Peace studies in recent decades refer not only to the political structure or to the management of the state but designate the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups participating in the peace processes may have led them to experience conflict. This approach has been engaged to guide an anthropological investigation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Peace Accord 1997 in Bangladesh. To assess how local people experienced the peace process through the CHT Peace Accord 1997, I conducted a qualitative research study in three CHT villages. Drawing on interviews with local people in these rural villages, this thesis sheds light on a much-neglected and significant issue. I offer an analysis of their reiteration of the discourses of peace and conflict, the way in which they negotiated and/or contested these discourses, and the everyday dilemmas with which they lived. While most academic discourses on the CHT Peace Accord 1997 in Bangladesh have largely contributed to constructing peace and conflict as ‘political processes’, I closely examine the performativity in the accounts of the Jumma people, the reiteration and citation of existing discourses, as well as the new possibilities that emerge. I trace how all these discursive practices both contribute to the materialization of existing discourses of peace and simultaneously exclude the local people.

In this thesis, I have argued that, even after a political agreement was achieved between conflicting parties in CHT, violence has continued to exist. I have investigated this situation using an anthropological fieldwork approach. By locating the dynamics of conflict in the post-Accord period at the village level, I have emphasized the fact that the CHT Peace Accord may have contributed to reducing the armed struggle but, at the same time, it created many problems in the implementation and clause-making processes. The Peace Accord has been submerged by ideas and practices which have
done very little to meet the demands of the Jumma people in their struggle for recognition of their self-identity and cultural rights, a form of connection that is discordant to discourses of peace building and sustainability.