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The Marginalisation of Voices: Reconciling Ethics in a Divided World

Casting out demons is a praxis we should practice [sic] as well as study.
Clifford Geertz, 1984

My proposition overarches the conference themes. I locate the goal to international peace in civil society, through a reconciliation forged from a recognition that the root of global division lies in the marginalisation of voices. I will argue this by extrapolating the liberal democratic tradition in the domestic (Australian) context to the global/regional reality, drawing on concepts of universal ethics.

I want to suggest that the marginalisation of voices leads to the consequent lack of ownership of outcomes, and increasingly insistent assertions in reaction to global issues. Claims of the marginalisation of voices is a recurring refrain in international debate. This detracts from the substantive issues of global concern. Rhetoric on the marginalisation of voices exacerbates the domination-subjugation discourse, with disruptive consequences for international relations. On the other hand, dialogues in collaboration illuminate areas of common morality on which to build approaches in unison. I shall argue for the prospects of convergence in a civil society built around universal notions of ethical good.