails. The second consists in changing some aspects of the peace agreement: this happens when spoilers do want peace, but are not satisfied with the current course of the negotiations. In this case, spoiling succeeds when new questions are raised, new ideas are introduced in the process, more attention is paid to spoilers’ needs, marginalized actors become more involved. In this instance, spoiling may assume a positive connotation, because it leads to the inclusion of new ideas and to a better commitment of the parties.

One extremely relevant thing that needs to be considered when investigating the nature and objectives of spoilers is the relation between them, their spoiling activities and politics; for the most part, contemporary peace processes tend to happen under the “umbrella” of the concept of liberal peace. Newman and Richmond (2006) warn about the practical problematics that this imply, arguing that typical Western values, like democracy, human rights, the idea of the state and citizenship, are not universal values and, thus, judging a group or an individual as a spoiler on the basis of these characteristics might prove to be a serious mistake.

1.2 Spoilers and politics: a crucial relationship

As we have seen, spoilers in a peace process can have different dispositions, different reasons and different objectives to spoil. What we need to address now is the relationship between spoiling and politics in such a situation. With the term “politics”, is intended the ability of certain states or international organizations to effectively affect the peace process and, therefore, operate in favour or against spoiling, accordingly to their interests and, probably most important in the case of states, to the results obtained in the

international field that they want to expose to their internal constituencies. The act of labelling a group as spoiler may indeed reflect a political agenda which is an extension of the conflict itself. Referring to a peace process, Newman and Richmond (2006) also include in the concept of politics the objection to terms and conditions that one party may perceive to be unfair or unduly detrimental to its cause. It is not always easy to recognize the difference between spoiling and politics, because of the subjective component that spoiling seem to have: one's side reasonable demands might be considered spoiling by the other side.

In their paper, Newman and Richmond (2006) illustrate a few cases, taking as examples the peace negotiations in Cyprus and Sri Lanka:¹ in both instances, one party – respectively the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the Tamil Tigers – was not accepted in the conflict as a state despite making this demand. This, according to Newman and Richmond, can lead to spoiling behaviours, as the unrecognized parties, trying to pursue legitimate (in their vision) claims to statehood, would argue that the real spoilers are their opposite side – respectively, in this case, the Cypriot and the Sri Lankan governments – that refuse to admit their identity and to include the question of statehood in the talks.

A second significant difference between spoiling and politics in a peace process is referred to what can be considered acceptable or not: Newman and Richmond (2006), despite recognizing that violence may be a part of the process and it can also be seen as a symptom of the procedure's progress, regard it as unacceptable; they claim that violent spoilers must be marginalized and not allowed to derail the process and that UN Peacekeepers, when deployed, should be equipped and mandated to resist their violence. Furthermore, they add that, when violence is used, public and the media should be encouraged to maintain public confidence.

Spoiling and politics are related also in a fundamental aspect: the nature of the conflict. War and disputes can have several different causes: territorial secession, issues on natural resources, religious or ethnic conflicts, political or economic disagreements. The dynamics of spoiling will be influenced accordingly to these distinct scenarios, as the

¹ The issue between Cyprus and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the latter supported by Turkey, is still ongoing and the island is, to this day, divided. The Eastern part is under the control of the Cypriot government, while the Western part is militarily occupied by Turkish forces. On the contrary, the civil conflict in Sri Lanka ended in 2009 with the defeat of the Tamil Tigers. It has been estimated that the war caused more than 100000 casualties.

actors will make use of different strategies and behaviours to achieve their goals. Especially when the conflict is associated with economic factors, some powerful groups may have an interest in its extension in order to have economic gains. In another case, when the conflict is associated with ethnic or religious factors, there may be some intransigent groups not willing to reach a compromise. Peacemakers need to identify these deviant actors and use the appropriate strategy to stop them (Newman and Richmond, 2006).

1.2.1 The context of liberal peacemaking

Finally, one last theme has to be contemplated in this section: the liberal peace² framework in which contemporary peace processes usually occur. The core of the liberal peace theory “constitutes a definition of long-term peace and security which is based on the values of democracy and justice” (Tziarras, 2012).

Asserting that spoiling is part of peace processes, Newman and Richmond (2006) relate to the context of contemporary peace processes, which, according to them, follow similar lines and are “all envisaged within the so-called liberal peace framework” (Newman and Richmond, 2006: 3); dispositions in such a framework include constitutional agreements, democratization, human rights safeguard, the rule of law and free market.

Certainly, in a liberal peacebuilding context, one could argue that spoiling behaviours are easy to identify: every group or individual hampering the development of the peace process is possibly seen as a spoiler. However, this thesis can find some practical problems: democracy, human rights protection, free market and the idea of state are indeed not universal values, but the product of a typical Western concept, a theory originally elaborated in the 18th century and later strengthened at the end of the Cold War. Additionally, the ways by which the liberal peace concept has been promoted have not always been based on social justice, making peace processes often not equitable and unfair. On this issue, Mac Ginty (2008: 139) surmises that “internationally supported

² The liberal peace theory is a theoretical and philosophical concept first introduced by Immanuel Kant. It is mainly referred to democratic countries and serves as the basis for democratic development and reservation of democratic human rights; liberalists suggest that a process which includes “democratization, economic liberalization and pacification” is ideal for building peace and, therefore, liberal peacebuilding associates peace and state security with democratic institutions, law, market economy and human rights, usually ruled by international organizations.

peace operations (the liberal peace) are promoting a standardization of peace interventions in civil wars that often fails to deliver a widely enjoyed peace.”

As Newman and Richmond (2006) observe, the risk in this case is to define as spoilers every group or individual that do not fit the requirements of liberal peacebuilding, while, as mentioned before, inside the concept of spoiler there can be a fundamental subjective component, by which spoiling may be differently perceived depending on the parties involved. Parties that do not recognize or simply do not belong to the liberal peace framework should not necessarily be seen as spoilers because of that: liberal-peace values, not being universal values, should be applied extremely carefully, avoiding making a value judgement about the nature of a particular society and to apply certain values that might not properly fit the situation. On this aspect, Newman and Richmond (2006) put strong emphasis in the continue reconstruction of the normative paradigms of liberal peacebuilding: they take as example the great impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, that, they argue, have changed our conceptions of spoilers and spoiling, leading us to label as “terrorists” the groups and individuals that were previously used to be defined “spoilers”. This aspect is also contemplated by Dalsheim (2014), whose contribution remarks the fact that within the hegemonic moral order of liberal peacemaking, peacemakers may accidentally contribute to create spoilers; in doing so, she introduces the metaphor of the “campfire”, arguing that the stories that coincide with the liberal peace order are the ones that are told around it, creating a kind of map that, through a social and political framework, helps people belonging to this order to better understand its particular socio-political aspects. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for example, the campfire depicts Israel as part of the rational, secular and modern West, facing the Palestinians, a population without an international recognized state, whose main political party, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was considered a terroristic group for a long period of time. That is, a modern Western state opposed to religious and terrorist groups whose principal target is its destruction. In this instance, Hamas, an Islamic movement founded in 1987 and considered a part of the Muslim Brotherhood (McCarthy, 2011)³ is seen as a peace spoiler; religiously motivated Israeli settlers are judged as spoilers as well.

³ The Muslim Brotherhood is a religious-political organization founded in 1928, mostly based in the Maghreb and in the Middle East, which advocates a return to the Coran and the Hadith, the record of sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, as guides for a healthy modern Islamic society. Hamas, which was founded in 1987 during the first rising (*Intifada*) against Israel, is considered to be its Palestinian affiliate.

Among both Israeli and Palestinians, these two religiously motivated radical movements are largely thought as the ones that impede the realization of peace. Moreover, according to Dalsheim (2014), religiously motivated Israeli settlers, in particular, are labelled as anachronistic, movements belonging to the past, that need to be brought into the present of the national collective because of the threat they represent to the possibility of peace and security. This way of thinking contributes in producing the “outside” of peace by reinscribing a moral community that is separate from these settlers. Another way liberal peace may have a negative influence is through its structures: bilingual schools, for example, which might be seen as peacebuilding efforts towards dialogue and reciprocal understanding, are, according to her, instruments that, despite meant to be the opposite of conflict processes, cause the production of identity, and specifically in this case, enemy identities. However, she suggests that spoilers are not the cause of stalled peacemaking, but a signal of a malfunction within the concept of nation-state and the secular constructs of historicism surrounding it. According to her, liberal peacemaking figures spoilers as actors beyond the line of the acceptable and rational, challenging its main features and its fixed order: both Hamas and religiously motivated Israeli settlers set up their actions on religion, an aspect that liberal peacemaking, an Enlightenment concept, has deliberately eliminated from the realm of politics. Both parties believe that their salvation depends upon religious practices, thus breaking a framework that is instead based on a moral and political order. Such framework, that for Dalsheim (2014) constitutes the light of the campfire, by consciously excluding certain parties and describing them as spoilers, creates the conditions for conflict. Contemporary peacemaking keeps out whatever falls beyond the light of the campfire, determining two important consequences: first, it allows these groups to be considered as alibis for the failure of the negotiations and, second, it limits eventual potential solutions. Using a set of different stories and narratives, Dalsheim (2014) documents peaceful ways of living and provides valuable alternatives to what is often considered an intractable conflict; for instance, she narrates the stories of Jews and Arabs living in relative harmony or the story of how native Jews from Hebron considered the Hebron massacre⁴ just as a temporary interruption of good neighbourly relations. Calling for local solutions, she stresses the importance of cooperation,

⁴ The so-called Hebron massacre refers to the riots, organized by Palestinian Arabs against the Jewish community, that broke out on the night of August 23, 1929 in the city of Hebron; the clashes lasted for three days and resulted in the killing of 67 Jews.

collaboration and coexistence, highlighting, at the same time, how nationalism and national identity make them harder to achieve, as collaborating with figures labelled as enemies, often results in accusations of treason. Her conclusion is that solutions are to be found beyond the light of the campfire, connecting the stories and the daily practices that point towards other ways of living together. As Dalsheim (2014) states, spoilers' production in the liberal peacemaking context is also strongly related to the matter of narrative and, therefore, of recognition; in her paper, she underlines the power of narrative in creating spoilers of peace: in fact, narrating the past and its different versions is a fundamental step in the process of producing enmity, which culminates, through recognition, in the formation of two distinct national groups. In the case of Israeli and Palestinians, recognition has not been equal, especially for the latter that still have not a recognized state. Narrative is also important because of its moralizing power that contributes to determine whoever is right or not: its importance can be better understood by the fact that hegemonic groups always depict their narrative as the real one, thus justifying and even idealizing their actions, even the most miserable.

To sum up, Dalsheim (2014) affirms that spoilers are "those groups who are produced as the "outside" of peace" (Dalsheim 2014:29), equivalent, in the Israeli-Palestinians case, to religious extremists that undermine rational negotiations over territory and sovereignty; moreover, she believes that spoilers are not the cause, but the symptom of an abnormal operation and of the contradictions of the conceit of nation-state.

Finally, the fact that peace processes in which spoilers operate are political processes is observed by Zahar (2010), who states that the role of peacemaking is to have an impact on spoilers' evaluations of the costs of their actions, making them less inclined to recur to violence; moreover, these political aspects create winners and losers who sit inside or outside the process and this greatly affects their evaluations of costs and benefits of their decisions.

1.3 The custodians of peace: role and limitations

Strictly related to the political context is the role played by the so-called custodians of peace; this term is generally associated to mediators and international third parties that

assume a significant part in the conflict and whose goal is to serve as intermediary to ease the achievement of a peaceful settlement.

As we will see, however, custodians of peace are often obstructed by limitations, especially in the international field.

The intervention of third parties in an ongoing conflict is of fundamental importance: their primary task is to facilitate the reaching of a possibly durable peace through providing a mediation role between the parties in conflict; custodians of peace can be international organizations, like the United Nations (UN), diplomats, foreign states and formal associations. In some cases, they might have some interests in the war and thus be labelled as potential spoilers.

As anticipated, custodians of peace may in certain circumstances struggle with limitations deriving from a range of different interests; as Stedman (1997) stresses, the optimal strategy to manage a spoiler and to end a conflict is sometimes too costly or risky for external actors, which are often more dedicated to protect their interests or reputation. This is particularly true if there are important interests of powerful states or organization at stake; for instance, during the 2006 war in Lebanon, former United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice strongly opposed a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, sustaining that it would have been a “false promise” because it would have guaranteed a return to the precedent *status quo*, allowing terrorists to launch attacks and threaten civilians. She urged for the creation of the conditions for stability and lasting peace, calling for the deployment of the Lebanese army and supporting the efforts of the Lebanese government to exert its authority over its territories (Rice, 2006). Whether such a conduct should be depicted as spoiling or not is related to the conceptual debate about which parties should be included in the analysis of potential spoiler mentioned above, but what is certainly ascertained is that, in the name of US’s interests in the area, she actively acted to prevent a possible peace agreement (Cochrane, 2008). This example is also mentioned by Cochrane (2008) in his description of “peaceful resisters”: I will analyse this argument in the next chapter.

The United Nations have also limitations in its role of mediators: its theoretical formal authority is indeed limited on the ground by the restrictions imposed by the Security Council and therefore its role is largely depending on the support of member states.

One of the biggest weakness of custodians in peace processes is hence found in the concerns of its most powerful members, which Stedman terms as “patrols” of spoilers (Stedman, 1997: 13). Although they can have a positive impact if truly interested in making peace possible, at the same time they might represent a peril when they have interests at stake or get pressured from inside groups to keep weakening the process.

1.4 Spoilers, society and leadership

A third fundamental relation to illustrate is the one that connects spoilers, the society and its leadership; Bar-Tal (2012) stresses how the peacemaking process involves major societal changes, substituting the socio-psychological way of thinking that supports the continuation of the conflict with a new way of thinking that supports efforts for peace. He argues that this may result difficult if the former is well-established in the hegemonic culture of conflict, especially in cases in which the society is habituated after many years of intractable conflict.

The challenge peacemakers have to face is not only based on satisfying peace’s basic needs, but also to mobilize the society for this process, constructing and justifying a new reality in which the old dominant assumptions are negated and a new future is, often, not completely guaranteed; in such cases, even the segments of population in favour of peacemaking may have problems to adapt, to accept new beliefs and to abandon the repertoire that functioned during the conflict.

This circumstance is usually used by spoilers that take advantage of the unfamiliarity with the new situation of extended parts of the population to carry out their strategies to undermine the peace process; because of the tactics of persuasion and incitement adopted by the spoilers, such societies appear polarized between who support the peacemaking process and who see it as a betrayal and refuse to legitimate a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Bar-Tal (2012), uses the example of the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to portray such processes (Bar-Tal in Fendius Elman and Goren, 2012: 6): the Israeli society, as also Dalsheim (2014) remarks, was, and still is, divided between who desire peace and who look at it as a form of treason, namely Israeli settlers and some fringes of the Israeli political right wing.

Spoilers' actions are often facilitated by the fact that, even when the conflict has stopped being intractable, it still exists, since the achievement of a formal agreement to settle it does not necessarily suppose an immediate stop to the acts of hostility and aggression, such as attacks on civilians, agitation and warmongering rhetoric and propaganda. In such delicate moments, Bar-Tal (2012) draws the attention to the role of the leaders as fundamental figures supposed to lead their societies in the transition from conflict to peace; he argues that if leaders publicly condemn and minimize the actions of spoilers while at the same time reassuring their allegiance for peace, the chances for the peace process to have success are higher; on the contrary, if leaders frame the events in favour of a conflict orientation, peace is not likely to succeed.

The conflict in Northern Ireland provides an example of the importance of leaders' conduct in such contexts: in this case, the perseverance and the commitment of the leaders of the parties involved in the negotiations to the Good Friday Agreement signed in 1998 made its survival possible even after the terrorist attack carried out in the same year by the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA), which caused the death of 29 people and the wounding of many others in the city of Omagh. Because of the strong reaction of the leaders, this act of terror did not prevent the peace process to keep moving forward.

1.5 Conclusion of chapter one

In this chapter, I wanted to examine what exactly a spoiler is; as we can see, there are many definitions that include a broad range of actors, actions and factors which can be ascribed to spoilers. The large number of these definitions, however, is not a positive and beneficial aspect when the concept of spoiler is used on the practical field, since different and ambiguous definitions may lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication that represent a threat for the successful outcome of peace processes. Within the scientific community, there is still an ongoing conceptual debate whether who the spoilers are, as the concept is still unclear and defining spoilers is not an easy task for scholars; some of them (Stedman, 1997; Aggestam, 2006) use very strictly descriptions to depict spoilers, while others offer broader perspectives (Newman and Richmond, 2006; Wanis-St. John, 2006). Three are the main points in which these definitions differ: the eventual use of violent behaviours and activities, which parties should be taken into account when talking

about spoiling and the reasons to become spoilers. There are many motivations whether to use a strict or a broader definition in a context of peacemaking, but, as Nilsson and Soderberg Kovacs (2011) point out, peacemakers should be careful to stress this conceit too much, because its application on a various number of actors and situations could make it useless.

In the second part of the chapter, we have seen that spoilers are essentially related to politics in several ways; states and international organizations can effectively act in favour or against spoilers and spoilers can change their activities and objectives depending on the different natures of the conflict. Moreover, a crucial aspect is the normative and moral framework in which peace processes are conducted; Newman and Richmond (2006) suggest that contemporary peacemaking tend to happen in the liberal peace framework: recognizing the inner component of subjectivity in the conceit of spoiler, they warn that this particular framework may endanger the entire process by defining as spoilers all the actors that do not perfectly fit its requirements. On a similar line, Dalsheim (2014) emphasize how liberal peace actually contributes in creating spoilers by excluding from the peace talks all the parties that are seated beyond the light of the campfire of the liberal peacemaking. In addition, Dalsheim underlines the importance of narrating the past and, thus, the importance of recognition which derives from this past; taking as examples religiously motivated organizations like Hamas and Israeli settlers, she argues that, in a framework of liberal peace that has deliberately excluded religion from politics, spoilers are those actors that, by transgressing liberal values and norms, fall beyond the light of the campfire. Therefore, liberal peacemaking, through its institutions and structures, may contribute to the creation of spoilers.

We have also seen the role and limitations of the custodians of peace, the actors whose objective is to ease the reaching and implementation of a peace agreement. They can be different parties, such as international organizations, states, diplomats or associations; however, they might struggle with many limitations: powerful states' interests and restrictions from their internal members are among them.

Finally, we have explored the relation among spoilers, society and its leaders; as Bar-Tal (2012) stresses, leaders are particularly important in guiding their populations in such a difficult and troubled period which is the transition from a state of conflict to a state of peace, a period in which spoilers usually try to achieve political gains by attempting to

undermine the process of pacification. The role leaders played in Northern Ireland after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement is a good example of their fundamental importance.

To conclude, despite their different and unsatisfactory definitions, it can be argued that, in a peace process, spoilers are a threat to a possible peaceful outcome: they can have various natures, different objectives, separate reasons to spoil and act in a number of ways; they can be produced by the context in which a peace process occurs and being understood differently. At the end, what is certain is that their activities originate threats for peace and so they must be properly managed. In the next chapter I will analyse some of the most common strategies employed to deal with them, the factors Stedman (1997) uses to make a diagnosis of the problem, its critics and the exercise of back-channel communication to exclude spoilers from the negotiations. Furthermore, in the last chapter, the cases of study will be explored using Stedman's definitions and categorisation, which I will test, given their importance and common usage.

2. Spoilers management

The main difference between the success and failure of spoilers lies in their management. Effective spoilers' management has to take several factors into account and I will inspect them by making use of Stedman' study on the development and implementation of strategies for protecting peace and controlling spoilers. Stedman (1997) believes that the first thing to acknowledge is that spoilers do not always act the same and for the same reasons in every situation; their goals and commitment may change and their role may be based on a number of causes. His work is mainly dedicated to providing an analysis of these causes in order to operate a better strategic management of spoilers. He consequently operates a partition of spoilers into three types, matching to every type a possible strategy. Moreover, he examines the location, number and locus of the spoilers, all elements that could alter their attitude towards the peace process. Some authors have highlighted some weaknesses in Stedman's approach: Cochrane (2008), Zahar (2010) and Greenhill and Major (2007), particularly, consider the definition of Stedman over simplified and excessively focused on negative and violent spoilers. Cochrane (2008) proposes a different theory on spoilers, dividing them into peaceful and violent "resisters" and paying close attention to their strategies and motives.

Spoilers can be managed also through another technique, i.e. back-channel negotiations; Wanis-St. John defines them as "officially sanctioned negotiations conducted in secret between the parties to a dispute [...] operate in parallel with, or replace, acknowledged front channels of negotiations" (Wanis-St. John, 2006: 119). Although criticized by many scholars (Wanis-St. John, 2006; Pruitt, 2008), the use of back-channel talks is still common during peace processes, especially in their first phases, and, in some cases, can significantly contribute to their success.

2.1 Stedman's diagnosis

When it comes to engage spoilers and spoiling behaviours, Stedman (1997) argues that policymakers have to face several different problems, that take the shape of the various dimensions in which the concept of spoiler can be divided: position, number, typology

and locus of possible spoilers are the factors mediators have to consider when examining the scenario.

2.1.1 Spoilers position

Distinctive of spoilers is the fact that, according to Stedman, they can be positioned either inside or outside a peace process: this characteristic is object of debate among scholars, primarily regarding the distinction itself. As aforementioned, scholars have yet to reach an agreement on which categories of possible spoilers should be included in their analysis. Stedman (1997) distinguishes insiders and outsiders in the peace process: inside spoilers are parties within the negotiations that “signs a peace agreement, signals a willingness to implement a settlement, and yet fails to fulfil key obligations to the agreement” (Stedman, 1997: 8). Inside spoilers usually use strategies of stealth, in which they comply enough to convince others of their goodwill, but, at the same time, make sure that their military capability is not weakened and they will not hesitate to begin to spoil if they should perceive signs of disadvantage from the peace process (Stedman 1997).

An example of inside spoiler is the organization of the Khmer Rouge (KR) during the Cambodian conflict: the KR had signed the Paris Peace Agreement in 1991 but later refused to comply, deciding to not demobilize their troops and to boycott the 1993 national elections.

On the other hand, outside spoilers are excluded from the negotiations since their beginning; they usually resort to strategies of violence to undermine the process: assassinations, massacres, terrorist attacks are among them. An example of outside spoiler that is generally cited is the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic (CDR) during the war in Rwanda in 1994.

It can be noted that the separation between inside and outside spoilers is entirely based on the work of Stedman; as noted above, his paper has been strongly criticized by many authors. The debate on whether the analysis on possible spoilers should be on a short or wide-range basis is still intense (Stedman, 1997; Wanis-St. John, 2006; Newman and Richmond, 2006; Nilsson and Soderberg Kovacs, 2011).

2.1.2 Spoilers number

The presence of more than one spoiler is a challenging situation for mediators and peacebuilders in a peace process; the use of a strategy against a spoiler may result in the strengthening of another which the mediators had previously underestimated or not noticed. Any strategy chosen to deal with a spoiler has important implications, as that same strategy may accidentally bolster a different but equally dangerous spoiler (Stedman 1997).

The Cambodian conflict offers the opportunity to verify the exactitude of this theory: during the war, in fact, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) depicted the Khmer Rouge (KR) as the most dangerous spoiler involved and, consequently, focused on adopting strategies (in this case the so-called “departing train” strategy) in order to possibly deal with them; the approach, however, although successful with regards to the KR, ended up facilitating the spoiling activities of the State of Cambodia organization (SOC), an actor there had never been considered a potential spoiler before, but that started its attempts to undermine the peace process right after its defeat in the national elections held in May 1993.

2.1.3 Spoilers typology

To negotiate with spoilers, Stedman (1997) suggests their partition in three main categories, to which he associates the relative strategies. The classification is based on spoilers’ objectives and commitments and is intended as a first step toward the realization of a successful spoiler management.

Stedman argues that there are two main school of thoughts on whether spoilers have in mind when attempting to derail or to change a peace process: on one hand, some scholars believe that spoilers are only motivated by their fear and insecurity; accordingly, they would engage in the fight against peace because they would dread their enemy to take advantage of peace to eliminate them. The only motivation would thus be fear and the only way to deal with them would be reducing their fear through international guarantees. On the other hand, there are scholars who assert that the main goal for spoilers is achieving total power: Stedman (1997) do not agree with them, noting that all parties may

desire power, but not total power. Power itself can be used to achieve other goals, as a resource to realize objectives which vary from exerting subjugation over one's own adversaries to building the basis for a democratic political regime.

Understanding why some parties undermine peace processes is crucial when trying to find measures to counterattack their activities; Stedman's main purpose is to establish a set of strategies to utilize when dealing with spoilers: to have success, these strategies need to be preceded by a correct diagnosis of spoiler's goals and commitments.

Stedman's most important contribution is arguably his categorisation of spoilers; he distinguishes three types of spoilers: *limited*, *greedy* and *total*.

Limited spoilers have limited goals, even if this does not necessarily mean that their commitment level is low; their goals may be, for example, recognition, basic security or more representation in the negotiations. However, limited spoiler's objectives may be non-negotiable and difficult for mediators to concede. Still, their goals can usually be accommodated and they can be, in certain occasions, involved in the negotiations.

Total spoilers are actors seeking for total power and exclusive authority; their goals will not change during the negotiations and their leaders often have a vision of the world in an all-or-nothing term. Total spoilers are also often linked with radical ideologies in which the use of violence to seek total power is a mean to transform the society accordingly to their aspirations. These characteristics usually make them too complicated to reconcile with the peace process.

Greedy spoilers are located between limited and total spoilers: their goals expand or contract depending on costs and risks; a greedy spoiler may have either limited goals that expand if costs and risks to achieve them are low or total goals that contract when costs and risks to achieve them are too high. They can be accommodated if their goals are limited and expanding them would be a too risky move.

2.1.4 Spoilers locus

One of Stedman's concerns is whether spoilers can change in type; for example, could a total spoiler be transformed into a limited spoiler or at least into a greedy spoiler? Stedman researches the answer in the locus of spoiler behaviour, that is whether it is the leader or the followers. If the spoiler behaviour is plotted by the leader, then a change in leadership

may be enough to transform a total spoiler in a greedy or limited spoiler. This has been historically evident when authoritarian and cruel dictators, such as Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein and Muhammad Gheddafi, were involved in peace processes. Changing the leadership role would be essential for peace in these cases.

On the other hand, if the locus of spoiler behaviour are the followers, a leader may fear that a transformation would unleash their reaction and thus be reluctant to fulfil his commitments; in this case, a change in the spoiler typology may be harder to achieve.

These internal dynamics may assume special relevance in understanding spoilers' necessities and behaviours; Nilsson and Soderberg Kovacs (2011) stress the importance of further studies on the argument, arguing that spoiling can be caused by a lot of different factors which should not be analysed in isolation. They underline the need to study the relationship between spoilers' intraparty and interparty dynamics in order to explain why some groups do engage into spoiling activities and why others do not.

2.2 How to deal with spoilers

In his paper, Stedman (1997) mentions three main strategies which can be employed when dealing with spoilers: inducement, socialization, coercion. These are generally the major strategies adopted by custodians of peace; despite being often conceptually associated with a specific type of spoiler, the use of each strategy at the practical level is more complicated and is likely to acquire different configurations depending on the different cases. As Stedman notes, in some cases more than a strategy can be used simultaneously. Matching these strategies to the different types of spoilers is a truly hard but essential task. Usually, total spoiler cannot be accommodated, so they should be defeated or marginalized; greedy spoilers can be attracted into a settlement or, if they have limited demands, be accommodated, making sure that this would not increase their hunger to demand more; limited spoiler can be commonly accommodated and integrated in the negotiations by meeting their limited demands.

Therefore, total spoilers should be dealt through methods of coercion, since both inducement and socialization would risk increasing their strength; greedy and limited spoilers, on the contrary, can be dealt both with inducement and socialization, depending

on the case. Especially in the case of a greedy spoiler, Stedman advises that a strategy of socialization should last on a long-term period.

Among the strategies suggested by Stedman is the concept of “Coercive Diplomacy” which, as Jakobsen (2016) asserts, involves the use of military threats (sticks) combined with inducements and assurances (carrots) in order to influence the opponent to do something it would prefer not to; this kind of tactic has seen an increase in its use since the end of the Cold War and is especially useful in resolving war-threatening crises and armed conflicts short of war. In his paper, however, Stedman (1997) argues that coercive diplomacy is not likely to accomplish positive results with total spoilers: given their costs insensitivity, they could indeed call bluffs and test the real will of the custodians. An eventual failure of the custodians in carrying through on threats may lead to a reinforcement of the spoiler and, consequently, it would add further power to its domestic reputation. As the coercive diplomacy strategy, also the withdrawal strategy could bring unwanted results, because, in some cases, a spoiler has everything to gain if custodians drop out of the process. Given these remarks, Stedman (1997) suggest that the two best strategies to deal with total spoilers are the departing train strategy and the use of force to militarily defeat the spoiler.

2.2.1 Inducement

Inducement is usually linked with limited spoilers and consists in taking positive measures to address their limited goals: as we have seen, spoilers may not seek power, but recognition, fairness, justice or simply more benefits. Those are limited goals, that custodians of peace, after having verified the veracity of a spoiler’s claims, can satisfy by inducing the spoilers in the negotiations or accommodating their costly demands. This approach offers the spoiler a role in the process by meeting its non-negotiable demands and is particularly useful in situations where the use of military power or any other form of intimidation may lead to a radicalization of a previously moderate spoiler. Despite the fact that this strategy is often used in relation with limited spoilers, inducement can also be used with greedy spoilers: in this case, custodians should focus not to allow the growing of the spoiler’s greediness, but it may prove to be successful if the spoiler has security concerns (Stedman 1997).

The frequency in the use of inducement, however, makes Stedman (1997) suppose that it is a convenient strategy to attempt because of its limited costs, but, at the same time, it is applied without an adequate attention whether it is an appropriate strategy for the type of spoiler in question.

2.2.2 Socialization

Socialization implies the establishment by custodians of a set of specific norms and rules to whom spoilers have to commit in order to join the peace process; these rules are thus the basis for a spoiler to be accepted by the other parties and represent the normative aspects through which spoiler's demands are judged: such standards can consist of values like the acceptance of democratic principles or the protection of basic human rights.

Socialization is theoretically linked with greedy spoilers, because, through its normative regulation, it allows to differentiate which requests and behaviours are acceptable or not and, consequently, to determine its possible costs and consequences.

As Stedman (1997) argues, this approach can be direct both at the elites and at the citizens; in each case the primary goal is to inculcate appropriate values and to educate the actors into norms of good governance, democratic competition and accountability. This is what Stedman calls the "intellectual component" of socialization, to which he adds a "material component", that is the capacity of custodians to make good use of both carrots and sticks to reward or punish the spoiler.

2.2.3 Coercion

Coercion is a strategy based on the use or threat of punishment to discourage a spoiler to undertake actions or behaviours that could endanger the regular advancement of the peace process; according to Stedman, there are four main variations of coercion. The two that are less utilized are coercive diplomacy and the application of force to militarily defeat the spoiler: these variations have been used very infrequently, probably because of the high risks they implied; in his paper, Stedman (1997: 13-14) makes the examples of the air strikes against Bosnian Serbs in 1995 and the UN's arrest of Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aideed after his forces ambushed Pakistani peacekeepers in 1993.

The two forms of coercion that are mostly employed are the “departing train” strategy and the “withdrawal” strategy; the first combines the assumption that spoilers’ requests are illegitimate with the statement that the peace process will go forward, whether the spoiler will join it or not. Its main goal is usually to legitimize the parties involved in the negotiations and delegitimize the parties who are not. Stedman stresses that this variation of coercion may require measures to protect the parties in the process and to limit the attacking capabilities of the spoiler. As we will see later in this thesis, the departing train strategy was successfully employed during the conflict in Cambodia against the Khmer Rouge. The withdrawal variation is founded on the theory that spoilers want an international presence during the peace process; the menace to withdraw international support would thus be considered a punishment for the spoiler. Stedman (1997:14) highlights that the most significant cases in which this kind of coercion was implemented were during the war in Bosnia and by the United Nations in Rwanda.

2.3 Different perspectives: critics on Stedman’s work

2.3.1 Zahar: Profiling the context

Numerous authors have somewhat found weak points in Stedman’s thesis; Cochrane (2008) proposes the term “resisters” to describe spoilers and develops a different partition of spoilers, dividing them into peaceful and violent resisters. Considering all actors involved as rational and equal, he offers a wider definition of the concept of spoilers, focusing on their strategies and structural causes of violence. He insists that both peaceful and violent resisters are very aware of their actions and consequences.

Zahar (2010), focusing on violent behaviours during processes of peacemaking and peacebuilding, makes a revision of the debate on spoilers arguing that there are not fixed types of spoilers and their propensity to use violence depends on their capability and structure; the use of violence does not depend on the type of the spoiler, but on its capabilities and opportunities to do so. This means that is the context and not the actors that mediators need to profile and, accordingly, custodians may have a great impact in shaping situations in which the increased costs of violence will reduce spoilers’ opportunities and willingness to make use of it. As I already mentioned in the first part of

this Thesis, she asserts that Stedman's categorization fails short in being a useful tool for mediators because of three main reasons: first, she observes that Stedman's typologies suggest that a large percentage of spoilers are prone to change their goals during negotiations, but do not offer many determinants of the change. Second, not every spoiler uses violence as a mean to destroy the peace process. Third, Zahar affirms that, while total spoilers for Stedman are impossible to induce into a rational and logical context, empirical review of cases have shown that even extremists can, under certain conditions, be brought to the table of negotiations (Zahar, 2008). In her paper (Zahar, 2010), she presents a model in which the use of violence is conditioned by three factors: actors' assessment of costs, assessment of capabilities and appreciation of the opportunity structure within which they operate. In addition, she divides potential spoilers in insiders, who may fear peace because of a lack of trust among themselves, and outsiders, not involved in the negotiations and thus prone to use violence. Being insiders or outsiders deeply affects the reasons, the capabilities and the costs and benefits of violent spoiling: insiders who decide to start violent gestures should consider not only the material costs of fighting, but also a loss in their reputation on the international field and a possible exclusion from future negotiations; outsiders, on the contrary, have nothing to lose and may perceive the costs of a potential peace to be higher than the ones faced by continuing to battle. Zahar (2010) supposes that spoilers' actions are also influenced by the conflict environment, which she intends as the composition of both capabilities and opportunities; she refers to capabilities as the means necessary to support the strategic option of violence, while opportunities refer to barriers that could make this option more onerous. To sum up, in contradiction with Stedman's theories, Zahar (2010) argues that preferences over outcomes are not fixed as spoilers' typology suggests and that the most significant dichotomy is between insiders and outsiders; she argues that mediators should focus on how to create incentives for involved actors not to recur to violence and that peace processes should be, in general, as inclusive as possible, because outside spoilers are more motivated to use every possible tool to derail peacemaking. Inclusiveness in a peace process is not always simple to achieve: some spoilers may deliberately exclude themselves from the negotiations, as the Khmer Rouge during the Cambodian peace process, or may not be invited to participate, in the case of the more extremist parties; anyway, including the greatest possible number of actors at the table is very important to

gain an understanding of their interests and priorities and, therefore, being able to reach a positive outcome: this is arguably the most fundamental lesson we can learn from the inclusive nature of the Northern Ireland peace process that will be investigated later in the Thesis. On the contrary, the exclusiveness of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process resulted in its failure. Finally, Zahar concludes that analysts and mediators should go beyond the concept of spoiler in order to apprehend violence.

2.3.2 Greenhill and Major: The importance of structural factors

Greenhill and Major (2007) debate that Stedman greatly underestimates the influence of structural factors on the implementation of peace processes: according to them, spoilers are originated by a mechanism which is not the one described by Stedman's typology, but its exact opposite: the type of spoilers do not determine the outcomes, but spoilers are determined by the possible outcomes. In line with Zahar, they put strong emphasis on the opportunity structure as the main factor which presents spoilers their options and therefore let them define their goals and behaviours.

Moreover, they believe that Stedman's categorization contains significant ambiguities that reduce its usefulness both as a tool for mediators to operate a correct diagnosis of spoiling and as a guide for outsider action. They summarize these ambiguities in three main points: first, they think that Stedman's model does not pay the necessary attention to the distinction between greedy and limited spoilers and hard bargaining; the issue is that, according to Greenhill and Major, a group or individual become a spoiler only when the outcome of its actions spoil the peace process and thus, if a spoiler behaviour is defined by the outcomes, then labelling a group or individual as spoiler depends more on the identification by custodians of peace of which party can be suppressed or co-opted than on distinguishing its goals and personality.

Second, Greenhill and Major assert that Stedman's model focus only on already manifested spoilers, ignoring groups and individuals which may appear weak at first; therefore, the model fails to include the whole set of actors. This may be dangerous in a peace process, because changing in relative power may lead previous weak actors to emerge as risks for the process. The cited example of the SOC in Cambodia may very well support this thesis.

Third, while Stedman affirms that total spoilers are impossible to transform because of their vision of the world and any commitment made by a total spoiler is just a mere tactic, Greenhill and Major, like Zahar, argue that total spoilers can and will change accordingly to their structure of capabilities and possibilities.

They suggest that mediators should concentrate upon shifting the opportunity structure in their favour; doing it, they argue, parties will, in most cases, change their behaviours and strategies. According to them, this happens because the distinction between different types of spoilers depends on the situation, and not on the actor itself.

2.4 Third party involvement

The involvement of third parties in a peace process may result crucial for the positive outcome of the negotiations. Whenever third parties are involved, however, they will face a series of problems. First, they have to deal with parties within an intractable conflict that cannot resolve their problems on their own: this could lead to communication and emotional issues such as communication barriers, emotional barriers, information barriers, cultural barriers, strategic barriers and unrealistic expectations (Hoffman, 2011). Moreover, third parties must consider, according to Stedman (1997), several factors regarding spoilers' diagnosis: the goal of the spoiler, its commitment, its degree of leadership command, the degree of unity within the spoiler group and the possible intent behind the acts of non-cooperation.

The simple presence of a third party involved may arise issues, considered that a mediator can work effectively only if approved by all the parties at stake. A third party can bring incentives and resources for spoilers to collaborate, like aid and international attention, but all these aspects may also encourage potential or greedy spoilers to spoil and, therefore, third parties should pay special care when using these kinds of incentives.

Another important factor to examine in the analysis of third parties involvement is the fact that they are never neutral: they always have an interest in the outcome of the process, otherwise they would not engage in it; to take part in a peace process implicates high costs, much time and remarkable efforts. Additionally, mediating parties take on huge risks, especially if the negotiations fail.

Because of the costs and risks involved, third parties are not expected to be neutral or merely observers in the process; they will guide the negotiations towards a direction that is profitable for them. If this is done too openly or if it becomes too evident that a party is excessively advantaged by mediators, however, the whole process will be weakened and exposed to spoiling actions.

Greenhill and Major (2007) relate the possibility of spoilers taking actions with the relative powers of both the custodians of peace, so mediators and peacemakers, and the domestic opposition: if both relative powers are strong enough, the probability of spoiling acts are low and spoilers' goals will likely to be relatively small; on the contrary, if both relative powers are weak, spoilers will be very greedy. Finally, if one relative power is strong while the other is weak, spoilers will likely to be moderately greedy and the chance that they will undertake spoiling actions or behaviours is medium. To conclude their analysis, Greenhill and Major (2007) state that "evidence of custodians' demonstrated willingness to engage in effective deterrence and to punish defectors should also be correlated with shifts in spoilers' willingness to cooperate" (Greenhill and Major, 2007: 15).

		Domestic Opposition's Relative Power	
		Strong	Weak
Custodians of peace	Strong	Low Least greedy spoiler	Medium Greedy to greedier
	Weak	Medium Greedy to greedier	High Greediest

Table 2.1: Possibility of spoilers' actions and predicted level of greed for a given distribution of power (Greenhill and Major, 2007).

Usually, problems can arise due to the fact that the situation of relative powers is dynamic and not static, meaning that a strategy which seems to be appropriate in a determined moment could result inappropriate in a second moment, as relative powers balance shifts. For mediators is therefore essential to maintain the situation as stable as possible, keeping

all factors constant, even if this may prove to be a very difficult task to implement in practice.

As stated before, there are several types of third parties: first, official third parties, such as governments and states; these parties seem to be the most powerful ones, thanks to their access to aid and resources and their ability to carry out rewards or punishments. Official third parties, however, are the ones that run the highest risks in the process. Second, the United Nations (UN), which offers diplomatic skills and legitimacy as well as coercive and rewarding measures; most importantly, UN can provide the international attention to the conflict that the warring parties often seek. On the downside, as we have seen above, UN's actions are systematically limited by the decisions of the Security Council. Third, non-official parties, namely Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which seem to be the weakest kind of mediators, because of their inability to supply legitimacy and to offer tangible promises or threats; on the upside, they are often the first to get involved in dialogue attempts and can raise international attention when official mediators and the UN are not interested yet. In addition, non-official parties do not have to worry about political relationships which could deteriorate as a result of failed negotiations.

On the basis of Stedman's framework of strategies to deal with spoilers (1997), it is clear that different kinds of mediators require the adoption of different strategies: coercive strategies, needing a great amount of resources to be carried out, are most likely to be implemented by official third parties or, previous the consensus of the Security Council, by the UN; an institutionalist approach is usually attempted by the UN, given its expertise in diplomacy and the fact that it is trusted by the warring parties sooner than the other mediators, while non-official parties are more likely to adopt a constructivist approach. It is essential to remember, however, that the use of these strategies is not exclusive, as the most important thing for mediators is that the warring parties listen to them and consider their proposals for the solution of the conflict.

2.5 The use of Back-Channel Negotiations

Managing spoilers can also take the form of secret talks between the parties, in an attempt to exclude potential spoilers. Wanis-St. John (2006: 119) defines Back-Channel

Negotiations (BCNs) as “officially sanctioned negotiations conducted in secret between the parties to a dispute”; this kind of negotiation usually takes place in parallel with the official negotiations and, as Pruitt (2008) points out, can be used both in the pre-negotiation and in the negotiation phase. Its utilization is more likely, according to Pruitt (2008), when two enemies in a heavy conflict become aware of the high costs and risks of the war and hence seek to settle a channel to approach their adversaries. Back-Channel communication can be either conducted through direct discussion between high-level decision makers or their representatives, or through indirect discussion between third-party intermediaries. In the first case, the use of BCN may be a symptom of an occurred deadlock, whereas the latter is particularly utilized during the pre-negotiation phase (Pruitt, 2008).

Back-Channel communication provides political cover and flexibility and allows negotiators to freely explore their common points and future orientations; most importantly, it permits the parties to manage what Wanis-St. John (2006) indicates as the four “uncertainties of the peace making process”: the costs of entry, underlying interests and priorities, outcomes and spoilers.

Spoilers arguably constitute the major uncertainty and threat for a peace process; as stated above, Wanis-St. John (2006) offers a relative broad definition of the concept of spoilers, including not only internal parties which are not at the table of negotiations but have interests at stake in the outcome, but also external third parties that could condition the peace process; furthermore, he suggests that a party should be concerned about the problems its adversary faces because of its own spoilers.

Back-channelling is a way to exclude spoilers from the process: in the pre-negotiation phase, it allows participants to establish relationships, explore one’s own possibilities, goals and alternatives and make preliminary agreements; during the negotiation phase, it allows parties to bargain and to work towards the implementation of a potential peace agreement without any external interference.

Back-channel negotiations imply secrecy and secrecy implies exclusion: therefore, spoilers are kept in the dark about the work of mediators and their possibilities to undermine the peace process or to prevent its implementation are dramatically reduced.

In certain cases, especially at crisis moments, and for a short period of time, the use of secret negotiations may be the only feasible solution to stay ahead of spoilers and,

therefore, reaching an agreement (Wanis-St. John, 2006); however, Wanis-St. John (2006) warns that its prolonged use may potentially have negative effects on the long term: agreeing with Zahar (2010) and Greenhill and Major (2007), he argues that spoilers are not static and their capability to conduct spoiling actions can intensify or decrease depending on the conditions. Their exclusion or isolation may hence provoke an intensification in their commitment level.

Focusing mainly on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Wanis-St. John (2006: 136) underlines BCN's most critical aspects: breakthrough agreements reached by using BCNs are later more difficult to implement because of the so-called "feedback effect",⁵ parties may find problems in bargaining without knowing their adversaries' real intentions, excluded groups may develop violent behaviours. Moreover, employing BCNs on a long-term period may propel the practice of what Wanis-St. John terms as "channel shopping", that is the use of multiple channels to achieve the most propitious conditions.

Pruitt (2008) is more engaged in illustrating the positive aspects of back-channeling: he highlights how they are fundamental in creating the right environment for negotiations, providing the political coverage essential to establish relationships between the parties. According to him, BCNs encourage flexibility, help to build trust among negotiators and permit mediators to explore and discover new ways to resolve their conflicts; the foundation of personal relations enable negotiators to perceive the other part not as an enemy, but as another human being. Furthermore, secret talks allow participants to possibly satisfy the preconditions set by the opposing party before moving to front-channel negotiations (Pruitt, 2008).

Nevertheless, Pruitt (2008) recognizes the existence of several potential problems in the use of BCNs: among them, the possibility that the excluded parties, i.e. spoilers, may discredit the outcomes of the negotiations or act against the implementation of an agreement; however, he argues that spoilers should not create issues if those supporting the agreement can build a coalition of supporters sufficiently large. In his paper (Pruitt, 2008), he admits that narrow participation is a factor which may derail the entire process,

⁵ The feedback effect is generated when the results of BNC are finalized in front-channel negotiations: in this case, the operational aspects of implementing the agreement may be politically costly and difficult to explain to internal subparties, political opponents and excluded parties. These groups may therefore organize to protest against the accords and to prevent any further secret negotiations, ultimately working to derail the process.

but he also affirms that this can be escaped by not over-relying on BCNs and, most importantly, by assuming an inclusive approach: respecting these two points should contribute to broaden the process and creating a coalition wide enough to successfully support the agreement. That is the case, for example, of the Northern Ireland conflict that I will examine later in this Thesis; the Northern Ireland negotiations are an interesting instance in which back-channel negotiations were used to institute a broad central coalition (Pruitt, 2008). Its particularity also relies in the fact that secret talks between the British Government and Irish parties were built on a long term, more than 20 years (O’Kane, 2015).

The great importance of back-channel communication during the conflict in Northern Ireland is also remarked by Ó Dochartaig (2011), whose contribution shows how BCNs were instrumental in building trust, developing personal relationships and enhancing cooperation between the parties.

2.6 Conclusion of chapter two

In this chapter I analysed the different factors and strategies that peacemakers should take into consideration when trying to deal with spoilers; a pioneer in this field is Stedman, whose contribution is aimed at providing an effective framework to launch an efficient spoilers’ diagnosis: he distinguishes four main dimensions peacemakers need to examine in the process, namely position, number, typology and locus of possible spoilers. Spoilers can be either inside or outside the process, consequently adapting their strategies: the use of violence is more likely to be performed by a spoiler which is excluded from the negotiations. The number is another important factor and should be intended by peacemakers as a warning signal, since the presence of more than one spoiler and the necessity to advantage neither of them makes the implementation of a valid tactic more difficult. According to Stedman, spoilers can be limited, greedy or total; this differentiation is based on the analysis of their goals and commitment: limited spoilers usually have limited goals (but not necessarily limited commitment), total spoilers have a vision of the world in an all-or-nothing term and are usually the most complicated to accommodate, while greedy spoilers lie between limited and total spoilers.

The last factor, the locus of the spoilers, is related to their internal dynamics; more specifically, whether their behaviours and necessities are plotted by the leaders or by the followers: in the former case, a change in leadership may contribute to a change in the typology of a spoiler, whereas in the latter case this may prove to be harder, as leaders may fear that this change would unleash their followers' reaction.

On the basis of Stedman's work, three are the major strategies usually adopted by peacemakers to deal with spoilers: inducement, socialization and coercion. Inducement consists in the accommodation of spoilers' limited demands and in their acceptance within the peace process; socialization involves the imposition of a normative framework to which spoilers must commit in order to join the negotiations. It is usually composed of an intellectual component, that is its capacity to be directed both at the elites and at the population, and of a material component, namely the peacemakers' ability to use both carrots and stick to reward or punish the spoilers; coercion is instead based on the use or threat of punishment to discourage spoilers' negative actions: the departing train and the withdrawal are the most used coercive strategies, while the use of military force and coercive diplomacy are less frequent, because of the higher costs and risks they imply.

Generally speaking, inducement, socialization and coercion are usually linked with a specific typology of spoiler, respectively limited, greedy and total spoiler: however, it is important to note that these relations are not always accurate and each case requires its own strategy, that peacemakers should applicate after having properly investigated the nature and characteristics of each distinct scenario.

Other scholars have pointed out some critical aspects of Stedman's analysis on spoilers; Cochrane proposes a different categorization, defining spoilers as "resisters" and dividing them in peaceful and violent resisters. Zahar (2010) argues that not every spoiler is prone to violence and, most importantly, even total spoilers can be induced to the table of negotiations. Moreover, she adds that there are not fixed types of spoilers and an eventual use of violent behaviours depends on the possibilities and capabilities they may have to do so, other than their assessment of costs; other factors that influence their actions, according to Zahar, are their position and the environment in which the conflict takes place. She concludes that, to apprehend violence, peacemakers should go beyond the mere concept of spoiler.

Greenhill and Major (2007) criticise Stedman's underestimation of the structural factors in peace processes, arguing that spoilers are determined by its possible outcomes; other important critics they move to Stedman are the fact that his model does not pay the necessary attention to the distinction between greedy and limited spoilers and hard bargaining and the fact that he only focuses on already manifested spoilers, ignoring possible spoilers-to-be. Furthermore, they agree with Zahar in asserting that total spoilers can be transformed by shaping their structure of capabilities and possibilities. They indeed suggest that peacemakers should concentrate upon shifting this particular structure in their favour.

Later, I proposed an investigation of how third parties can be involved in the negotiations; their intervention is usually positive if they are completely accepted by the warring parties, but they still have to face a number of problems and challenges, including communicative, cultural and strategic barriers, other than take into account the factors that Stedman (1997) relates to a correct spoilers' diagnosis, like, for example, spoilers' goals and commitment. Mediators are generally not expected to be neutral and, in the eyes of Greenhill and Major (2007), their degree of relative power can influence spoilers' targets and behaviours. In general, third parties are divided into three categories: official, UN, non-official; for each category is possible to associate a determined strategy to deal with spoilers. This, however, is not an exclusive process, as strategies may change accordingly to shifts in relative power balances. Finally, I introduced the method of back-channel communications as a tool to exclude spoilers from the negotiations and therefore prevent them to undermine the peace process; despite being criticised by Wanis-St. John (2006) for its possible negative effects, the use of back-channeling, especially in the pre-negotiation phase, may prove to be a precious instrument to provide the essential political cover and flexibility a peace process may need. Back-channel communication was successfully used during the conflict in Northern Ireland, where it was crucial in building trust, cooperation and even personal relationships among the parties involved.

In the next chapter, I will illustrate some cases of study in order to make a deeper examination on how spoilers and peacemakers act on the practical field: these cases will concern two conflicts in which a peace agreement has been reached, Cambodia and Northern Ireland, and a conflict still ongoing in which spoilers have succeeded in undermining every attempt to make peace, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

3. Cases of study

In this part of the Thesis, I will apply theory to three cases, examining historical situations that will help us to observe how mediators' strategies and tactics can be actualized in practice, as well as identify complications and obstacles of various kinds that may affect the outcomes of the spoiler management process, but are not expected by theory. Moreover, one of the goals of this chapter is to test the validity of the definitions given by Stedman about spoilers.

More specifically, I will discuss three cases of study, of which two, Cambodia and Northern Ireland, are pretty much stable at the moment, meaning that an agreement between the parties has been reached and violence has stopped, or, at least, significantly diminished, while the other, the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is still ongoing. I will briefly describe the background of the conflicts, which parties were or are involved and which actions and strategies were taken by mediators and third parties to counter spoilers' actions and behaviours.

I have decided to inspect the cases of Cambodia and Northern Ireland because they have really different backgrounds, locations, kinds of spoilers and parties involved; the Cambodian case, in addition, gives the opportunity to examine two different, but related, cases of spoiler management in which the first, against the Khmer Rouge, was successful and the second, against the State of Cambodia organization, was ineffective: moreover, these cases provide the chance to analyse the behaviours, strategies and factors that led to their respective success and failure. Finally, analysing the case of Cambodia gives us a more Asian perspective on the ways to resolve conflicts and to properly adopt tactics of spoiler management.

As a final conflict to investigate I have chosen the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, focusing in particular on the failure of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process (1994-1996); this conflict has a lot of history, already identified spoilers and a number of failed solutions to deal with these spoilers: all these factors make it very difficult to find a suitable definitive solution that will work. As the Cambodian case in which the SOC was involved, this peace process failed, but the tactics and techniques adopted by mediators and spoilers' behaviours were rather different and thus intriguing to study.

As noted above these cases include both successful and failed spoiler management: for example, in Cambodia, mediators' strategies proved to be successful against the Khmer Rouge (KR), but failed in achieving positive results against the State of Cambodia (SOC) organization; the use of back-channel communication was fundamental in building reciprocal trust among the negotiating parties in Northern Ireland, but, on the other hand, was, according to Wanis-St. John (2006), one of the main reasons for spoilers to intensify their actions (and eventually derail the whole peace process) during the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process (1994-1996).

Furthermore, I believe these cases to be interesting because of the different strategies used to manage different types of spoilers: in Cambodia, both coercion and inducement were adopted against, respectively, the KR, considered a total spoiler, and the SOC; in Northern Ireland, peacemakers decided for a more inclusive approach, while all the tactics implemented so far to limit spoilers in the Middle East have been ineffective.

Finally, each of these three cases is characterised by the presence of different third parties involved: in Cambodia, the UN played a primary role through the UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia), while in Northern Ireland the principal actors were parts of the British and Irish governments, as well as of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and even private citizens; in the Middle East, the authority of the UN is limited, as the negotiations are primarily conducted by the respective governments and authorities, with a rather marked influence employed on the Israeli side by its foreign allies, United States *in primis*.

3.1 Case of study 1: The Cambodian conflict

3.1.1 Background of the conflict

In 1991, warring Cambodian parties signed the Paris Peace Accords, successfully culminating four years of negotiations aimed at putting an end to violence in the country; for more than twenty years, Cambodia had been lacerated by three successive conflicts, namely the civil war and US aerial strikes in the early 1970s, the genocide at the hands of the Khmer Rouge in the late 1970s and the Vietnamese invasion and consequent civil conflict throughout the 1980s. As a result of war and war-related diseases, more than 2

million Cambodians had died. At the end of the civil war in 1991, Cambodian society was severely harmed and the economy was in ruins.

After its independence from France (1953), Cambodia had known a period of relative stability and peace, interrupted by a military coup led by general Lon Nol, which eventually brought the country into the Vietnamese conflict, focusing on eliminating North Vietnamese and Vietcong bases in the east and on hunting down the KR and its supporters; Lon Nol's actions transformed, *de facto*, a low-level domestic conflict into an all-out civil war (Dobbins et al., 2013: 31).

However, the increasing of US bombing of Cambodian targets and frequency of American and South Vietnamese's incursions in the east of the country weakened Lon Nol's power, allowing KR to gradually seize more and more territory, until April 1975, when they took control of the capital Phnom Penh.

The KR immediately established a collective society, similar to Mao's China; Cambodians were forced to leave cities and to work in the countryside's rice paddies, living in collectives, while citizens associated with the former regime were identified as enemies and, in large part, executed. Despite assistance from China, these living conditions and the ravages of mass starvation and diseases caused the death of nearly 2 million people under the KR (Dobbins et al., 2013: 32).

Meanwhile, the KR also carried out military raids in Vietnam over a period of two years, provoking Vietnamese's reaction, which culminated in the invasion of Cambodia in 1979; Vietnamese troops blew over the KR regime and put into place a Marxist-Leninist government, the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), a regime backed by the Vietnamese army and composed of opponents to the KR.

The KR were forced to retreat in the jungles along the Thai border, together with forces loyal to Prince Sihanouk⁶ and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF); the bases of the KR in the jungles effectively became paramilitary training centers. Thanks to the Chinese, American and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) support, a new government in exile, the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), was formed, made up of groups opposed to the PRK; furthermore, Western

⁶ Sihanouk was king from 1941 to 1955, when he abdicated in favour of his father in order to get elected as the country's political leader; he was elected Head of State in 1960, retaining the title of Prince. With the new Constitution promulgated in 1993 he regained the title of King of Cambodia; he abdicated again in 2004, in favour of his son and, since then, has gained the honorific title of "King-Father of Cambodia".

backing was essential in guaranteeing CGDK a seat at the United Nations as Cambodians' representatives.

The consequent war between CGDK and the PRK lasted for 13 years and lowered its fighting level only in 1989, when Vietnamese troops withdrew from Cambodia; in the same year, PRK changed its name in State of Cambodia (SOC), adopting, among others, free-market policies.

In 1990, US signalled that they would no longer support CGDK as the representative of Cambodian people at the United Nations; progresses towards peace, however, remained slow until 1991, when Cambodian's four main political parties, the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), the KPNLF, the Khmer Rouge and the CPP (SOC's political wing) came together in Paris to sign a series of accords aimed at ending the civil war and, consequently, transferred a significant amount of power to the UNTAC.

As Greenhill and Major (2006) point out, the investigation of the Cambodian conflict is particularly interesting because of a number of reasons: the UN put a considerable effort to resolve the war, both on the economical and personnel side, and, therefore, the analysis highlights UNTAC's potential, limits and capabilities in contrasting possible spoilers; according to them, it also show the merits of their thesis, within events such as the disintegration of the KR, that were considered to be the main threat to peace, and the embezzlement of power by the SOC, that was not even considered as a menace before. At last, it underlines how mediators and peacemakers should be extremely careful in carrying out their strategies, as in Cambodia, the tactic used against the KR resulted inadvertently in a strengthening of the SOC, which consequently, by taking advantage of it, became a spoiler that nobody had previously foreseen.

3.1.2 Reasons of the conflict

Dobbins et al. (2013) note that the internal and external conflicts in Cambodia can be largely attributed to a series of independent factors: Cambodia's geographical and geopolitical position, the country's cultural and social features, economic, political and institutional aspects. Cambodia is situated between Thailand and Vietnam, with whom it has border contentions: its population saw the conflict against Vietnam as a struggle for

territory and the consequent invasion as a threat for Cambodia's existence. The Khmer Rouge and other resistance groups were financed and strongly supported by both China and Western states, that looked at them as a useful barrier in order to block the Soviet influence in the region; the rivalry between the two super-powers deeply affected and catalysed the war in Cambodia, with the Khmer Rouge that were boosted by US bombing against the Soviet-backed Vietnamese. US and China justified their support to Cambodian's resistance groups with their need to oppose Soviet's attempt to annex Cambodia: at the same time, however, this brought them to condoned Khmer Rouge's crimes and to complicate the already serious problem of the refugees that were not allowed by the KR to leave their camps, in an attempt to delegitimize the PKR government.

Culturally, Cambodians are, according to Dobbins et al. (2013), submitted to political authority; the Khmer Rouge exploited it to its advantage by creating a nationalist ideology of extreme collectivism, presenting the opposition to the Vietnamese invasion as a fight for Cambodians own existences and the centralization of power as the only way to serve the common cause. The acceptance of many of the Khmer Rouge's nationalistic appeals helped the group to preserve at least a partial support even after their removal from power. From an economic standpoint, Sihanouk policies before the conflicts had discouraged foreign ventures and grand industrial projects, limiting civic organization; moreover, the country lacked vital infrastructures and adequate development programs: by the time UNTAC arrived, economic activity in Cambodia was insufficient for developing the society or even supporting the government (Dobbins et al., 2013: 39).

On the political and institutional side, the country suffered from decades of bad political practices, like the lack of intermediary structures between politics and population; in general, government control was feeble and people often acted out of its authority. Cambodia also felt short of appropriate civil servants and proper legal institutions; furthermore, at the time of the Vietnamese invasion, the country did not have organized security forces and lacked the resources to establish an effective military conscription.

As Ashley (1998) points out, the core issue for the parties involved was, in any case, their inability to share state power: Cambodia had no tradition of sharing power and no institutions with which to limit it. Therefore, in a country which could not survive without international legitimacy and aid, Ashley (1998: 20) observed that "while the forms of the

struggles varied during the 1980s and the 1990s [...] the aims remained unchanged: power and legitimacy.”

3.1.3 Actors involved

In the analysis of the Cambodian conflict, we can identify three major parties involved: first, the UN, which, after the signing of the Paris Accords, launched a peacekeeping operation in the country, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), whose main target was the administration of the state, as well as the organisation and the fulfilment of regular and democratic national elections, leading Cambodia through the transitional period between war and peace and restoring the whole set of civic rules. On the administrative side, UNTAC had to supervise both the already existing administrative structures and the operate of the police; on the military side, its assignments were supervising and monitoring the withdrawal of foreign forces from the country, secure the ceasefire and, during the demobilization of the parties' troops, ensuring the regrouping and relocating of all forces to cantonment areas (Allدن and Ramses, 2007). The UNTAC was officially deployed on March 1992 and is still recognised as one of the biggest UN operations ever; at its peak, it counted over 21000 UN personnel, including human rights, civil administrative and military components, as well as a police component of about 3600 police monitors (United Nations). Widyono (2008) notes that Cambodians greeted UNTAC peacekeepers, as they were seeing the light at the end of the tunnel after twenty years of civil conflict and turmoil. This is also observed by Dobbins (2013), who argues that “UNTAC was warmly welcomed by Cambodians who believed that it was their best chance to finally put an end to years of bloodshed. UNTAC personnel were thought of as “liberators” who would wrestle the Khmer Rouge into submission and keep the CPP from exercising dictatorial authority” (Dobbins et al., 2013: 52).

Second, the Khmer Rouge (KR), a communist organization first emerged during Cambodia's struggles for independence against France in the 1950s; initially supported by Vietnam, they took power in 1975, defeating Lon Nol's troops and immediately implementing a radical Maoist and Marxist-Leninist transformation of the society: among others, they abolished free markets, money, public schooling, private property and

religious practices, basically depriving citizens of their basic rights. Moreover, they arrested and killed thousands of soldiers, military officers and public servants from the Khmer Republic led by Lon Nol, turning Cambodia into a huge detention center: it is estimated that over 2 million people died as a result of their policies. Their regime ended with the Vietnamese invasion that forced them to hide in the jungles in the west of the country; however, Western and Chinese support consented them to survive and to be recognised as the only legitimate representative of Cambodia as part of the CGDK at the United Nations from 1979 to 1990 (Cambodian Tribunal Monitor).

Third, the State of Cambodia (SOC) organization, that represented the evolution of the Vietnamese-backed People’s Republic of Kampuchea (PRK); as the Vietnamese forces withdrew from Cambodia in 1989, the PRK, in order to remove the stigma of being a Vietnamese puppet, decided to change its name in SOC and to adopt free-market oriented economic policies (Ashley, 1998); initially not depicted as a possible spoiler, the SOC became a greedy spoiler (Greenhill and Major, 2007) after the national elections held in 1993.

In this Thesis, these two spoiling groups, their actions and behaviours and the strategies to counter them, will be analysed separately to provide a more complete and clear examination of the facts.

Actor	Position
UNTAC	Peacemaker
Khmer Rouge (KR)	Spoiler
State of Cambodia (SOC)	Spoiler
US, China, URSS, Thailand	Spoilers’ Patrols
FUNCINPEC, KPNLF	Political Parties

Table 3.1: Main actors involved in the Cambodian conflict and peace process and their positions within it.

3.1.4 The Khmer Rouge and the Departing Train Strategy

The signing of the Paris Peace Accords⁷ (Brown, 1992), on October 23, 1991, was an achievement to which several factors had contributed; the war had reached a stalemate among its principal fighting actors, the Khmer Rouge, the forces loyal to Prince Sihanouk (FUNCINPEC), the State of Cambodia and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF). The external patrons of these parties, namely US, China, Vietnam and Russia, had tired of the stalemate and forced, through mechanisms of coercion, the warring parties to discuss about a framework calling for democratic national elections, their disarmament and demobilization and an UN intervention to secure the effective implementation of the agreement (Stedman, 1997).

The party that mainly raised doubts about its compliance to the agreement was the Khmer Rouge: during their 3-year regime, over 2 million Cambodians had died and the group had been able to survive only thanks to its military skills, support from China and recognition from the countries of the ASEAN. According to Stedman (1997), its inclusion in the negotiations was primarily due to the awareness by US and others of the fact that the KR could only be marginalized, but not defeated on the military field; also important was that the Paris agreement had been developed as a very inclusive process and excluding the KR, which were still a relevant part in the country's politics, would have been quite impossible. Greenhill and Major (2007) indeed observe that not including the KR in the negotiations would have represented a tremendous danger to any new coalition government. Moreover, Ashley (1998) suggests that KR's hopes were incompatible with the aspirations of the other factions: the Maoist group aimed at replacing the SOC regime and substitute it with a coalition made up of all four groups on the short-term, achieving legitimacy and a strong share of power, while, on the long-term, the target was to monopolize power. The KR argued that the SOC was a product of the Vietnamese invasion and, with it in power, free elections were not possible.

⁷ According to Brown, the Paris Peace Accords are at the same time really detailed on certain points and very ambiguous in others; this can be seen as both a strength, in the mean that the warring parties would have never accepted to sign it without this vagueness, and a weakness, as it does not explicit several key aspects. UNTAC's official mandate was "to ensure implementation of the Agreement, including those [matters] relating to the organization and conduct of free and fair elections and the relevant aspects of the administration of Cambodia".

Between 1991 and 1992, the KR did not completely comply with the Paris Accords, carrying out actions of disturb whose peak was an attack to a UN helicopter in February 1992; to complicate the situation, two incidents occurred in that period: first, SOC-inspired rioters assaulted a KR's spokesman attempting to open a political office in Phnom Penh. Later, Sihanouk proposed the formation of a political coalition between SOC and FUNCINPEC aimed at isolating the KR. Both these incidents openly violated the spirit of the Paris settlement and gave the KR an excuse for its noncompliance; according to Stedman (1997), in fact, some scholars believe that KR's omissions in respecting the principles of Paris were due to a lack of trust towards their adversaries. Others argue that the organization was basically divided into two factions, one supporting peace, the other supporting war; anyway, evidences suggest that KR's compliance with the agreement was always tactical and oriented to a possible return to power (Stedman, 1997: 27). This would also collimate with the theories of Zahar (2010) and Greenhill and Major (2007) on the importance of spoilers' structural factors, capabilities and possibilities.

After UNTAC's deployment in March 1992, KR's behaviours became more cautious and slightly more cooperative: for example, it allowed the presence of some UNTAC civilians in its areas and collaborated in a few humanitarian initiatives with the United Nations (Stedman, 1997).

However, difficulties persisted, as UNTAC's activities on the ground were strongly limited; the KR indeed refused to demobilize and to give up their weapons, claiming that the permanence in Cambodia of some Vietnamese forces made the possibility of its soldiers' cantonment extremely low. This can be explained with two weak points in the implementation of the agreement: first, KR's misinterpretation of the Accords, which established that, upon its entry into force, all foreign forces, with the exemption of UN personnel, had to leave the country; the KR incorrectly interpreted it as the removal of all foreign people from Cambodia, especially ethnic Vietnamese, a decision that would have been contrary to the principles of human rights' protection. Second, the KR believed that the institutions of the SOC would have been dismantled: these, however, were too important for the whole society and the UN did not have the necessary capacities to replace them; furthermore, KR's leadership believed that UNTAC's apparent preference for the SOC reflected an American plot to favour a FUNCINPEC/ CPP coalition and

subsequently, through Western aid, funding KR's destruction. (Ashley, 2008) Therefore, the KR did no longer comply with the Accords. On May,30,1992, KR troops refused to allow the entry in their territories to a military UN convoy led by secretary-general's special representative, Yasushi Akashi, and his force commander, General John Sanderson. Instead of insisting and sending other UN troops in the area, Akashi and Sanderson decided to turn back; this decision had significant repercussions, because it made the KR doubting of the real capabilities and military strength of the UN mission⁸ (Widyono, 2008: 77).

At that point, many UNTAC officials invoked the use of force against the KR; UNTAC's deputy military commander, Michel Loridon, debated that the inability of the UN's forces to act on the ground would have led to a decrease in their reputation and a loss of credibility, whereas a show of strength would have pushed the antagonist party to meet its obligations and would have established a reputation of enforcing compliance among the other parties involved. In addition, as Stedman (1997) reminds, the UN had the legal permission of enforcing compliance and did not need a Chapter 7 mandate to do so.⁹

Akashi and Sanderson opposed these claims for a number of motives, listed by Stedman (1997) and Widyono (2008): first of all, militarily forcing the KR to comply would have possibly meant a new war or, at least, an escalation that countries contributing troops could not tolerate; taking as example the "Bamboo Pole Incident", Sanderson argued that a military reaction would have cost the UN mission over 200 casualties. In addition, Sanderson felt that UN peacekeepers lacked any offensive capability and that an eventual attack would have been inefficient. Moreover, a new cycle of hostilities would have destroyed the political consensus among the other parties at the table, causing the failure of the operation. Both of them also did not trust the possible outcomes of such attempt to gain compliance, as the use of force could have definitively stopped any prospect of peace with the KR. A sixth and final reason was that the military option against the KR could upset the balances of the peace process, as some of the main parties, especially the

⁸ The fact is also known as the "Bamboo Pole Incident" and attracted heavy critics from the UN side; according to Widyono (2008), "Akashi's party was prevented from proceeding further from a simple roadblock when several young, unarmed Khmer Rouge soldiers refused to lift a single bamboo pole over the road through their territory [...] The incident was publicised all over the World, and Akashi seemed completely devastated".

⁹ Chapter 7 of the Charter of the United Nations regulates UN actions with respect to threat to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression. It does not require the warring parties' consent.

FUNCINPEC and the KPRLF, derived their power from KR's ability to counter SOC and a KR defeat would have increased SOC's hunger for an outright victory (Stedman, 1997). All these reasons pushed Akashi to find a different solution to resolve the situation: understanding the KR's tactical move as a demonstration of its lack of sincerity towards committing to the process, he created a unified approach to the problem by meeting with KR's external patrons, Thailand and China, dictating, at the same time, a strategy of "patient persuasion" and "sustained pressure" (Stedman in Darby and Mac Ginty, 2008: 30). At the same time, he requested UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to put economic pressure on the KR in case of a persisting state of noncompliance (Stedman, 1997).

Akashi had clear that KR's main goals, the banishment of all ethnic Vietnamese from Cambodia and the dismantled of the entire SOC's administrative structure, could not be met; as already mentioned, the first issue would have meant a violation of human rights, while consenting the second request was simply impossible, because UNTAC had not enough administrative personnel to replace SOC's administration. Because of their noncompliance with the peace process and the fact that their goals were unrealistic to be met, the KR was indeed labelled as a "total spoiler" and a tactic of "soft" coercion, the Department Train Strategy, was adopted; UNTAC set the dates for the elections and planned to move forward towards them even without the KR. The KR and its supporters were advised that, in any case, the course towards free and democratic national elections would continue, whether they participate in the process or not; one major KR's leader, Khieu Samphan, in response, rejected the possibility of further negotiations, defining talks between his group and the UNTAC as a "dialogue with the deaf" (Munthit, 1993). The organization eventually decided to not participate into the elections, a decision that proved to be wrong, as it started its dissolution, which culminated in 1997.

Moving forward in his strategy, Akashi opted to leave the door open for KR to re-join the process, in order to limit the range of action of its followers and its hostility towards the negotiations; this proved to be a fundamental move, as it was able to create a certain degree of consensus among the other warring parties and the UN's allies. Additionally, Akashi's strategy could count on the support of both Thailand and China, which explicitly sustained the elections to be held in 1993.

To support the operations, UNTAC took initiatives also on a military standpoint: General Sanderson redeployed his troops to provide security and protection to every possible target, specifically the ones directly linked with the national elections. Stedman (1997) notes that, in doing so, Sanderson made use of both his soldiers and the armies of the other parties involved, obviously with the exemption of the KR, simultaneously specifying that such a military operation was “an interposition strategy, but not between opposing forces. Rather, it was between a highly moral act sanctioned under international law and supported by international consensus, and any person or group which might threaten it” (Sanderson in Jianwei Wang, 1996: 71).

Moreover, in December 1992, UNTAC set up radio UNTAC, a radio station which was employed to satisfy two main purposes: to create a feeling of safety among the population, encouraging the people to take part in the elections, and to neutralize KR’s propaganda (Stedman, 1997).

Even if the KR attacked the UNTAC between March and April 1992, it did not really launch a military offensive against the elections.

UNTAC’s strategy was successful: after having recognized the impossibility to accommodate KR’s demands, because of the threats they posed to the implementation of the agreement, Akashi and his personnel were able to draw considerable international consensus to delegitimise the KR and to endorse their plan of letting the peace process moving forward also in its absence. Military and propaganda initiatives were equally important for the positive outcome of the strategy: UNTAC’s forces acted to protect the elections, while support from the people was achieved thanks to ventures like radio UNTAC. Furthermore, the fact that the KR was not automatically kept out from the negotiations, further unvalidated any possible spoiling action and contributed to keep its followers under a relative control.

Ashley (2008) observes that the UN’s implementation of the Departing Train Strategy was primarily due to its peacekeeping rather than peace-implementation structure: he highlights that UNTAC achieved major successes where it could do things itself, like promoting human rights awareness, organising the elections and accelerating the development of economic and political liberalisation, but was quite in troubles when the factions refused to implement their commitments, forcing it to adopt a kind of strategy by which the use of force was not necessary (Ashley, 2008).

Evans (2012) acknowledges that the UN operation was not perfect: more flexibility was needed to better deal with rapid changes in conditions on the ground and significant issues arose from UNTAC's limited capabilities and resources in providing an adequate civil administrative function. In addition, the lack of a criminal justice system made this aspect of the operation unachievable. Ashley (2008) adds that, because of UN's preference for the SOC/ CPP faction, UNTAC also missed a sufficient margin of manoeuvre to act and the political backing of its member countries. Despite these problems, Evans (2012) recognises that the main goals were achieved: UN succeeded in removing war from Cambodia, also allowing for more conciliatory relations with its neighbours, especially Vietnam, it succeeded in resolving the question of the over 350000 displaced Cambodians, that were repatriated from the Thai border, and, most importantly, it succeeded in helping the country to assume its place in the community of nations. Findlay (1995) defines the mission as a "qualified success", as the most part of its objectives were successfully fulfilled; among them, the organization and conduct of the elections, the refugee repatriation programme, the verification of the Vietnamese withdrawal and the beginning of the process of reconstruction of Cambodia's administration, economy and infrastructures. Most importantly, all these targets were achieved without being involved in a shooting war.

Recently, UNTAC's importance in ending the conflict in Cambodia has been publicly questioned by CPP's leader and actual Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, who claimed that, at the moment of the UN's forces withdrawal, the country was still divided and the definitive implementation of peace came only thanks to his "win-win" strategy conducted between 1996 and 1998, consisting in integrating Khmer Rouge holdouts into military and government positions. Hun Sen's declarations, however, draw critics from some Cambodian and international analysts, that agree on the effective relevance of the UN's mission in holding free and fair elections and in putting the necessary international pressure on the warring parties (Sokhean and Kijewski, 2018).

Some observers have also questioned the nature of the KR as a total spoiler: both Greenhill and Major (2007) and Stedman (1997) cite evidences that KR intended to collaborate as far as the UNTAC/SOC relation became evident; others, like US Ambassador Richard Solomon, believed that the KR could have been co-opted (Greenhill and Major, 2007: 32).

Greenhill and Major (2007: 34) support this option by recalling two factors: firstly, at the time of the elections, the KR had lost a significant part of their forces, while the SOC military power had increased; KR weakness was thus both political and military. Second, KR's external patrons, Thailand and China, had stopped financing and supporting the Maoist organization; even if part of KR's funds came from illegal drug and timber trade, this was not enough to avoid their marginalization also on an economic standpoint.

Despite the critics and the doubts, it is enough fair to say that UNTAC's mission and the consequent strategy to counter KR's spoiling actions were of critical importance in ending the war and leading Cambodia towards peace. These, however, also had some negative repercussions, namely SOC's seizure of power.

3.1.5 The State of Cambodia and the Inducement Strategy

Khmer Rouge's motivations to not comply with the Paris Peace Agreement had some merits: as noticed, UNTAC lacked adequate control over SOC and, during its mission, never really took over SOC's administrative structure, given the shortage of qualified administrative personnel. As a result, SOC tended to ignore UNTAC's instructions and to sabotage its directives (Stedman, 1997); the UN did not have enough power to contrast SOC's authority and its violations. As Ashley (2008) observes, UNTAC simply needed the SOC, given the resources and credibility it had invested; in order to keep moving towards national elections, and with the KR faction out of the process because labelled as a spoiler, the UNTAC could not afford to lose another party, in particular the CPP, which controlled a great part of the territory in which UN forces were deployed. Moreover, according to Stedman (1997) the realization of the Departing Train Strategy against the KR had made Akashi feel that UNTAC was dependent from SOC's support and so limited in its options for controlling it. These were the reasons why it was impossible for UNTAC to maintain a neutral attitude towards the implementation of its mandate; against the communist movement, UNTAC only had the power to accommodate, not to coerce.

UNTAC was not even able to preserve human rights: despite having this ambition, its enforcement of violations was weak and sporadic, as Akashi believed that an intransigent behaviour would have endangered the mission's neutrality; as a result, a rather ineffective broad interpretation of human rights protection was issued (Stedman, 1997).

The SOC took it to its advantage: preserving their command over police, army, media, bureaucracy and judiciary consented them to strongly support their electoral campaign and, at the same time, to perpetrate numerous acts of human rights abuses, without the possibility of an UNTAC concrete intervention (Ashley, 2008).

Moreover, when General Sanderson redeployed his troops to protect the elections, SOC forces initiated a real reign of terror, although on a low level, aimed at intimidating the KR's party and civil society.

Despite being aware of the signals, Akashi and the UNTAC personnel did not perceive SOC as a possible spoiler-to-be; this did not give them the opportunity to properly respond when SOC seriously began to undermine the peace process, following the results of the 1993 elections.

The elections saw a clear FUNCINPEC's victory, even though SOC's attempts to drive the results in their direction, through assassinations, intimidation and fraud; immediately, SOC's leader Hun Sen claimed that the elections were forged and dishonest and attempted to violently grab power by organizing protests throughout Cambodia (Stedman, 1997: 32). On the other hand, the UNTAC believed that the elections were a success; Akashi, right after having met with the representatives of the SNC,¹⁰ declared: "In the opinion of the United Nations and Secretary General the polling has taken place in a very good, peaceful atmosphere, and I consider the polling is free and fair" (Munthit, 1993).

From the signing of the Paris Accords, UNTAC had only focused on impeding the KR to ruin the process: the KR were intended as the biggest threat for peace, so that Akashi had ignored the danger constituted by the SOC. In addition, the actions carried out to counter the KR had created a series of opportunities for the SOC to undermine the process; Stedman (1997) rightly argues that both spoilers' behaviours were a function of the other: the fight against the major spoiler had ended in strengthening a party whose goals and structure of opportunity consented it to finally spoil peace. The communist organization, however, was arguably stronger and better organized than the KR and thus harder to contrast.

This case once again reflects what predicted by Zahar (2010) and Greenhill and Major (2007), by which spoilers are influenced by the conflict environment and are determined

¹⁰ The SNC was the Supreme National Council, a coalition government officially recognized by the UN and representative of the three main factions. It was chaired by Prince Sihanouk.

by the process's possible outcomes; in Cambodia, it was clear that the SOC became a spoiler because of the opportunities UNTAC gave it and its capability to exploit them. Hun Sen and its followers fully understood that UNTAC could not achieve what expected without their support and acted consequently, becoming dangerous for the peace process at the same moment that the UN had seemingly achieved a positive result.

Stedman (1997) notes that between its deployment and 1993, UNTAC carried out a strategy of inducement towards the SOC; it usually did not operate against SOC's violations and, when it happened, it tried to do it through private persuasion rather than public repression. According to Stedman (1997: 34), this was probably due to Akashi's believing that Asian methods had to be used in the Cambodian context: such methods found public reprimand distasteful.

After the elections, the SOC resorted to violence in an attempt to reverse the electoral results: their violent behaviour was successful, as the UNTAC, fearing a potential return to civil conflict, mediate with Sihanouk to let the SOC access to more power positions that it actually deserved. Not only Akashi consoled Hun Sen right after the elections' results were published, but he also provided him with a political deal in which FUNCINPEC's approval by the population was combined with the political and administrative experience of the SOC.

Another reason why UNTAC had to concede a relative power to the SOC was its inferiority on the ground; despite the fact that the UN had deployed a number of troops to secure the mission, at the time the SOC's military force was clearly stronger, with a formidable arsenal and the knowledge of the potential battlefield at their disposition; moreover, the SOC's troops outnumbered UN forces of almost 90000 soldiers (Greenhill and Major, 2007: 34). Hence, although FUNCINPEC had resulted victorious in the elections, the measures that regulated the control over the country's government were changed in order to accommodate a government of national unity.

Greenhill and Major (2007) find that what happened after the national election in 1993 was just the first step towards a coup that materialize a couple of years later, in 1997, when the SOC complete its course assaulting the capital, eliminating FUNCINPEC from the political process and re-establishing total control over Cambodia.

Following their model, the two authors assert that what made the difference for the SOC was its ability to move from not being a spoiler to be a greedy spoiler to finally be a total

spoiler, shifting its position based on changes in the balance of power and the prevailing structure of opportunity. As argued by Stedman (1997: 36), the SOC “skilfully manipulated an internationally negotiated and implemented peace process to triumph in a war that it could not win on the battlefield.”

3.1.6 Conclusion

Several lessons can be drawn from the Cambodian conflict and how it was managed. Alldén and Ramses (2007) contribute in making a list of them; for an analysis on spoilers, two are particularly important: first, the decision to adopt an inducement strategy against the SOC proved to be ineffective, as diplomatic pressure and sanctions did not accomplish the results UNTAC needed. Second, in order to foresee potential spoilers, an adequate understanding of a country’s culture, customs and traditions is fundamental.

Regarding UNTAC’s strategies for managing the spoilers’ problems, their outcomes in the Cambodian peace process are related but different; the Departing Train Strategy used against the KR was successful, as Akashi was able to exclude a spoiler from the process and, at the same time, justify his decision by leaving the door open for the Maoists to re-join the negotiations. KR’s decision to stay out of the elections put an end to their ambitions and, in retrospect, is considered the first step towards the group’s disintegration and its leader Pol Pot’s deposition in 1997. The evaluation is, however, very different for what concerns the management of the SOC; the strategy of inducement has drawn a lot of critics: Stedman (1997: 36) notice that it caused several experts on Cambodia to warn in 1996 of a “creeping coup”. This prediction turned real in 1997, when the SOC forces conquered total control of Cambodia.

In particular in the case of the SOC, UNTAC’s faults are retrospectively evident: their strong focus on counter the KR was motivated by their violent genocidal history (Stedman,1997); once marginalized the KR, however, the UNTAC could not block the SOC’s climb to power, because of its lack of preparation in reacting to the group’s changes in strategy and spoiling behaviour. It is now understandable that the SOC’s leaders wanted elections as far as they believed this would have assured them the control of the government: as cited in Stedman (1997: 35), the SOC “wanted an election, but only one that helped it monopolize political power”.

According to Stedman (1997), problems arose in the SOC case due to a poor diagnosis and the choice of an inadequate strategy to the contest and parties involved, whereas success against the KR derived from the ability to correctly learn the spoiler's intentions. Greenhill and Major (2007), strongly emphasize that, in the KR case, the primary cause of the emergence and deterrence of the organization was the distribution of power among the interested domestic and international actors.

3.2 Case of study 2: The Northern Ireland conflict

3.2.1 Background of the conflict

Today, the civil war in Northern Ireland is considered the most dramatic and exceptional conflict in the post-war Western Europe. Ó Dochartaig (2011) reflects that this war well illustrates that democratic institutions and norms cannot provide guarantees against a violent ethnonationalist conflict. With respect to the Cambodian conflict, the war in Northern Ireland is, however, relatively older, because, despite being depicted by Mac Ginty (2006: 154) as a “modern political contest between exclusive nationalist projects”, its roots date back to the 17th century, when English and Scottish Protestants settled in the Northern Ireland region, following the King of England's decision to send colonists to convert Ireland to Protestantism, attempting to suppress the Catholic community; real Irish nationalism escalated only in the 19th century, due, at the beginning, to the economic differences that had arose between the North, where industry and manufacturing had developed, and the South, where inequality in the distribution of land had caused tensions between Protestant and Catholic communities. In the 20th century, the two warring parties set forth their division over the issue of the “Home Rule”¹¹ (Mulvagh). The country, especially the South, was predominantly Catholic and it gained independence, winning self-governance in 1922 and becoming the Republic of Ireland in 1949.¹² The

¹¹ “The Home Rule was the demand that the governance of Ireland be returned from Westminster to a domestic parliament in Ireland [...] The idea of Home Rule dates back to 1870, but it should be viewed as part of a longer tradition which aimed at revising the Anglo-Irish relationship by constitutional methods.”

¹² In 1916, Irish political party Sinn Féin had won the elections, declaring its independence from the United Kingdom and founding the Irish Republican Army (IRA). In 1921 a treaty was agreed between the IRA and the British forces, officially creating the Irish Free State, composed of 23 southern counties and 3 northern counties.

six counties in the north-east of the county, however, decided to remain part of the United Kingdom, dividing *de facto* Ireland in two different states; Unionist in Northern Ireland, for the most part Protestants, supported the “Union” with the United Kingdom, while Nationalists, largely Catholic, were in favour of a united Ireland: this difference in identity is at the core of the Northern Ireland conflict. This is also found by Tonge (2002) who highlights that the political problem is based upon the assertion of competing national identities; the majority of people in Northern Ireland consider themselves as British, but there is a strong minority which see itself as Irish.

Between the two world wars there were periods of relative peace, but violence broke out again in the late 1960s, when riots, according to Mac Ginty (2006) mainly caused by nationalists disquiet over poor social conditions, began in Londonderry and Belfast between 1968 and 1969; the UK reacted by sending troops in order to re-establish British control.¹³ Disorders culminated in the “Bloody Sunday” incident in 1972, when 14 civilians died as a result of a shooting from the British troops.¹⁴ As a result of the clashes and despite a temporary ceasefire, the British government, considering the Northern Ireland administration incapable of ensuring security, issued the Northern Ireland Act,¹⁵ which resulted in the imposition of London’s direct rule over the country and in the suspension of the Unionist-controlled Northern Ireland Parliament.

Mac Ginty (2006) find that during the 1970s onwards a low-intensity conflict developed among the UK, Irish republicans (dominated by the IRA) and pro-UK loyalists; the latter was made up of a series of organizations like the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Ulster Defence Association (UDA).

The 1970s and the 1980s were characterised by numerous episodes of violence, known as “The Troubles”: in 1983, Sinn Féin won elections again and negotiations were re-started; the Irish requests, however, lost much support after the IRA carried out a series of terrorist attacks which provoked the death of 9 people and injured many more. Exclusive political ventures to put an end to the conflict between 1972 and 1993 failed;

¹³ “The British state maintained up to 30000 troops in Northern Ireland and many areas were effectively “garrisoned”, often fuelling grievances among Catholic nationalists and constantly reinjecting a fresh dynamic into the conflict.”

¹⁴ The episode happened in the city of Derry during a march organised by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA); during that period, the incident was the most serious and the one with the largest number of victims.

¹⁵ The Northern Ireland Act was a measure initially meant to be temporary, but its imposition was extended throughout some years as the Troubles continued; it officially came into effect on March 30, 1972.

these failures taught the negotiators an important lesson and the approach was changed into a more inclusive one. Two ceasefires were agreed, respectively in 1993¹⁶ and 1996, which led to a negotiated settlement, the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.¹⁷ Its implementation, however, was marked by several crises, in particular the refusal of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) to participate in it, although it is generally perceived as a step towards peace; moreover, its success was primarily achieved thanks to its inclusive approach.

Despite the fact that further violent behaviours were observed after its signing, the Good Friday Agreement is widely regarded as the turning point that ultimately ended the war, a conflict that lasted for more than 30 years and claimed the lives of over 3500 people, while about 20000 got wounded.

3.2.2 Reasons of the conflict

The Northern Ireland conflict can essentially be seen as the collision between different identities, namely religious, national and political. For the most part of the 20th century, academic writings and popular perception agreed upon the assertion that war was, in essence, a conflict between two religious communities: this was supported by the fact that, as shown by Hayes and McAllister (2004), nine out of ten Northern Ireland citizens have identified with either the Catholic Church or with one of the many Protestant denominations; however, Hayes and McAllister (2004) also note that, recently, the religious nature of the conflict has been questioned, as there are not many evidences of religion playing a significant role in shaping the dispute. On the contrary, other elements of discord have emerged, such as nationalism, ethnicity, class and territorial aspects. Therefore, the importance of religion is due to its capability to provide the warring parties with a clear identification rather than of being a real reason of contention; it is indeed understandable that religious beliefs were fundamental in establishing a strong correlation between them, political attitudes and electoral outcomes in Northern Ireland (Hayes and McAllister, 2004). Mac Ginty (2006: 154) argues that the conflict was not

¹⁶ The first ceasefire followed the so-called Downing Street Declaration, a joint declaration issued in 1993 between the Prime Ministers of UK and Ireland; it is considered as a first step towards the Good Friday Agreement and its principles, including Irish people's right for self-determination, were enough for the parties to agree on the implementation of the ceasefire.

¹⁷ It is also known as the Belfast Agreement.

about religion, but religion was “the fissure along which the clash between nationalism is most visible.” Bar-Tal and Rouhana (1998) define conflicts such as the Northern Ireland war as “intractable ethnonational conflicts”, characterised by totality, protractedness, centrality, violence and perception of irreconcilability.

On a politico-national standpoint, two distinctive blocks developed: on one side, Unionists, loyal to the UK and practicing Protestantism as their creed, on the other side Nationalists, which were in favour of a united Irish republic and professing Catholicism; it is therefore clearly visible that both parties had distinctive characteristics on a three-level base: religion, politics, nationalism.

Mac Ginty (2006) recognizes that the Northern Ireland conflict was set in a deeply divided society, distinguished by great social problems, such as ethnic voting patterns, high levels of residential segregation and a confessional schooling system; moreover, the already existing social inequalities were exacerbated by annual marches and parades, highlighting the presence of an identity conflict, and the existence of physical divisions among Catholic and Protestant housing, namely the so-called “peace walls”.¹⁸ O’Malley (2000: 5) also finds that Northern Ireland Catholics regarded justice administration to be unfair, as they saw themselves being policed by the dominant Protestants: in his words, “they saw that those who were charged with upholding the law broke it routinely and were not held accountable for their actions”.

Furthermore, Mac Ginty (2006: 155) notes that “although employing the rhetoric of a “war of liberation” against Britain, the IRA’s campaign often had a sectarian flavour, deepening intercommunal tensions”.

In absolute terms, levels of violence were not that high, but considering the country’s modest size and low population, it is comprehensible that the war had a considerable impact on the citizenry (Mac Ginty, 2006).

Despite an element of religious belief, it is thus observable that the conflict broke out on the basis of social issues and differences in identity that were particularly explicit in the religious and political sides; the contrast and subsequent war was mainly due to the contemporary presence of two polarized religious, national and political identities.

¹⁸ Peace walls were separation barriers dividing Nationalist neighbourhoods from Unionist neighbourhoods, built in Northern Ireland’s main cities to minimise violent episodes among their inhabitants.

3.2.3 Actors involved

As in Cambodia, three were the main actors involved in the conflict: first, the British, whose attempt to colonize the country in the 17th century was the first breakthrough towards the conflict; the UK actively participated in the war, sending up to 30000 troops in the late 1960s to maintain order and aid local Unionist forces, like the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR). As noticed, these troops were responsible for one of the most serious and publicized act of violence in the conflict, the so-called “Bloody Sunday”, which happened in the city of Derry on the 30th of January 1972.

Additionally, Mac Ginty (2006) points out that British governments often used the loyalist militants as their proxies, giving rise to further Irish resentment towards the British state; it must be underlined, however, that the actions of British governments were later decisive in the establishing of a working relationship between the parties and strategically implementing a settlement that would draw support, approval and acceptance from the leaders of both communities (Mac Ginty, 2006).

Second, the Unionists, for the great majority Protestants and supporting the ideal of Northern Ireland being part of the UK; this party was composed of a large number of smaller organizations: other than the already cited UVF, UDA, DUP and the armed factions of RUC and UDR, particularly notably was the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). In this complex system of organizations, the Democratic Unionist Party was still the most relevant and popular on a political standpoint. Politically, the Unionist side can be ascribed to the centre-right wing.

Finally, the Nationalists, Catholics and in favour of a united Irish Republic, whose major political party, the Sinn Féin, won the elections first in 1916 and later in 1983, providing further push for the Irish national identity. Sinn Féin also had an army wing, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a paramilitary movement originally established in 1917 on a voluntary base, that, during the conflict, split into numerous armed groups of which the most important and controversial were probably the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA) and the Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA), consisting of members firmly opposed

to the Northern Ireland peace process. The IRA is generally associated with centre-left political movements (McDermott, 2007).¹⁹

Other actors which played a minor role were the Republic of Ireland and the United States, which instead of opposing the process that led to peace, served as their guarantors, acting as beneficial third parties and eventually having a positive impact on the outcome of the peace process.

In this Thesis I will examine both attempts to achieve peace in the Northern Ireland conflict, although I will primarily focus on the second, because more interesting for what concerns spoiling behaviours and activities and their counter-management.

Actor	Position
British and Irish Governments	Peacemakers
Unionist Groups	Spoilers
Nationalist Groups	Spoilers
Paramilitary and Armed Groups	Spoilers excluded from the negotiations
IRA	Spoiler involved in the negotiations
US	Third Party

Table 3.2: Main actors involved in the Northern Ireland conflict and peace process and their positions within it.

3.2.4 *The first peace process: The Sunningdale Agreement*

A first attempt to reach peace was conducted in the early 1970s and is most notably known as the “power-sharing government”; it was marked by the assumption that moderate Unionists and moderate Nationalists should cooperate together against those who were unwilling to cooperate with the other side (Horowitz, 2002).

In March 1972, given Northern Ireland government’s incapacity to stop paramilitary violence, the British government had decided to take over its duties and impose the

¹⁹ There are evidences that IRA provided aid and training to communist organizations such as the FARC in Colombia. “The IRA has left a daunting legacy in Colombia, where the government is struggling against left-wing guerrillas who have learnt urban warfare tactic from their Northern Irish allies”.

Westminster direct rule over the country, leading to a reaction from the Catholic community; William Whitelaw was named Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, but his first decision to remove the barricades from “no-go” areas²⁰ in the north had the result to increase population’s support to IRA and other paramilitary groups. He also issued a White Paper for negotiations which should have been the beginning of a power-sharing agreement between Unionists and Nationalists; this created discontent among the former, which basically split into two factions: the ones who supported the arrangement were defined “pledged” Unionists, while the ones who opposed it were known as the “unpledged” Unionists.²¹ It can thus be observed that clear divisions had already emerged even before the negotiations of the Sunningdale Agreement started.

Among the proposals submitted in the negotiations there was the establishment of a Council of Ireland, involving politicians from the south and having control over a significant number of areas; extremist Unionists resisted this idea, as, in their opinion, it was the first step towards a united Ireland. Despite this, the Sunningdale Agreement was signed in December 1973, leading to further divisions among the Unionist side; the “unpledged” Unionists, in particular, formed the United Ulster Unionist Council (UUUC) to resist power-sharing government: in February, they used the British General Elections as a referendum over the Agreement, winning eleven out of twelve Westminster seats in the north. In May, the Ulster Workers Council (UWC) called a general strike to protest against the power-sharing executive, supported by Unionist paramilitary forces, which, in some cases, forced people to stay home from work, blocking the streets.²² In the end, the power-sharing government fell: the major reason for its collapse was the fact that the major part of Unionists strongly opposed it, favouring, among others, the UWC strike (Leaving Cert History). Its crumple entailed the re-imposition of London’s direct rule over Northern Ireland.

Despite not being that interesting regarding spoilers and their behaviours, the failure of the Sunningdale Agreement is important because it lets us better understand how, in cases

²⁰ A no-go area is an area in a town where civil authorities are prohibited to enter or an area barred to certain individuals or groups. In the specific case of Northern Ireland, no-go areas were zones where the British troops and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) could not operate; the most famous one was called Free Derry.

²¹ The main figure in the “pledged” Unionist side was former Prime Minister Brian Faulkner, whereas the “unpledged” Unionists were loyal to Harry West, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP).

²² Many of the strikers worked in electric power stations: as a result, electricity output was cut, so that people could not work and live a normal daily-life.

such as the conflict in Northern Ireland, an exclusive approach may be counter-productive for a peace process; this is a lesson negotiators and peacemakers learnt in those years and that later shaped the framework of the negotiations which began in 1993 and ended successfully with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

3.2.5 The Second peace process: The Good Friday Agreement

The Northern Ireland conflict and consequent peace process do not provide the clearest example of spoilers: the main spoilers were arguably the UVP on the Unionist side and the IRA on the Nationalist side. Both of them carried out attacks before and after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, both with the same two purposes: first, get the peace process to move forward in periods of stalemate; second, force the other part to react violently, luring it to use violence because, in that case, it would have been thrown out of the negotiations.

Another spoiler actor can be considered the DUP (Mac Ginty, 2006): although it did not use violence to undermine the peace process, it strongly opposed it by refusing to join the negotiations and accepted to be integrated in the process only after its victory in the elections in 2003.

The peace process was initiated because of a mutually hurting stalemate; the dialogue between the Irish and British governments was crucial on reaching the peace accords, because of the shared goal of producing an accord which could convince the majority of people on both sides. A key question concerned which parties should be included in the negotiations, considering the fact that the parties had spent so much money and resources in demonizing the others; having learnt the lesson of the previous attempt to achieve peace in 1972, failed because of its exclusive approach, the warring parties ultimately decided to include any group which would declare a ceasefire and show a genuine interest in the positive outcome of the peace process. According to Mac Ginty (2006: 156), particularly problematic was whether to include also militant actors, a fact that would have “directly contradicted the “surround sound” chorus of condemnation that had comprised the bulk of ministerial activity for the previous decade”. The inclusion of factions such as the IRA was complicated *in primis* for the Unionist side, that had to take a difficult decision between accepting what they widely regarded as terrorists or abandon the negotiations.

By 1994, all parties had declared ceasefires and their representatives started to engage in negotiations with British and Irish governments; Mac Ginty (2006) observes that groups were facing numerous dilemmas, of which the most urgent was whether participate in negotiations whose outcomes were unclear.

The Agreement was reached in 1998, after many failed ceasefires and false starts, with the inclusion of all the parties with the exemption of the DUP, the only group that did not approve the presence of Sinn Féin and the IRA. The Good Friday Agreement was a comprehensive peace accord in which the IRA and the main loyalist militant groups were able to receive the endorsement of their followers; among its points, the most significant were: the recognition of Northern Ireland's constitutional position within the UK, the establishment of a devolved power-sharing Assembly in the country set to run concurrently with a British-Irish Council and a North-South Ministerial Council, the liberation of several prisoners and a reform of the policing and judicial systems (Mac Ginty, 2006).

Moreover, the Agreement was exposed to a popular referendum, whose outcome confirmed the population's approval of it: most importantly, the ability to find consensus among people derailed every possible spoiler's attempt to undermine the peace process, as both the party fighting for secession and the party fighting for unification were inhibited by unification by consent.

Despite the occurrences of periodical political crises, the situation never escalated in large-scale political violence; spoilers were obviously present, but, citing Mac Ginty's words, "they failed to attract widespread support, were incapable of derailing an inclusive peace process, or were so interested in pecuniary spoil that they had minimal political impact" (Mac Ginty, 2006: 157). Other factors which contributed to the success of the Good Friday Agreement were, according to him, the fact that spoilers were easily identifiable, the guarantees provided by the Republic of Ireland, the safety that the government of London assured to the correct functioning of the country's administration and, finally, the lack of a sufficient illegal market which could support spoilers' economical dimension. As Mac Ginty (2006) points out, in comparison with other modern conflicts, the pacific management of the war in Northern Ireland was favourable.

Spoiling behaviours and actions did not lack during the peace process; between 1996 and 1997, IRA conducted a few terrorist attacks, mainly because frustrated by the slow pace

of the British government in initiating multi-party negotiations (Mac Ginty, 2006: 160). These attacks, however, saw a lower level of violence than the previous ones and were carried out against military targets, reflecting IRA's new strategy of thwarting the peace process in precise moments, without causing its complete derail.

In the same period, two other Republican organizations acted as spoilers, the RIRA and the CIRA: both were unable to attract large support, given IRA's prohibition for its members to join these groups, and principally relied on relatively inexperienced militants. As the peace process moved forward, they launched military campaigns; Mac Ginty (2006) lists three reasons why their attacks were notable: first, they were pretty much sporadic, also considering the fact that these organizations could not count on a great number of adepts and lacked enough resources. Second, their attacks had an elevated rate of failures, which may signal infiltration by security forces. Third, their main target was to put pressure on the Protestant community with the purpose to make it force their politicians to leave the peace process, as violence was in fact directed at Protestant majority towns: if Unionists had withdrawn the negotiations, then Nationalists could have blamed them for the failure of the whole process.

The RIRA, however, was responsible for one of the worst assaults in the entire conflict; on August 15th, 1998, a few months after the ratification of the Good Friday Agreement, a bomb exploded in the city of Omagh, killing 29 people. The attack resulted in a mobilization of both the Catholic and Protestant communities, which compelled RIRA to announce a ceasefire three days later; furthermore, following the attack, the CIRA suspended its operations.

The Unionist side also presented some spoiling behaviours, particularly evident in the actions of the Loyalist Volunteer Forces (LVF), an armed group formed in 1996, rather limited in numbers and resources, that was still able to engage in some focused Catholic murders. These attempts, as noticed by Mac Ginty (2006), had as the major target to provoke IRA's violent reaction and subsequent disqualification from the negotiation process; LVF's actions were more what Mac Ginty (2006: 163) calls "frustrating spoiling" rather than actual efforts to undermine the peace process and nevertheless the IRA was never fooled by this.

Mac Ginty (2006) pushes further his analysis on Northern Ireland's spoilers by adopting a broader view, including in his examination also parties which did not make use of

violent behaviours and actors which undermined the peace process as a by-product of other actions. In doing it, Mac Ginty accepts broader theories on spoiling sustained by scholars like Wanis-St. John (2006) and Newman and Richmond (2006).

An example of peaceful spoiler was the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), whose refusal to participate in the process was primarily due to its assertion that an eventual peace would have led to an erosion of Northern Ireland's position within the UK; furthermore, it was deeply against the IRA's involvement in the peace process. Ultimately, it decided to join the political process after its victory in the elections in 2003 and a renegotiation of the agreement, always without using violence.

Mac Ginty (2006) notes that other two clear examples of peaceful spoilers were the Sinn Féin and the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). In numerous instances they blocked the process, inhibiting the other party's engagement to peace. Sinn Féin's reluctance to decommission was a tactical move, while its links with the IRA were interpreted by other parties as a sign of ambiguity towards committing to peaceful means. The UUP's slow approach to the negotiations was a consequence of its will to explore all possible solutions and, at the same time, limit concessions to Republicans and Nationalists; the UUP refused every contact with Sinn Féin and to enter the peace process: this decision, however, provoked a slow but lengthy erosion of its position.

In the second case, there were parties which opposed the process at times and in reaction to particular issues, a type of inadvertent spoiling: part of this category are the UVF and the UDA, whose militants, unsatisfied with the ongoing peace process, often organized in armed gangs around single commanders, losing *de facto* interest in the political process: particularly in the case of UDA, despite its declaration of a ceasefire, some of its militants arranged major riots and attacks against the catholic community; these acts were obviously not linked with politics, but rather with a feeling of dissatisfaction and frustration and were exacerbated by sectarianism (Mac Ginty, 2006).

At the end, however, spoilers in Northern Ireland never achieved major successes and mediators, peacemakers and parties involved were able to ratify and implement a quite successful agreement that, despite further acts of violence and obstruction, ended the conflict. The key aspect was in this case the inclusive approach of the Good Friday Agreement: as mentioned, the inclusion of the parties was difficult and complicated by resentment, but this was overtaken by the ability of the principal factions to build

reciprocal trust and understanding. Such major achievements were obtained through the use of a specific tactic of spoiler management, that is back-channel communication.

3.2.6 The importance of back-channelling

A key factor in the Northern Ireland peace process was the link established between the British government and the Republicans via back-channel communications.

As noticed by Ó Dochartaig (2011), the use of back channels can “contribute to a strong sense of joint enterprise and a common project by creating shared interest and tasks specific to this form of communication, in particular the shared project of maintaining secrecy” (Ó Dochartaig, 2011: 768-769), allowing parties to build mutual trust, ensuring continuity of personnel and creating a reciprocal exchange.

Despite being correctly considered an inclusive peace process, in the Northern Ireland case, back-channelling largely contributed in controlling, marginalizing and finally excluding from the negotiations those extremist parties which opposed peace and tried to undermine its achieving,

O’Kane (2015) finds that the existence of this particular form of communication in Northern Ireland dates back to the early 1970s, although it was largely unknown until 1993, when Brendan Duddy (O’Kane, 2015: 401),²³ a businessman from Derry with strong political contacts, began to act as an intermediary between the Sinn Féin, in particular its leader Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, and the MI6,²⁴ in the person of senior agent Michael Oatley (Ó Dochartaig, 2011); his code name was “Mr.Brown”. Ó Dochartaig (2011a) remarks that the very beginning of back-channelling in Northern Ireland is datable to August 1969, when contacts between British military and government officials and local defence associations were issued regarding the removal of the barricades that surrounded areas of the city of Derry and West Belfast.

Back- channelling was used only sporadically between the 1970s and the 1980s, but communication was maintained opened by the correspondence between Duddy and Oatley; in 1975, for the first time, a series of secret meetings were initiated by British

²³ Duddy decided to go public about his role only in 2008.

²⁴ The MI6 is the UK’s Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), responsible for international intelligence operations.

delegates with Republicans representatives which were directly reporting back to the IRA (Ó Dochartaig, 2011). However, O’Kane notes that it was only Oatley’s imminent retirement that forced the channel to be officially re-opened and that there was some confusion surrounding the back-channel initiative, as neither the British Secretary of State that authorised it knew the exact number of people involved.²⁵ When Oatley retired, he was substituted with two agents, Robert McLaren and Colin Ferguson, whose code name was “Fred”: they were able to maintain the relations instituted by Oatley, significantly contributing to the process.

O’Kane (2015) highlights how Duddy’s role was not merely of being a message carrier: he was also active in giving interpretations about the dialogue and the events that were going on and even constructed messages himself.

Pruitt (2008) refers to another chain of back-channelling, active between the 1980s and the 1990s: its intermediaries were John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), linked with Gerry Adams, leader of the Sinn Féin, and officials of the Irish Republic, who were in contact with British officials. Furthermore, he adds that public was aware of the existence of dialogues between them, but it did not know of the passage of messages from one hand of the chain to the other.

The channels were obviously not free from ambiguity, as much that Republicans started to refer at the messages exchanged as the “bogus” (O’Kane, 2015: 405); perhaps the most controversial fact in this sense was the so-called “the conflict is over” message in 1993: the message stated, “the conflict is over but we need your advice on how to bring it to a close. We wish to have an unannounced ceasefire in order to hold a dialogue leading to peace” (O’Kane, 2015: 405).

As underlined by O’Kane (2015), the exact origin and authenticity of the message is still debated, but it provides an example of how back-channelling may origin both advantages and problems, as well as illustrating the possible presence of tensions within the channel; moreover, citing Denis Bradley’s account, he adds that it was probably a result of frustration for the lack of progresses among those involved.

A second “bogus” message was sent on June 1st, 1993, in a period when the possibility of direct talks between the parties had gradually increased; according to O’Kane (2015), the

²⁵ O’Kane (2015) argues that, other than Duddy, two other persons were involved on the Republican side: a former Catholic priest, Denis Bradley and Noel Gallagher. Duddy, however, was the key figure.

message stated that the Republicans wanted to directly meet with a British delegation without delay: this, however, as he notes, did not happen, but constitutes another instance that the actors involved often exceeded their actual brief.

A third and final message was issued in November 1993, after a period of stalemate, calling for the establishing of open dialogues in the event of a total cessation of hostilities; the problem was that the message was not sanctioned by the republican movement.

The abuse of this kind of messages was a huge issue during the use of back-channel negotiations, as their provenience and legitimacy were far from clear. Additionally, O’Kane (2015) observes that this was caused by several factors: frustration for the lack of results, lack of clarity over the roles of the actors involved, the differences in the parties’ agendas and the number of stages that these messages had to go through before they could be receipt.

As mentioned, actors involved in the back-channel often exceeded their brief: in O’Kane’s opinion this is evident especially on the British side, whose part of the channel was primarily supervised by the duo MI5-MI6.²⁶ Its main agent, Fred, is believed to have violated its duty in at least two occasions, first in 1991 and later in 1993, when he directly met with Republicans representatives: interrogated if he had cross over his orders, he answered that “he had overstepped his brief in having the meeting in the first place but all of his replies to the questions asked by Walter [Mcguinnes] were as had been agreed by his superiors” (O’Kane, 2015: 412); this is however not completely clear, as O’Kane (2015) asserts that, while Republicans’ use of the secret channel had as its major purpose the fulfilment of direct meeting between the parties, the British intended it as an expedient that let them communicate with the top Republicans leaders and, at the same time, be insulated by not being straight engaged with an organization that they openly labelled as terroristic. British’s lack of will in accepting Republicans’ requests was indeed an obstacle for the correct development of the back-channel, as it set up a kind of chain by which British’s refuse to establish direct talks with the Republicans had the effect to frustrate them and indirectly led nationalist paramilitary groups to carry out attacks, thus reinforcing British’s position.

²⁶ The MI5 is UK’s domestic counter-intelligence and security agency and is directed to protect the country’s democracy and economic interests, as well as carrying out counter-terrorism and espionage operations.

According to O’Kane (2015), the unwillingness of the British side to authorise direct talks with the Republicans is one of the most important factors which marked the end of the back-channel; two days before the channel was published by “The Observer”,²⁷ Duddy sent a message to the British which stated, “as a result of difficulties, of which you are aware, we wish to replace Mr Brown. We would welcome your advice on how to proceed with this. We will forward our suggestions in the near future” (O’Kane, 2015: 415), *de facto* putting an end to the existence of secret talks.

On analysing the impact of back-channel negotiations on the Northern Ireland peace process, O’Kane (2015) identifies both positive and negative aspects: on one side, the channel made the British understand that at least a part of the Republican movement was considering a new approach; moreover, secret talks were instrumental in politically engaging the Irish Nationalists.

Critically, the channel also created issues with whom the parties had to face: first, the intermediaries had an ambiguous role, as they often exceeded their brief by interpreting the parties’ thoughts and, when events frustrated them, by seeking different ways to get the process move forward. Furthermore, the process did not have access to actual centres of power (O’Kane, 2015).

O’Kane (2015) concludes his paper arguing that back-channelling had a primary role in the development of the peace process, although its real contribution is widely somewhat misunderstood.

Ó Dochartaig (2011) has instead a more favourable stance regarding the channel; first, he asserts that it was made possible by the fact that it was built on a long-term relationship, providing further informations for the parties and a more effective interaction. According to him, key elements for its success were continuity of personnel and personal relationship: the fact that the same individual acted as intermediary for such a long period of time, and was reciprocally accepted by the parties, secured that an important figure was in place at key moments of the negotiations. Ó Dochartaig (2011) emphasizes that both parties had confidence in Duddy and his discretion about the contacts he was involved in. Pruitt (2008) enhances the role of intermediaries in back-channel negotiations because, according to him, they can facilitate communication and belief in

²⁷ The Observer is a British newspaper published on Sundays, first edited in 1971. Its parent company is the Guardian Media Group Limited.

the truthfulness of the messages, helping to settle seemingly intractable conflicts; in addition, he admits that a possible problem can arise in using intermediaries: the danger that, passing through multiple stages, informations may be distorted. However, Pruitt argues that this can be escaped by using a second back-channel to verify the suitability of the first channel or double-check what has been transmitted and eventually meet directly. Continuity of personnel is straight related to the introduction of strong personal relationships among the actors involved, as it increased reciprocal trust by binding individuals together through their shared secrets. Ó Dochartaig (2011) notes that continuity in personnel gave the channel high levels of validity and legitimacy, other than establishing that both parties had the necessary authority to commit to their declarations. Back-channel served the scope to build trust by ensuring the reliability of the other party, making sure that the “enemy” would not exploit meetings to its advantage. Pruitt (2008) adds that one important characteristic of this kind of back-channel was its longevity, as its long gestation produced positive effects on both sides: first, it made them understand that war was counterproductive for everyone, second, it convinced them that dealing with the other was possible and that both were ready to make significant concessions in order to achieve peace.

Despite its ending in 1993, the importance of back-channel communication in achieving peace in Northern Ireland is undeniable, although it did not directly curtailed the war: the establishment of trust and a system of complex but durable relationships among its actors were instrumental in setting the basis for the Good Friday Agreement that, ultimately, ended the conflict. As Ó Dochartaig (2011) reports, this case of secret negotiations traces the connection that occurs between the deradicalization process and its associated outcomes; the consequent developing of cooperation helped to generate movement on both sides and to deradicalize their behaviours, attitudes and activities.

3.2.7 Conclusion

Spoilers had limited power and scarce impact on the Northern Ireland peace process; among their most manifest failures were the incapacity of sustaining large-scale attacks, the inability to attract widespread support among the population and the inaptitude in precluding the achievement of a major peace accord.

According to Mac Ginty (2006), there were three factors at work that deeply limited the actions of spoilers: first, the inclusive nature of the negotiations, that prevented groups that had the capabilities of undermining peace efforts to carry out violent actions, as they were included in the process by the British and Irish governments.

Second, as a result of cooperation between British and Irish, penalties were established for the parties which resorted to violence; mediators were in this case able to set parameters and rules of the peace process, inducing both sides to participate in the process, even if the governments were ready to a certain grade of violence (Mac Ginty, 2006).

The third factor was due to conflict environment, especially for what concern the absence of external spoilers and the lack of important economic interests, namely the lack of marketable goods, at the contrary of what had happened in Cambodia, where spoilers funded themselves also thanks to illegal traffics.

Broadening the vision of spoilers, there were arguably some parties that adopted spoiling behaviours, of whom the most important was the DUP, although this spoiling was rather limited and tactical. Furthermore, a great part of spoiling was inadvertent.

The inclusive approach that characterised the peace process was fundamental in its success; undoubtedly, peacemakers had learnt a lesson from the previous failed negotiations realized in the early 1970s, which had had a negative outcome because of their decision to exclude potential spoilers.

Also really important, as we have seen, was the use of back-channel negotiations, which provided the necessary political coverage in order to establish communication in such a conflict; moreover, they were decisive in building that sense of trust and confidence which was instrumental in laying the foundations for the negotiation and subsequent signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

3.3 Case of study 3: The Israeli-Palestinian conflict

3.3.1 Background of the conflict

The case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict differs from the other two cases analysed for the simple fact that it is still an ongoing conflict and, moreover, because the spoilers have succeeded in undermining the implementation of any effort attempted to reach peace.

The two populations had coexisted for several years under a series of external patrols, but found themselves at odds as Jewish and Arab nationalism increased and the ruling empires lost their control over local people at the end of the 19th century. On the Israeli side, the rise in nationalism, socialism and religious heat gave birth to the modern Zionism (Encyclopedia Britannica),²⁸ but it was a wave of antisemitism in Eastern Europe that first settle the way for Jewish immigration in Palestine; some 60000 Jews settled in Palestine between 1880 and 1914, but, despite still being a weak minority, they encountered rather little conflict from the Arab community (Makovsky, 2018).

The situation was worsened after World War I by the Allied's policies in favour of Jews and Arab self-determination, which, according to Makosvky (2018) exacerbated the cohabitation between the two populations, creating incompatible expectations that manifested themselves in anti-Jewish riots. The rise of Nazism in Europe further aggravated resentment, as Jewish immigration increased, additionally shifting demographic balance. In 1937, the advice of the British-held Peel Commission (Center for Israel Education, 2014)²⁹ recommending Palestine's division into a Jewish and an Arab separate states, was approved by the Jews, but not by the Palestinians.

On May 14, 1948, the Jewish of Palestine declared their independence and the establishment of the State of Israel; as a result, the armies of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Iraq attacked the fledgling state, but were repelled by Israeli forces, which were also able to make some territorial gains; about 700000 Palestinian

²⁸ Zionism is a Jewish nationalist movement that has had as its goal the creation and support of a Jewish national state in Palestine, depicted as the ancient homeland of the Jewish. It originated in Central and Eastern Europe in the latter part of the 19th century.

²⁹ The Peel Commission was a British Royal Commission of Inquiry appointed to investigate the causes of unrest in Mandatory Palestine. The result of the Peel Commission was a report asserting a review of the British mandate. It recognized Arab's desire for independence, their fear of the Jewish and the Jewish determination to realize their goals; it concluded that the two aspirations were not reconcilable and recommended Palestine's partition into distinct entities.

civilians left their homes and refuged in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Gaza and, as Makovsky (2018) remarks, in that period, the “Palestinian issue” fell under the control of neighbouring Arab states, so that the newborn Palestinian Arab government lost its independence and its leadership was deprived of any form of decision-making. In the same years, Palestinian nationalist organizations such as Fatah and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) were instituted (Makovsky, 2018: 2).

In 1967, another war broke out between Israel and the adjoining Arab countries: this conflict is known as the Six Days War and its outcome was favourable to Israel, which gained further strategic and more defensible borders;³⁰ Israeli officials believed that this result would have brought Arabs to the table of negotiations, but the Arab League reaffirmed that there would be neither recognition nor negotiating talks with Israel (Makovsky, 2018).

The defeat of the Arab coalition indirectly helped the PLO’s leader Arafat and Fatah to disengage from these countries’ control, giving them the opportunity and the autonomy to launch attacks on Israeli targets from Jordan; Israeli’s retaliations, however, pushed King Hussein of Jordan to expel Fatah, which, consequently, established its new bases in Lebanon.

In 1973, Egypt and Syria mounted another military attack on Israel, known as the Yom Kippur War, initially taking it by surprise: the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) eventually regained advantage on the battlefield. This short war pushed United States to organize a first attempt to reach peace, which resulted in the Geneva peace conference in December 1973; in this occasion, Palestinians were represented by Jordan, as Israel refused to negotiate with the PLO until PLO’s recognition of the Israeli’s right to exist. The only positive results were, however, Israeli-Egyptian talks for military disengagement, which, Makovsky (2018: 5) notes, were also secretly prolonged in the following years.³¹

In 1977, Israeli conservative party Likud came to power, which resulted in more and more Israeli settlements in the occupied territories; a positive note was, however, new Prime

³⁰ Israel conquered the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula, West bank and the Gaza Strip; the capture of the Golan Heights is nowadays one of the most critical and dangerous controversy between the Israeli and Syrian governments.

³¹ The talks led to secret accords establishing peace between the two countries in exchange for Jerusalem’s withdrawal from Sinai. It was finally made public during the historic visit of Egyptian’s President Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem in 1977. A final peace treaty was signed in Washington D.C. in March 1979, but Sadat was in the end assassinated by Islamic soldiers in 1981.

Minister Begin's idea to set a plan for a Palestine autonomy in the West Bank, a concept which was developed and discussed in the framework of the Camp David accords,³² but progresses were stopped in 1982, when Israel invaded Lebanon because of PLO's attacks from the south of the country. As noticed by Makovsky (2018), Israel failed in achieving a series of key targets, such as reaching a peace agreement with the government of Lebanon and avoid the increasing in local population's support to Shia resistance to the Israeli presence in the south.

After the failure of the so-called London Agreements in 1987, which had been issued to reach a multilateral peace accord with the amity of Jordan, the attention of Arab countries was more and more attracted by the Iraq-Iran War, leaving Palestinians isolated in their fight; in December 1987, Palestinians settled a series of riots which quickly escalated in the first *Intifada*,³³ which did not directly harmed Israel's existence, but undermined Israel's sense of personal security and draw international attention to the Palestinian case (Makovsky, 2018).

The first *Intifada* pushed US Secretary of State George Shultz to propose a new version of the Camp David accords, calling for Palestinian final status talks to be launched shortly after an autonomy agreement regardless of whether it was fully implemented. This initiative was rejected by Likud's leader Shamir.

In 1988, the PLO made the first step towards Israeli recognition by accepting both UN General Assembly Resolution 181, thus declaring Palestinian independence, and UN Security Council Resolution 242, which expected Israeli troops to withdraw from occupied lands; particularly important was the acceptance of the Resolution 181, as it specifically dictated the two-state solution in order to resolve the conflict, therefore giving legitimacy to the state of Israel. Makovsky (2018) argues that, in the same period, several individuals and privates acted to favour further dialogue between Palestinians, Israeli, moderate Arabs and the US. On the Palestinian side, this was also due to PLO necessity to achieve international recognition and ensure American support to its cause. The Israeli

³² The Camp David accords were signed between Sadat and Begin in 1978 and led to the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty in 1979. The first framework agreed was called "Framework for Peace in the Middle East" and consisted of three parts: the first recalled Palestinian right for autonomy and self-governing, the second established Israeli-Egyptian relations and the third declared principles that should be applied to the relations between Israel and the Arab states.

³³ The word *Intifada* literally means "tremor" and "shivering", but in this case is intended as "uprising" and "rebellion".

side responded quite positively and, for the first time, Shamir declared his support in holding elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to choose a Palestinian delegation which could represent the Palestinians' interests in negotiating an autonomy with Israel. On June, 1990, however, the Us decided to suspend their meetings with the PLO, as a result of Palestinians' refusal to condemn an attack on a beach of Tel Aviv and to punish the attacker.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the consequent war, which saw the defeat of Saddam Hussein and his pan-Arabism by an US-European-Arab coalition, gradually demoted the position of the PLO, as the Palestinians had enfolded Saddam's claims and supported his threat to the countries of the Gulf.

In 1991, the US and Russia agreed on holding a peace conference in Madrid, which immediately turned on a series of bilateral negotiations between Israel and Syria, Lebanon and joint Jordan-Palestinians; however, Palestinians refused Israeli's proposal of "personal" autonomy as a substitute for control over designated areas in the West Bank and Gaza (Makosvky, 2018).

In 1992, in the midst of the electoral campaign in Israel that was eventually won by Yitzhak Rabin, a first contact was issued to arrange a secret channel of negotiations, mediated by Norway, that, at the time, was the only way to establish communication between Israeli and the PLO, given the fact that Israeli law prohibited contacts with PLO officials; this was the first step towards the negotiations that finally led to the Oslo Agreement. The first major advancement in the process came with the 1993 Declaration of Principles between the PLO and the Israeli government; as Wanis-St. John (2008) stresses, although the signing ceremony was held in Washington D.C., the US had no role in this initiative, as it was negotiated within the Norwegian back-channel. The agreement dictated December 1998 as the date for the implementation of a status agreement covering all issues of the conflict. Furthermore, in the following two years, the two parties reached other six major agreements, which led to the 1995 Interim Agreement (Wanis-St. John, 2006: 131-132).³⁴ However, the implementation of the Oslo Agreement was first derailed in 1995, when an Israeli extremist killed Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin; the

³⁴ The so-called Interim Agreement established duties on both sides: Israeli had to make a significant improvement in their withdrawal from occupied territories, whereas Palestinians had to start assuming civil and police responsibilities and to participate in coordinated patrols along the borders with the Israeli forces.

negotiations finally ended in 2000-2001, in conjunction with the failure of the Camp David summit and the breakout of the second *Intifada*.

The failure of the Oslo peace process is thus an example of a peace process which failed completely after the peace agreement had been signed.

As noticed above, the conflict is still ongoing, as peace between the parties still seems to be utopic. In this Thesis, the period taken into analysis will be the last decade of the 20th century, as I will examine the steps that led to the Oslo Agreement and, primarily, among the reasons of its collapse, the actions of spoilers which, on both sides, strongly opposed any attempt to achieve peace.

3.3.2 Reasons of the conflict

Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006) argue that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is centered on the contested territory known as Palestine; this area is claimed by both national movements as their homeland, so that Palestinian nationalism and Zionism have fought for nearly 90 years over the right for self-determination, statehood and justice. Consequently, the conflict can be seen, as the one in Northern Ireland, as a war over national identity. In the authors' words, the parties "held the view that if it is to be considered a nation, the other cannot be considered as such" (Bar-Tal and Salomon, 2006: 4).

Dalsheim (2013: 62) observes that, before Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe, local Jews peacefully coexisted with Palestinians, citing as example the relative harmony that linked local Jews and their Arab neighbours and the fact that problems started to arise only after the arrival of Ashkenazi Jews.³⁵

The first wave of Jewish immigration at the end of the 19th century did not generate problems between the two populations; it was the conjunction between British conquest of Palestine and the fall of the Ottoman Empire that really worsened the situation: as Dalsheim (2013: 121) explains, the period between 1917 and 1948, when "the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the British conquest of Palestine... brought Palestine and the rest of the Middle East into the age of nationalism, was the period when certain previously accepted behaviours among the Arabs of Palestine became traitorous and unacceptable.

³⁵ The term Ashkenazi Jews is originally referred to Jewish settlers that, during the Middle Ages, established communities in Western Germany and France; in this case, is referred to Jews with European ancestry.

Previously, it had neither been unusual nor especially problematic to sell land or to have other economic relations with Jews in Palestine". Dalsheim's words make it very understandable that it was nationalism and its consequences that originated the basis for the conflict; on one side, the rise of Arab nationalism propelled Palestinian's requests for independence, whereas on the other hand, the principles of Zionism pushed Jewish to seek for the establishment of a Jewish state in what they believed to be the historic land of Israel, or the so-called Holy Land. Each party believed that the mere existence of the other endangered and weakened its claims for the same land; in this case, the concept of territorial claims is fundamentally linked with the concept of national identity, gradually giving rise to an intractable conflict.³⁶

Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006) assert that the conflict started as a communal conflict between Jewish and Palestinians living in British-ruled Palestine and later evolved into an interstate conflict between Israel and Arab states during the war of 1948-49; the war regarded mainly elementary issues, such as basic existential needs, and was thus impossible to find a suitable agreement. As the authors observe, "Israel's minimum requirements exceeded the Arabs' maximum concessions and vice versa" (Bar-Tal and Salomon, 2006: 3). Finally, Barak (2005) asserts that both Jewish and Palestinians are two human groups whose needs for identity and security went unfulfilled.

The conflict has constantly been on the agenda of both parties for such a long period of time and, accordingly to Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006), both sides employed a great amount of resources to learn to cope with its dynamics; in order to prepare for the struggle, Israeli and Palestinians developed a psychological adaptation that involved a repertoire of shared beliefs, attitudes, emotions and capacities, constructing a specific narrative and collective memory that were apt at remembering the common past of the respective societies. Furthermore, the ethos of the conflict outlined societies' goals, means and experiences (Bar-Tal and Salomon, 2006); narrative and collective memory were also cited by Dalsheim (2014) as central factors which were instrumental to the progress of the conflict, because they were crucial in increasing nationalistic demands. Narrative is so important in the Israeli-Palestinians relationship that Bar-Tal and Rouhana (2006: 763) label this conflict as a "clash of narratives between the two societies", in which Palestinian

³⁶ Intractable conflicts are defined as wars that are protracted, irreconcilable, violent, of zero sum nature, total and central; parties involved in these conflicts usually have an interest in their continuation.

narrative depicts Jewish immigration as an invasion of foreigners who took over the control of their country, whereas the Israeli narrative sustains that the land was liberated and redeemed in a process of national revival.

Other than the mentioned factors, Bar-Tal and Rouhana (2006) list a number of characteristics that, according to them, make the Israeli-Palestinian conflict unique: among them, the perception of exclusive legitimacy, as each party believes to be the real indigenous people of that land, the history of victimization, as both people bring a national history of persecution and destruction, the intermingling and dispersion of national populations, as each populations is defined within geographical borders, but the State of Israel came at the expenses of the Palestinians who are living in Israel and who are creating issues to Israel's national identity; moreover, the double asymmetry that is perceived by both Palestinians, because of Israel's clear superiority on the battlefield, and Israeli, as the country is relatively small and surrounded by Arab states. Finally, the politicization of religion, which is increasingly playing a major role in the intergroup and intragroup dynamics of the conflict.

3.3.3 Actors involved

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is distinguished by the presence of several actors involved: obviously Jewish and Palestinians are the major actors, but these parties were constantly supported or obstructed by other states and/or organizations and groups. For what concern the Israeli side, the US have arguably always been its strongest allied: the Americans and their diplomatic intervention were crucial in the negotiations between Israel and the Arab countries, hosting both Camp David summits and favouring the development of conflict resolution's measures; US governments have more and more times called for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, despite clearly being Israeli supporters. US policies of peace were required by the necessity to maintain friendly relationships both with Israel and the Arab countries, especially the monarchies of the Persian Gulf. Freedman (1999: 55) justified US moves in the Middle East with the need of rallying Arabs' support; in his paper, he cites US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Robert H. Pelletreau, who spelled out US goals in the area: "Securing a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between Israel and its neighbors remains a

cornerstone of our overall foreign policy. A successful peace process will enhance regional stability, remove a rallying point for fanaticism, and enhance prospects for political and economic developments. The United States is engaged in several fronts to advance peace negotiations, an engagement which in turn helps achieve our other objectives in the Middle East [...] preserving Israel's security and well-being; maintaining security arrangements to preserve stability in the Persian Gulf and commercial access to its resources; combating terrorism and weapons proliferation; assisting U.S. businesses, and promoting political and economic reform.”

The Palestinians, on the other side, have received support from the Arab countries and the Arab League: as we have seen, these countries entered in conflict with Israel in more than one occasion and, Jordan in particular, always backed Palestine during bilateral and multilateral meetings, providing it with diplomatic delegations and negotiating skills. Moreover, Arab countries have been often accused to finance Palestinian's resistance (Ehrenfeld, 2009). As mentioned above, the influence of Arab states on Palestine has had ups and downs, as it strongly limited Palestinians' authority after the 1948 war, but vanished when these states had to confront bigger issues, as the Iraq-Iran War and the First Gulf War. Barak (2005) observes that some of these countries acted as external spoilers regarding the Oslo Process: while some, like Egypt, supported the peace process and got committed to mediation and negotiations between the parties, others, like Syria and Iran, rejected the outcomes of the Oslo Agreement and backed its opponents. Especially Iran is seen by Abrams and Singh (2009) as the principal external spoiler fomenting tensions in the region; they note that, in an attempt to diminish Sunni Arab's power in the area, Iran provided support and funds to a series of internal spoilers, such as Hamas, the Islamic Jihad and the Lebanon-based organization Hezbollah. According to them, Iran's aim was, and still is (Coughlin, 2015),³⁷ creating divergences among Israeli and Palestinian governments, lessening their willingness to make concessions and wearing their collaboration.

Europe has played a rather marginal role in this conflict; Dieckhoff (2005) notes that, after 1967, Europe developed its policies regarding the conflict in the Middle East on the basis of two principles: the partition of former British-Mandate Palestine into two

³⁷ Still nowadays, the Islamic Republic has been accused of supporting terroristic organizations, like Hamas and Hezbollah.

separate states and the illegality of settlement activity. He adds that, given Europe's reduced capacity of influence, in 1991, when a new peace process opened in Madrid, the EU had been politically marginalised.

With reference to internal spoiling actors, as Dalsheim (2013) points out, two were the main groups carrying out spoiling behaviours: on one hand, religiously radicalized Israeli settlers, on the other, Hamas, a fundamentalist organization moved by Islamic resistance principles, and its affiliates. Hamas was politically the antagonist of the PLO, to which it contended the leadership over Palestinian people. Hamas had opposed Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait and had received praises for this by the monarchies of the Gulf; both before and after the signing of the Oslo Agreement, Hamas, and in minor part the Islamic Jihad, carried out attacks against Israeli targets, attempting to undermine Israel's confidence in the PLO and to provoke its violent reaction. Moreover, Pearlman (2008: 101) adds that Hamas's behaviours were also intended to secure their position within the weakly institutionalized Palestinian political system, as the ability to launch attacks could undermine the PLO's prestigious and capability to disrupt them; she states that, "suicide attacks pressured the Palestinian leadership to give them "a seat at the table" of Palestinian decisionmaking". Spoiler violence was therefore aimed at endangering both Arafat's international and domestic credibility, as well as draw public support from the population. After 1996, under strong US and Israel pressure, Arafat was forced to act against Hamas; in the same period, the group's popularity decreased, changing the opportunity structure of carrying out attacks. In the years that followed, the organization split into diverse factions and chaos within it rose dramatically; violent attacks did not stop, but were conducted in fewer occasions.

Hamas, in Pearlman's opinion, could thus be seen as an internal spoiler that was pushed by both its opposition to Israel and its desire to shape the internal political situation within Palestinians.

Israeli religiously-motivated settlers were instead characterised by their violent demands to establish a Jewish state in the Holy-Land; since 1948, this spoiling group had occupied more and more Palestinian lands, *de facto* building new Israeli infrastructures in territories which were in contention. Aiming at preserving Jewish rule over the entire territory, they violently opposed the Oslo peace process, attacking Palestinian civilians

(Barak, 2005: 728).³⁸ Ultimately, one of the main reasons that led to the failure of the Oslo Agreement was the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by an Israeli settler in 1995.³⁹

In 1994, it was the IDF that played the role of an unintentional spoiler when Israeli soldiers opened fire against several PLO security officials in Gaza, killing a number of them; according to Wanis-St. John (2006), this episode was accidental, as the Israeli army had been excluded from the secret talks in Oslo and consequently was not aware of the ongoing conversations for peace.

Finally, the impact of media and press must not be underestimated, as they can shape understanding, expectations and behaviours of the population and possible spoilers: Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirsman (2010: 212) suggest that “the destructive effects of negative information on public expectations regarding the peace process are considerably stronger than the positive effects of supportive information”; they also found that, during their research, there was not a single month in which the balance of media valance, especially on the Israeli side, was positive. The media thus played a spoiling role, even if not specifically intended at undermining peace. In this sense, the media and the press were probably one of the parties that the use of back-channelling was aimed at excluding.

Actor	Position
US	Peacemaker/Israel major ally
Israeli Settlers	Spoilers
Hamas	Spoiler
Islamic Groups	Spoilers
Iran	External Spoiler
Arab Countries	Third Parties/Palestinians’ Patrols
Media and Press	Acted a Spoiling Role

Table 3.3: Main actors involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and peace process and their positions within it.

³⁸ For example, in 1994, an Israeli settler massacred 29 Palestinian worshippers in Hebron.

³⁹ The assassin was Yigal Amir, an Israeli ultranationalist, radically opposed to Rabin’s peace initiative and the Oslo peace process.

3.3.4 Spoilers management

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and, particularly, the signing and implementation of the Oslo Agreement were characterised, like the Northern Ireland war, by a strong use of back-channel communication by both sides, so as to deliberately leave out of the process internal and external spoilers, which, in this specific case, were really strong and fearsome. Despite being objectively important to reach compromised agreements, back-channelling at the end strengthened the actions and legitimacy of the spoilers. The outcome, in fact, showed the weaknesses of back-channelling and finally resulted in the failure of implementing the accord.

The PLO had started its decline in 1982, when Lebanon decided its expulsion from the country; consequently, the group had to reorganize its structures in Tunisia, under the leadership of Arafat. Arafat's power began to decrease a few years later, in occasion of the Madrid conference, where, given Israel's refusal to directly negotiate with the PLO, Palestinians were represented by delegates from the occupied territories, catapulting new Palestinians names and faces on the international stage (Pearlman, 2008). These negotiators were loyal to the Tunis-based PLO, so that they were seen by Arafat as potential threats for his monopoly on representing the requests of Palestinian people. According to Pearlman (2008), Arafat's struggles in maintaining his role was one of the main factors that moved him to develop a secret channel of negotiations with Israel, in which the PLO could be directly represented; this move had also the scope to confront internal contestation from Hamas. Pearlman (2008: 98), in this sense, observes that, "much of the Palestinian leadership's urgency in negotiating the Oslo agreement stemmed from its hope to maximize gains vis-à-vis internal rivals more than vis-à-vis Israel".

As Wanis-St. John (2008) underlines, the Oslo peace process was dominated by exclusion, motivated by the assumption that certain factions could have hindered the process if involved; moreover, also civil society was marginalised. In this case, however, the excluded parties were able to achieve popular support and to mobilize people against peace. As he suggests, both sides knew that peace talks had to progress in secret because of the possible interference from Israeli extreme right wing and Palestinian Islamic groups. The use of back-channelling was crucial in the signing of the Oslo Agreement, overshadowing the unproductive negotiations taking place in the front-channel; secret

talks also continued after Oslo, in an attempt to ensure its success and continuity. A first round of post-Oslo Agreement secret negotiations was conducted by Palestinian negotiator Ahmed Qurei (“Abu Alaa”) and the Director General of Israel Foreign Ministry Uri Savir, while a second round was established in Cairo; both rounds passed through a series of attacks, so that they were continually stopped and later resumed, but were eventually successful as they led to the Gaza-Jericho agreement in 1994. In 1995, the parties utilised high-level summits between Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres as a cover to institute further back-channel talks: these negotiations were the cornerstone for the signing of the Interim agreement later in the same year (Wanis-St. John, 2006a).

Meanwhile, front-channel negotiations preceded with modest results, due to their inability to escape the actions of spoilers: the first of these open negotiations was indeed obstructed by Israeli settlers and had to move from the city of Haifa to the city of Eilat in order to escape the demonstrators. Despite the numerous failures of the front-channel negotiators, successes in the back-channel had laid solid foundations and consented the whole process to move forward.

As stated by Wanis-St. John (2006: 133), “the secrecy of these negotiations enabled both sides to explore and eventually agree to try something truly novel for both; with joint Palestinian-Israeli security cooperation at border crossings, command stations, and mobile units, the former enemies prepared to conduct joint police operations against Palestinian militants [...] both sides explored the practical side of peacemaking, discussing such issues as the transfer of governing powers to the new Palestine Authority, the timing and location of the Israel redeployments in the West Bank, the elections for the Palestinian Presidency and Legislature, and security measures.”

The use of back-channel negotiations, however, did not generate only positive things; the main issue was arguably the fact that public had been excluded from the negotiations and it had not been properly prepared for their outcomes. To highlight the problem, Wanis-St. John (2006: 134) mentions Uri Savir, who called it “a detachment from public opinion and consideration...you cannot public opinion in the same way as in open diplomacy”. Therefore, secrecy ended up increasing public opposition to the peace process during the Interim period, bolstering mortal attacks on Palestinian and Israeli civilians; spoilers took advantage of the situation and intensified their actions, raising tensions on both parties.

As Pruitt (2008) argues, this is due to the fact that back-channelling is particularly useful when used in the pre-negotiation phases or as an adjunct to front-channel negotiations in case of a deadlock, but raises problems if the final agreement is entirely reached in secret talks, without front-channelling; in his words, “the danger is not with the use of back-channels *per se* but with the use of back-channels to create a quick and narrow agreement”(Pruitt, 2008: 51).

Any attempt to reach a positive outcome from the negotiations was cut short by Rabin’s assassination in 1995; this was a huge success for peace spoilers, as suddenly not only talks stopped, but also the Israeli conservative party, the Likud, and its leader Benjamin Netanyahu returned to power, immediately launching a policy aimed at renegotiating Israel’s redeployment, increasing Israeli settlements and eventually creating the conditions to a return to armed conflict.

A further tentative of achieving an agreement through back-channel was attempted by Israeli chief negotiator Isaac Molho and his counterpart Abu Alaa’: the mediation actually worked and laid the groundwork for the signing of an agreement arbitrated by US President Clinton; despite this, Netanyahu finally refused to implement the agreement, leading the way to his government political crisis and subsequent fall; anyway, the return to power of the Israeli Labor Party in 1999 did not produced the expected results and did not prevent the failure of the Camp David summit in 2000. In 2001 a second *Intifada* broke out, resulting in several more years of violence.

3.3.5 Conclusion

Spoilers succeeded in undermining the peace process by exploiting the fact that, as noticed by Wanis-St. John (2006), back-channel negotiations helped the parties reaching many agreements, but, at the same time, they drifted further from a possible feasible peace agreement. In the long-run, this kind of talks proved to be ineffective and even counterproductive in the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; as the operations for implementing the agreements became politically more difficult to manage and explain, opposed parties organised and mobilised the populations to protest against the process: not only this prevented further secret negotiations, but ultimately derailed any attempt towards peace. Excessive reliance on back-channel talks created a sort of vicious

cycle, in which necessity for secrecy did not consent the parties to adequately prepare their internal constituencies, resulting in the latter's rebellion against the peace process. Wanis-St. John (2006: 136) defines this threat as the "feedback effect". Pruitt (2008), in line with Wanis-St. John, points out that the fact that negotiations were entirely conducted within a secret channel meant that a number of key issues were not taken into consideration and the exclusion of many groups, including armed militias, from the final decisions, eventually resulted in the transformation of these groups in spoilers opposed to the peace process. Moreover, spoilers used the fact the negotiations were conducted in secrecy to depict Israeli and Palestinian leaders as national traitors, lowering their legitimacy.

Spoilers' achievements in this conflict exemplify that back-channelling alone cannot work for a long period of time, but an internal change within the sides is necessary to support it, as reaching peace with the other external party will not guarantee the end of internal divisions.

In this case, the need to keep negotiations in secret in order to reach an agreement was not followed by both societies' support to implement it; as Wanis-St. John (2008) notes, the lack of popular and even political support for the peace process may be a result of civil society's marginalization. He concludes by hypothesizing that an increasing in civil society involvement in the process would probably translate into a more sustainable peace. This, however, did not happen, as the secret channels involved were very narrow and limited to a few negotiators.

On the contrary of what happened in Northern Ireland, Israeli and Palestinian mediators failed in reaching what Pruitt (2005: 49) defines as a "broad central coalition", able to effectively politically support the implementation of an agreement. Even though other factors contributed to the failure of the negotiations and implementation of the various agreements reached, such as unilateral decisions of deliberately not implementing them, failure in building consensus and in combining a diminished use of secrecy with a gradual increase in publicly, expanding the central coalition to counterbalance spoiling behaviours, was the main reason why the whole process failed.

4. Conclusions

In this Thesis I have examined the concept of spoilers, their role within peace processes and the tactics they use to undermine the achievement of a possible peace; the concept of spoiler has many definitions and it is still a cause of contention among scholars, as there are several key points in which they are in disaccord: among them, the most important are the definition of spoiler, the possible use of violence in their actions and whether certain actors should be labelled as spoilers or not. Two schools of thought currently exist, one favouring a stricter definition, the other broadening it to more actors. Stedman (1997), at least initially, and Aggestam (2006) limit the concept of spoiler to the actors that adopt violent behaviours during the peace process, while Wanis-St. John (2006) argues that also civil society groups should be included in the analysis, expanding Stedman's definition to parts of the society that are very unlikely to assume violent actions; Newman and Richmond (2006) explain that a broader perspective should be preferred, as they embrace in the definition of spoiler all the actors involved in the negotiations, because, according to them, even external and geographically far parties have the ability to spoil if given the opportunity. Nilsson and Soderberg Kovacs (2011), however, do not completely accept Newman and Richmond's theory, as they point out that stretching the concept of spoiler beyond its original meaning might originate ambiguities; they instead primarily focus on inside parties.

We have seen that spoilers are usually related to politics and that the framework of liberal peacemaking in which peace processes usually take place can shape their existence and behaviours (Newman and Richmond, 2006; Dalsheim, 2014); moreover, I have highlighted the importance, although in certain cases limited, of so-called custodians of peace and the huge role played by leaders in guiding their societies in the delicate transition between conflict and peace.

In the second chapter I have analysed Stedman's categorisation of spoilers and his advices to manage them (Stedman, 1997); he believes that peacemakers should focus on four dimensions of a spoiler: position, number, type and locus. According to him, spoilers can be, on the basis of their goals and level of commitment, limited, greedy or total. To these types, he generally associates three ways of managing them: inducement, consisting in the accommodation of spoilers' limited demands, socialization, that is the creation of a

framework of rules a spoiler must respect to join the peace process, and coercion, a system of punishments and rewards that is supposed to limit spoilers' actions and violent behaviours.

Despite criticisms from Zahar (2008, 2010) and Greenhill and Major (2006), who blame Stedman principally of not focusing enough on spoilers' structure of opportunities and costs and to put too much emphasis on a fixed typology of spoilers, his contribution on the issue is still widely regarded and used among mediators and negotiators.

To conclude the second chapter, I have studied how third parties can be involved in the peace process, shape spoilers' behaviours and favour or carry out actions against them. Moreover, I have introduced a final strategy to possibly deal with spoilers, the use of back-channel negotiations, which establishes secret channels of communication between the parties in order to exclude the interference of potential spoilers.

In the third chapter, I have decided to investigate three conflicts, of which two already concluded and one still ongoing, in order to develop a deeper understanding of how spoilers have acted and were managed on a practical field; I have chosen the conflicts in Cambodia, Northern Ireland and in the Middle East because I believe they gather together a rather complete sequence of different spoilers' behaviours and tactics and mediators' strategies to counter them. The analysis has been also an occasion to test Stedman's definition and categorisation.

In the Cambodian conflict, two were the main spoilers involved: on one hand, the Khmer Rouge, considered to be a total spoiler since the beginning and successfully countered with the "soft" coercive strategy of the Departing Train, by which the group was excluded from the 1993 national elections but was, at the same time, left in a position where he could re-join the process; this tactic undermined KR's legitimacy and power and was a cornerstone in the organization's disbandment in the years that followed. On the other hand, the State of Cambodia organization, a group that before the election was not even considered a potential spoiler, but that, given its electoral defeat, turned into a greedy spoiler which the UN was not able to manage: against it, an inducement strategy was adopted, but it proved to be ineffective, as the SOC took advantage of its administrative structure and the contemporary collapse of the KR to carry out violent attacks which ultimately resulted in their conquest of power. This case provided a great example of how negotiators must put attention in correctly identifying spoilers and potential spoilers, as

the strategy adopted against the KR, even if successful, had also the effect to reinforce the SOC, which was placed in a position where it could easily undermine the peace process.

The Northern Ireland conflict was instead characterised by relatively low levels of violence and injuries and losses; despite that, this was an extraordinary war, because it took place in Europe after the end of WWII and demonstrated that modern Western institutions are not always appropriate to avoid a violent conflict.

In this case, the principal spoilers were a series of armed paramilitary groups on both sides, which were motivated by territorial and social controversies, and, in a smaller and less important part, by religious beliefs. A first round of negotiations, based on the exclusion of more extremist parties, reached a compromise agreement but miserably failed in implementing it. This led to the establishment of secret channels of communication which helped to build trust and reciprocal recognition, fundamental tools to lay the groundwork for the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. Despite further episodes of violence, this agreement was implemented and legitimated by a popular referendum, officially ending the conflict. This case shows that back-channelling may be really important in establishing relationships and is completely successful if accompanied by the creation of a broad coalition able to present the final agreement to internal constituencies and politically support it. Back-channel in Northern Ireland was a crescendo of activities, meetings, messages and relationship-building that put pressure on political reconciliation and delegitimised the demands of spoilers, enhancing the value of using this kind of spoilers' management strategy.

On the contrary, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the third case inspected, back-channel negotiations were not properly utilised, as secret talks were much narrower and lasted for way less time than in Northern Ireland; parties used secret channels for developing accords, but trust and personal relationships were never built and a feeling of suspicion always persisted. Spoiler management failed to prevent spoilers on both sides to launch attacks and to achieve what was arguably their major success, Rabin's assassination, increasing accuses of bad faith from both parties and a sentiment of insecurity and scepticism among the populations.

The analysis of these cases has given me the opportunity to examine more in depth the concept of spoiler proposed by Stedman and to assess some key aspects of his work, particularly with reference to his categorisation and the strategies he suggests.

From what I have observed, the main weakness of Stedman's definition concerns the fact that a group, to him, should make use or at least should be willing to use violence to be depicted as a spoiler: this was true in Cambodia and in the Middle East, where spoilers such as the Khmer Rouge, the State of Cambodia, Hamas and the Israeli settlers adopted violent behaviours to achieve their goals; in Northern Ireland, however, the conflict never reached high levels of violence and, if some groups opted for military actions, others, like the DUP, continued to pursue their opposition to the peace process by taking more pacific and diplomatic positions. The DUP's behaviour, for instance, shows that spoilers do not necessarily have to embark on violent actions to spoil peace.

Stedman's categorisation has instead been useful to effectively identify spoilers in the discussed cases; moreover, the cases cover all the types of spoiler Stedman listed: total and greedy spoilers were present in Cambodia and in the Middle East, while in Northern Ireland some of the minor groups that were included in the negotiations could be depicted as limited spoilers. Interesting is also the presence of both internal and external spoilers: in accordance with Stedman's statements, spoilers which were included in the negotiations tended to use strategies "of stealth", like, for example, the Khmer Rouge's refusal to implement the 1991 Paris Accords, whereas external spoilers were more prone to apply violence, as Hamas and Israeli settlers.

Finally, we have seen that Stedman mentions different strategies which can be adopted against spoilers; these, however, do not automatically provide success to the peace process, as spoilers can act differently and adjust their actions and behaviours accordingly to the process environment and conditions, taking advantage of mediators and process's weaknesses; that is the case, for example, of the State of Cambodia organization during the Cambodian conflict, which was able to exploit the fact that its administrative structure was fundamental for UNTAC's programmes and thus could carry out its actions without the danger of being punished.

In the Israeli-Palestinian war, it was the inability of mediators to create a central coalition strong enough to support the Oslo Agreement which spoilers used as a tool in order to

mobilize public opinion against it, finally succeeding in undermining any attempt towards peace.

On the contrary, when parties were able to establish an environment of trust and to build a “broad central coalition”, peace processes could marginalise spoilers and reached a positive outcome, as in the Northern Ireland conflict and in Cambodia against the Khmer Rouge. The comparison between the Northern Ireland and Israeli-Palestinian conflict also reflects the huge importance of an inclusive approach to peace, since it can limit violence and expand possibilities to achieve it: one of the main points deriving from the examination of the peace process in Palestine is that its failure can be mainly explained by its exclusive character.

To conclude, there are many approaches that negotiators can choose to manage spoilers and it is therefore clear that correctly identifying and deciding a proper strategy to counter them, other than developing collaborative conducts within the peace process, is instrumental in their defeat.

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