10. Deep and shallow restorative peace

Table 10.1 tentatively characterises Bougainville as a 'restorative peace' rather than the much more common phenomena of a 'realist' or 'liberal peace'. A table like this might help us better see a conflict through a comparative lens, at the same time as it simplifies too much. Hence, in the conclusion to this chapter, we will reach the view that while Bougainville had a comparatively deep restorative peace locally, across the region that restorative peace was shallow. In particular, there remains a shallow regional reconciliation and a shallow integrity of regional truth on the question of honouring the outcome of the forthcoming referendum on independence for Bougainville.

Table 10.2 characterises Bougainville as bottom-up for truth and reconciliation, which again is quite unusual compared with very common war settlements of non-truth and top-down reconciliation. Bougainville had no top-down truth commission such as we have seen in various Latin American countries, or a South African-style Truth and Reconciliation Commission. So we see Bougainville as a case of deep bottom-up reconciliation and shallow regional truth. Regional elites in Port Moresby, Canberra, Wellington and Jakarta and in the boardroom of BCL now have obligations to enliven the integrity of regional dialogue about the Bougainville peace agreement.

Table 10.1 Accomplishing peace through political settlement, legal justice and restorative justice

How peace is accomplished	Political settlement	Adjudicated wrongdoing based on legal justice	Reconciliation of wrongdoing based on restorative justice/traditional reconciliation	Provisional interpretation
Unresolved conflict Burma	No	No	No	Hobbesian struggle
Political settlement ignoring war crimes Korea	Yes	No	No	Realist peace
Political settlement and rule of law Nazi Germany	Yes	Yes	No	Liberal peace
Political settlement and reconciliation Bougainville	Yes	No	Yes	Restorative peace
Political settlement, rule of law and reconciliation Attempted in Timor-Leste and South Africa	Yes	Yes	Yes	Republican peace*
Pure rule of law Hard to identify a clear case	No	Yes	No	Peace by rule of international law
Rule of law and reconciliation Hard to identify a clear case	No	Yes	Yes	Peace by restorative international law
Pure reconciliation Hard to identify; some preventive diplomacy could approach it	No	No	Yes	Restorative peace without political settlement

* Barnett's (2006) concept of republican peace would require of the political settlement that it include commitment to a constitution with a separation of powers and that the settlement be based on deliberative politics that is broadly representative.

Table 10.2 Variation in how bottom-up and top-down are truth and reconciliation*

How peace is accomplished	Bottom-up truth	Top-down truth	Bottom-up reconciliation	Top-down reconciliation	Provisional interpretation
Bottom-up truth and reconciliation Bougainville	Yes	No	Yes	No	Truthful local reconciliations
Top-down truth and non-reconciliation Chile**	No	Yes	No	No	Pure Truth Commission model
Top-down truth and reconciliation South Africa***	No	Yes	No	Yes	National Truth and Reconciliation Commission model
Truth and reconciliation bottom-up–top-down Timor-Leste (short-term attempt at it)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	National and local Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Non-truth and non-reconciliation World War I	No	No	No	No	Feigned forgetting
Non-truth and reconciliation Poso (Braithwaite et al. 2010)	No	No	Yes	Yes	Forgive and forget
Truth and non-reconciliation Korean War	Yes	Yes	No	No	Remember and resent
Non-truth and top-down reconciliation Tito's communist Yugoslavia	No	No	No	Yes	Feigned forgetting, elites forgive (but hatred hides in people's hearts)

* This table lists only half the combinations of the four columns possible for these variables. We expect some of the hidden combinations will be brought to life as Peacebuilding Compared accumulates new cases.

** There was some bottom-up truth in Chile from NGOs, though nothing like the breadth of local bottom-up truth in Bougainville.

*** There were some important attempts at bottom-up truth and reconciliation in South Africa as well that were not widely based.

The bottom-up truth and reconciliations in Bougainville have been quite different from those we described for a number of Indonesian conflicts in the first volume of Peacebuilding Compared (Braithwaite et al. 2010). We described these as cases of non-truth and reconciliation. Much of that Indonesian reconciliation was real enough, but based on no-one making explicit admissions of wrongdoing and apologising for it. In contrast, reconciliations within Bougainville—while slow getting to the point of admissions—have been strong on both admission of specific wrongdoing, even for murder and rape, and marking that by the payment of traditional compensation or heartfelt apology, reciprocated by (mostly) binding forgiveness. One leading Bougainville woman said the philosophy was 'if you don't reconcile, don't talk to each other' because interaction without reconciliation could lead to violence. In contrast, Indonesian non-truth and reconciliation were based on adversaries working together on rebuilding and reintegration projects without ever admitting to wrongdoing. Over the next 20 years of this project, we will follow the ways such different dispensations succeed and fail in the resilience of peace. But for the moment, Tables 10.1 and 10.2 do no more than float only provisional interpretations (as opposed to variables we code) in the hope they might provoke conversations to clarify and elaborate them. We hope the project will have a wiki quality with a conceptual architecture that will be adjusted as new cases are added.

This is a book on the particularities of Bougainville's war and peace. It is not the place for exegesis on what is theoretically at stake down the right-hand columns of Tables 10.1 and 10.2. That in any case is better refined from the experience of more cases followed up for longer. For the moment, these tables help us to see how distinctive the Bougainville peace was and the way it was distinctive. And really, that is the only claim we advance for Tables 10.1 and 10.2 at this early stage of our comparative project. Doubtless we could end up concluding that Tables 10.1 and 10.2 are too reductively simple for any wider purpose. Needless to say, however, it is a firm conclusion that the Bougainville peace has been remarkable because of the distinctive strengths of its expanding webs of traditional bottom-up reconciliation and the architectural supports of its political settlement.

The fact that it is hard to find clear cases for the last three rows of Table 10.1 at this stage of Peacebuilding Compared—cases where peace has been secured by legal justice or reconciliation without a political settlement—could signal an important caution to our analysis. Without a political settlement to a war, it could be that bottom-up reconciliation will always be crushed by future waves of conflict. That does not imply a political settlement must always come first. The Bougainville case shows that bottom-up reconciliation achieves only fragile progress when war rages around it. Yet we also find that early reconciliations paved the way to a political settlement. So we hypothesise that the commonly

expressed wisdom during our fieldwork in the corridors of the United Nations in New York that 'peacekeeping cannot work if there is no peace to keep' goes too far. While a political settlement can create peace without genuine truth and reconciliation, and while truth and reconciliation might be unlikely to secure peace without a political settlement, truth, justice and reconciliation could be more than just value added on top of a settlement. Rather, we hypothesise that top-down political settlement and bottom-up restorative justice form a virtuous circle that consolidates deeply sustainable peace. PMG Commander Brigadier Bruce Osborn's metaphor was of the peace as building a house that acquired strong foundations because of traditional reconciliation and sturdy walls because of the architecture of the peace: 'The foundations of the house were the Bougainvillean people. The walls were the various parties to the peace process. You had to shape, strengthen and unify those walls in order to support the roof, which was the reconciliation government, the one voice of Bougainville' (Osborn 2001:55).

While Bougainvilleans identified with and built Brigadier Osborn's house, they now have the space to contemplate whether it could be better buttressed by some national and international architecture. Simply because local reconciliation continues to progress reasonably well, gradually expanding its scope within Bougainville, it does not necessarily follow that a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the Bougainville war would be redundant for Papua New Guinea. Some PNGDF soldiers and riot police we interviewed benefited from participating in local reconciliations that occurred in 1991 and also from reconciliations between the Lincoln cease-fire and the departure of the last PNGDF in April 2003. But most PNGDF and riot police were not on the ground at those times and places and participated in no reconciliations with the people of Bougainville. In one of our interviews with two members of the Police Mobile Squad in Port Moresby, they said they felt for their colleagues who had married Bougainville women and had children living on the mainland, or who had left a Bougainville wife and children behind, when those children would benefit from reconciliation and connection with their mother's or their father's family. They also expressed this concern for orphaned Bougainvillean children who had been adopted by PNG police and soldiers. Then they mentioned the unreconciled state of PNG police and soldiers who defected to the BRA after landing in Bougainville and others who defected in the other direction who were still serving in the police or military on the mainland today.

No national reconciliation ceremony was ever conducted for the Bougainville war in Port Moresby. The Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom had considered reaching out to the PNGDF with a 'Where's my son movement', given the importance in Bougainville of returning the bones of the fallen. Nothing organised has come of this. Many Bougainvilleans living in Port Moresby, and

other parts of Papua New Guinea, were violently victimised during the war. About 15 000 refugees who fled to the mainland from Bougainville have not experienced reconciliation concerning the loss of jobs and homes and harassment they suffered. None of the Chinese refugees who had lived in Bougainville's Chinatowns for generations experienced reconciliation for the loss of their homes, businesses and the disappearance from history's page of the entire little communities they had eked out in Bougainville. They have their story of oppression to tell as indentured 'coolie' labour of the Germans, chased out twice in the next two generations—by the Japanese and then by Bougainvilleans. Young Bougainvilleans today have little comprehension of their truth. BCL and its old and current expatriate management would benefit from a reconciliation process with a Bougainville that must come to terms with the fact that these expatriates still have legal title to mining rights in their lands. That might be difficult while BCL is afraid of the legal implications of apologising. In any case, there it would be perhaps more meaningful for the Australian Government to apologise for the mine, its support for the war in its early years, and more. One argument some Bougainville leaders advance against a Truth and Reconciliation Commission is that it is an alien institution for Bougainville society. This is not much of an argument against its application with alienated aliens to Bougainville society. This is not to deny that it is equally an option to embrace these aliens within traditional Bougainvillean reconciliation. That embrace might spiritually enrich them.

Our interviews on the mainland revealed a lot of 'forgive and forget' attitudes, but also some residual bitterness in these quarters. Healing is important not only to these damaged people. It is also in the interests of a secure relationship for Bougainville with Papua New Guinea. A National Truth and Reconciliation Commission might give former PNG leaders and Australian leaders a space in which to apologise for the mistakes they made between the 1960s and Sandline. The need even more profound than reconciliation in Port Moresby is for a truth of greater integrity. For many in the PNG political elite, there is no truth to the commitment to honour the will that the people of Bougainville were empowered to express through an independence referendum. For these PNG politicians, it was a trick, not a truth, and that was why there was no legally binding undertaking to honour the outcome of that vote. ABG leaders such as the one who said 'some people were not genuine when they signed the peace agreement' and who accused the Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare, of being one of those less than genuine leaders,[1] are hardly blind to the prospect of betrayal. Those in

---

1   Some insiders in Port Moresby we interviewed said quite the opposite of Sir Michael's good faith on Bougainville. One said, 'Sir Michael Somare has repeatedly stated in public that his government is committed to honouring the letter and spirit of the *Bougainville Peace Agreemen*t and implementing laws.'

the Port Moresby elite who think it would be wrong under any circumstance to allow the break-up of Papua New Guinea have many who agree with them in the capitals of the regional powers: Canberra, Jakarta and Wellington.

There is a need for a regional conversation on the integrity of the national and international buttressing of the Bougainville peace process. A National Truth and Reconciliation Commission is not the only way to accomplish that, of course. The Prime Ministers of Papua New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand simply issuing statements that they personally support honouring the wishes that the people of Bougainville vote for (while expressing the hope they vote to stay in Papua New Guinea) could be a significant step towards securing enduring peace. Australian diplomats persuaded Bougainvilleans to agree to their plan of a delayed referendum by saying Australia would organise international diplomatic pressure on Port Moresby to honour the referendum result. This was not unlike the way Australia in that period pressured Jakarta to honour the 1999 East Timor referendum. New Zealand diplomats were also unusually involved in that pressure on Jakarta over the East Timor referendum. So Wellington could also say that the international community must demand that the wishes of the people of Bougainville as expressed in the referendum are honoured. Jakarta could help by saying it did honour the East Timor referendum, and likewise Port Moresby should honour the Bougainville peace agreement.