7. First steps towards a theory of peacebuilding

Emile Durkheim's (1897) anomie was advanced as an explanation of patterns of suicide across space and time. Here we proffer anomie as normlessness for one lens in examining six cases of armed conflict. We will also find anomie relevant in the next four conflicts of Peacebuilding Compared, for which fieldwork is virtually complete. A story from Robert Lilly's (2007:123) study of rape by American GIs in Europe during World War II suggests an evocative link between anomie in war and Durkheimian anomic suicide.[1] After entering the house of a seventeen-year-old German girl, Private William Blakely threatened to kill her father and mother with his pistol unless she agreed to have sex with him in their presence. Completing the rape, Private Blakely reported being overcome with remorse. Those present agreed that he then handed the girl his pistol and urged her to shoot him. She did not do this, nor did she submit to his alternative proposition to marry her. The rape and the attempt at a proxy suicide in this disturbing incident are suggestive of Private Blakely suffering from the loss of some kind of normative compass he once had.

Non-truth and reconciliation are not peculiar to recent Indonesian history. While the Allied nations reconciled with Germany in the decades after World War II, the rape of hundreds of thousands of German women and girls by Allied soldiers, especially Russians, was not part of the truth that was spoken and acknowledged as a basis for that reconciliation. An important moment in that movement from non-truth to a truth about victor rape in World War II was the publication of Lilly's (2007) book, which was suppressed for years because no American publisher would touch it. There were other disturbing features about the truth. While the military records that Lilly accessed showed there were a considerable number of executions of GIs for rapes in Europe during World

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1   One of Durkheim's (1897) empirical findings about suicide in nineteenth-century Europe was that it was higher among soldiers than civilians. For Durkheim, 'anomic suicide' happens when the individual is not under the influence of social norms. 'Fatalistic suicide' is the opposite of anomic suicide, where the individual is so dominated by social norms that when violation of them is revealed, the individual deems life pointless (as in traditional Japanese suicide that affirms norms through the ritual). Durkheim sees 'egoistic suicide' as a result of weak integration into society and the primary groups that are its building blocks; hence his finding of high suicide among divorced men. 'Altruistic suicide' fits better the pattern of JI suicide bombers who came from Poso and the nineteenth to mid-twentieth century suicidal jihadists of Aceh. It means a suicide of excessive attachment to a societal group that so engulfs individualism that the individual gives up their life for the society.

War II, most were of black soldiers. And none of them was for rapes of German women; they were for rapes of French and British women, which the records revealed tended to be less bestial and sadistic than the rapes of German women.

The Central Sulawesi and North Maluku conflicts in particular raise the question of whether anomie might be a more powerful explanation of violence if its meaning were to be broadened from the unsettling of the normative order to include unsettling of the sense of who is in charge at a 'critical juncture' in a nation's history (Bertrand 2004). In these cases, the security forces often failed to snuff out spot fires of violence, preferring to sniff the winds to work out who was in charge or who would come out on top. This was not just a matter of wanting to back the winner when the ethnic or religious card was played in a contest for a provincial governorship. It was also a legacy of factionalism and patronage within the military that Suharto had intentionally created so he could control the generals and prevent them from deposing him (Mietzner 2009). In conditions of anomic unsettling of the institutional order, military officers wanted to place bets on a local governor/*bupati* who would win and on a general in Jakarta whose faction would prevail. The contest over factional control of the military was, however, also connected with a contest over the normative order: should Indonesia inherit democracy and human rights or stability induced by military rule and renewed authoritarianism?

Anomie means that anti-sadism norms are often suspended at the onset of violence. In turn, our Indonesian stories from victims and combatants reveal that the experience of sadistic behaviour induces hatred and feelings of revulsion and revenge. That is why we are inclined to describe many of these conflicts more as 'revenge conflicts' than 'ethnic conflicts' or 'religious conflicts'. Another dynamic we have seen across these conflicts is the youthful suspension of norms that is induced by the historical opportunity for excitement in normally dull rural lives. Another is the space that normlessness provides for psychopaths who flock to armed conflict. Psychopaths seize the opportunity to indulge the sadism that the normative order contained during their prewar lives. We think this social selection effect is a neglected theme in theories of crisis more broadly. We therefore suspect the conditions of anomie on Wall Street that developed in the roaring 1990s attracted the kind of psychopaths who ran Enron, attracting them like bees to a honey pot of illegitimate opportunities at the centre of power. Normlessness meant a corporate game player ruthless enough to want to be a 'master of the universe' could indulge even the most ridiculous illegitimate opportunities. The excitement and psychopathy dynamics of anomie provided kindling for vicious spirals of revenge in all these Indonesian conflicts. We suspect this is important to understanding the unpredictability of where conflict explodes. Chaos theory shows that when many explanatory variables have non-linear relationships with one another, the flap of a butterfly wing can

cause a far-away storm. A single act of horrific sadism might therefore be widely communicated, leading to multiple acts of revenge in different places, which in turn multiplicatively produce many acts of revenge for the revenge. This connects with our inference that widely diffused bottom-up reconciliation has been important to the peace secured in Indonesia.

Many combatants we interviewed expressed remorse for things they and their colleagues did during their war, without being specific about what those things were. As in the story of the rape by Private Blakeley, war normally does not permanently unravel a normative order. The anti-rape norm still had an imprint for Blakeley that could be reactivated by the horror of the execution of the crime itself.

For these conflicts, multiple top-down peace processes[2] often manage only to negotiate pauses or permanent suspensions of conflict when they are negotiated by a narrow group of combatant and political leaders. Yet such de-escalations create spaces, including islands of civility (Kaldor 1999) such as Wayame village on Ambon, where more bottom-up and middle-out depolarisation can occur through reconciliation processes. That is when elite peace bargains can connect with wider circuits of civil society. Large numbers of civilians might then become stakeholders in the detailed working out of the peace deal, as we have seen to a degree in Aceh. Before de-escalation and depolarisation can occur in the dynamics of peace, identity formation as peacemakers is also a collective accomplishment in civil society. In the Indonesian cases, just as religious leaders fed much of the war-maker identity formation, they played even bigger parts in peacemaker identity formation, as they will also do in the next four cases to be published from this project. Concrete forms of combatant reintegration assisted demobilisation in the Indonesian cases, often consolidated by *gotong royong* that saw houses and mosques rebuilt, food supplied and paid employment arranged. Finally, we saw de-constitution of the likes of GAM, Laskar Jihad and Laskar Kristus as organisations, peaceful reconstitution of violent street gangs and constitution of new pro-peace organisations. So we have built on the literature on a dynamics of contention (McAdam et al. 2001; van Klinken 2007) to show how a dynamics of contrition progresses through peacemaker identity formation, de-escalation, depolarisation, demobilisation and de-constitution of fighting groups. Reintegration and reconciliatory gestures—often very simple ones in the course of daily life—grease these dynamics of conflict diminution at each of these stages. Just as small initial causes can spread large escalating spirals

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2   We counted nine mostly unsuccessful top-down peace processes in Maluku, five in Central Sulawesi, four in North Maluku, three in Aceh and one in Papua, West and Central Kalimantan that engaged the main combatants before a cessation/pause of fighting (that is, excluding reconciliation talks after the killing had stopped, excluding talks with leaders that did not include combatants and excluding very local peace agreements). It therefore seems that positive peace is often preceded by many peace processes that are mostly failures, though often only partial failures.

of revenge, so peace is interpreted as driven less by front-stage peacemaking by national leaders than by more backstage aggregation of countless little reconciliatory rituals of everyday life.

The opportunities that are seized through violence in these cases are highly variable: opportunities for political office, for patronage through government contracts in the shadow economy, for jobs in a goldmine, illegal logging, the takeover of organised crime, revenge, excitement and opportunities for jihad, for a death that sends warriors to paradise. We have not found strong support for master narratives of opportunity, such as the 'resource curse'. It follows that peacebuilding must be diagnostic in identifying the specific blocked opportunities that could be unblocked. And it needs to be catalytic of economic and political entrepreneurship to find ways of opening legitimate opportunities and of closing illegitimate opportunities. Peacebuilding can thus be conceived as the art of identifying the bottlenecks blocking the flow of legitimate opportunities and forming new bottlenecks that cut off opportunities for violence. The most recurrently important illegitimate opportunity is access to guns. The Indonesian state has been quite successful across these conflicts in blocking that access. The most recurring legitimate opportunity blockage was of the right to a hearing from those in authority about a grievance. This is the easiest to remedy. A case such as Maluku illustrates that a great deal can be accomplished by respectful listening by formerly deaf political and religious leaders, even if deep structural change does not ensue. These conclusions resonate with Barbara Walter's (2004) finding from all civil wars ending between 1945 and 1996 that war was least likely in societies where citizens had access to an open political system and to economic opportunities.

An opportunity theory version of anomie theory allows us to reconcile what seem to be contradictory conflict dynamics. We can explain wars as unintended (as a result of a security dilemma) or we can explain them as wilful politics by other means.[3] In conditions of normative breakdown where the rules of the game are no longer agreed, it is more open to politicians to attempt a bold manoeuvre to crush their opponents by playing the ethnic violence card, for example. In these same normatively unconstrained conditions, the behaviour of one's adversaries is less predictable precisely because it is less channelled by the rules of the game. Therefore, people might see themselves as in a security dilemma, whereby it is best to attack the other before they seize the normatively open opportunity to attack us. Put another way, anomie is a background explanation of greed and grievance, of opportunism and security dilemmas.

Anomie creates particularly fertile conditions for Valerie Braithwaite's (2009) motivational posture of game playing, which our cases repeatedly reveal to be a

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3 We are indebted to an anonymous reviewer for prompting this paragraph with this point.

useful lens through which to comprehend the proximate action in the onset of violence. The most prominent game player of war and peace in this book was the Indonesian military. An anomic society is also one in which the motivational posture of disengagement is widespread. A bulge of disengaged youth, no longer committed to either their military commanders or the elders who provided them with a moral compass before the conflict, is a recurrent challenge of post-conflict peacebuilding in all these cases.

Capitulation to a new normative order without commitment to it is also an anomic motivational posture. In a sense, however, it is a necessary one in the dynamics of de-escalation and de-polarisation. Across these cases, for many of the fighters who reluctantly and resentfully handed in their guns, capitulation was a transitional posture that saw them ultimately shift to strong commitment to the peace. In our next volume, on the Bougainville civil war, we find an even more dramatic sequencing from capitulation by fighters to their strong commitment to the peace. While resistance to norms is a posture that is part and parcel of anomie, our data on Indonesia—like the data from tax compliance and business regulation in Australia (Braithwaite 2009)—are consistent with resistance also being an easier posture to flip to commitment to a new political order (compared with disengagement and game playing, which are more obstinate). A peace process can cut deals with combatants who are clear about what features of the political order they resist, and what new political arrangements will be a compromise that in time might bind them to a peace.

In these ways, the insights that come to us from the motivational postures perspective go to the relevance of what we coin 'transitionalism' in peacebuilding. We are familiar with the concept of transitional justice. Part of the meaning of transitional justice is that there might be a place for amnesties—perhaps on condition of speaking truth to a truth commission—when there is enforcement swamping by the multitude of crimes committed in a war. After the period of transitional justice, the policy settings shift to more consistent law enforcement for serious crime. There is also a case for transitional governance and transitional constitutions. In the case of Poso, we saw virtue in an agreement of all political parties contesting the Poso elections in 2005 to have balanced slates of Muslim and Christian candidates. We argued that this was a prudent transitional consociationalism of sorts. It would, however, be a dangerous basis for an enduring constitution because it would exclude Poso Hindus from politics, ossifying the identities that mattered within the identity politics of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Our ANU colleague Jo Ford is exploring whether transitional justice, transitional governance and transitional constitutionalism might be complemented by 'transitional business regulation', using Liberia and Timor-Leste as case studies in his PhD to diagnose what this kind of transitionalism might mean.

The progress that has been made towards mapping the sequencing required of transitional governance, transitional constitutionalism, transitional economic policymaking and transitional justice has been modest in this volume. We have given but glimpses of a few options. We do think there is an important insight in our diagnosis of Aceh as a case where it was necessary for those with power to be reduced to a small group granted legitimacy to haggle a peace deal. In the next phase of transition, it was vital to connect wider circles of civil society (and the Indonesian parliament) with the peace process. In particular, if the game players in the Indonesian military or the hardliners of the Indonesian parliament had been in the room at Helsinki, Aceh would still be at war. So we have shown that a dynamics of contrition comes with patience, in stages. In a phase when the density of game players who pretend to be peacemakers, but are in fact spoilers, is high, a different politics of inclusion is needed than at a later stage when the density of game players is in decline. So we have asserted multidimensional transitionalism as an important research agenda.

Our next volume, on Bougainville, will involve two advances with this agenda. It will describe a constitutional transitionalism that establishes formal linkages between different constitutional stages (culminating in an independence referendum) triggered only when specific demobilisation stages (for example, containment of weapons, arrival of unarmed peacekeepers) are completed. Second, Bougainville will reveal more about the *longue durée* (Karstedt 2005, Forthcoming) of a dynamics of contrition. It will show that reconciliation is a process that can be constantly renewed by indigenous leadership with new waves of reconciliation initiatives, waves in which male political leaders are crucial, waves in which women's leadership from civil society is crucial, waves for which leadership of chiefs in particular localities is the catalyst and waves in which youth leaders in churches re-energise momentum. Melanesian philosophies of peacebuilding—also evident in a different historical trajectory in our third volume, on Solomon Islands—mean reconciliations and intergenerational renegotiations that take decades rather than years.

Our fourth volume, on Timor-Leste, will show the importance of a transition to a formal separation of powers from a networked governance of transition. The Timor-Leste volume will also show that a patient *longue durée* of networking in domestic civil society (the East Timor 'clandestine movement', particularly of students), combined with token military resistance and a brilliant, patient networked diplomacy at the United Nations led by José Ramos-Horta (linked to an international solidarity network) could defeat the concentrated power of the Indonesian state, the United States and allies such as Australia. These powers fell prey to a misplaced realism. Western diplomats fell for the folly of misplaced realism because Indonesia was so geopolitically important in the politics of Islam and in the Cold War. They therefore thought encouraging Ramos-Horta

and Fretilin was a grave error. Blindness to Fretilin turned out to be the tragic error. In retrospect, we might say the same thing about GAM, about OPM, the terrible waste of life in Aceh and the agony of Papua.

Our intellectual journey with peacebuilding must also be a patient one. We have taken preliminary steps to link theories of transitional justice with theories of transitional reintegration, transitional reconciliation, transitional economic and political governance and transitional constitutionalism with emergent separations of powers that are responsive to peacebuilding imperatives. Transitionalism is an imperative because we have seen that violence explodes in conditions of anomie. And violence is reconciled in conditions of restoration of commitment to a normative order, sometimes a transformed one. Dynamics of contention (McAdam et al. 2001; van Klinken 2007) flourish in conditions of anomie. Obversely, we can begin to understand a dynamics of contrition in the *longue durée* of reconciliation. One reason why transitionalism in a dynamics of peace must be staged is that at different points in a peace process different motivational postures are dominant: resistance, capitulation, game playing, disengagement and commitment to a transformed or renewed normative order. Perhaps it is only a small start to link Mertonian anomie to motivational postures, to dynamics of contention, to dynamics of contrition, to transitionalism in the theory of peacebuilding. It is, however, some sort of fresh start theoretically— even as it errs at this stage on the side of being a little complicated! We aim not to be too quick to pare to parsimony as we acquire more cases.