

REVIEW ESSAY

Peacebuilding: A Time to Listen to and Learn from Reconciliationism*

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- Tristan Anne Borer, ed.* Telling the Truths: Truth Telling and Peace Building in Post-Conflict Societies. *Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.*
- Charles T. Call, ed.* Constructing Justice and Security after War. *Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007.*
- Chester A. Crocker, Fen Olser Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds.* Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World. *Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007.*
- John Darby, ed.* Violence and Reconstruction. *Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.*
- Julie A. Mertus and Jeffrey W. Helsing, eds.* Human Rights and Conflict: Exploring the Links between Rights, Law and Peacebuilding. *Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2006.*
- Daniel Philpott, ed.* The Politics of Past Evil: Religion, Reconciliation and the Dilemmas of Transitional Justice. *Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.*¹
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Lisa A. Baglione, *Saint Joseph's University*

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Lisa A. Baglione is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia. She has published works on superpower arms control decisionmaking, the political and economic transformation of post-Soviet Russia,

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1. In-text references will be to author of the chapter, followed by initial(s) of editor, and page numbers if appropriate.

and teaching research-paper writing to Political Science majors. Her current research focuses on peacebuilding in war-torn societies.

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens. . .

—Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3 Verse 1

Since the end of the Cold War, peacebuilders have had greater opportunities to engage in global efforts to quell conflict. Gone is the ideological competition that had characterized East–West tension and threatened Europe and other regions of the world. Both Russia and the United States found that they no longer had the desire or the resources to support proxies in many violent disputes. Opponents in Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia, therefore, began looking for ways to settle their long-running conflicts. Meanwhile, new clashes emerged, as confrontations that had been suppressed by Soviet imperial power or the overarching American–Soviet rivalry erupted. The superpowers’ dumping of unneeded arms on world markets and disengagement from international commitments allowed sub-state actors to materialize to challenge weakened states. At the same time, antagonists in these emerging conflicts came under increasing pressure to reach accords to staunch the bloodshed. The last 15 years, then, have provided occasions for negotiated solutions to communal violence and the transformation of the resulting accords’ promises of peace into reality. The six books reviewed here exemplify the most recent efforts by respected scholars from multiple disciplines, as well as by policymakers and activists, to understand the post-settlement process.

Taken together, these volumes provide an excellent window on the contemporary field of post-accord peacebuilding. Two clear and contrasting schools of thought can be identified in these works. The first, which I call “Traditionalism,” is the dominant perspective; it focuses on institution- and coalition-building as the most important strategies for stabilizing post-war societies. “Reconciliationism,” as I am naming it, is a relatively new school that has emerged from multi-disciplinary efforts to study the post-settlement period. Its adherents argue that post-war societies must engage in a process of reconciliation, characterized by truth-seeking, apology, forgiveness, and national redefinition. While both schools agree on the long-term nature of the peacebuilding process, the tenacity of violence in this period, the danger of equating democracy with elections, and the importance of creating an efficacious state, they differ on multiple points. Traditionalists tend to hold standard definitions of peace, security, and justice and usually believe that the search for truth is ancillary in the post-settlement process. Reconciliationists, however, interrogate each of these concepts and arrive at more expansive understandings. These differences lead to

another distinction between the schools over the final goal of the post-settlement process. Traditionalists frequently conceive of the desired outcome as “conflict management” or the creation of procedurally just systems. While Reconciliationists hope that post-settlement societies achieve both of these conditions, they also add peace to their list of objectives, a condition that for them includes personal safety and needs satisfaction for citizens. Finally, the two schools have differing perspectives on the global obligation to intervene to protect ordinary people against organized violence.

While the field of post-accord peacebuilding is bifurcated, the Traditionalists have been the dominant voice and have often ignored what their Reconciliationist colleagues have been writing. A dialogue between these two groups has begun, but the study and practice of peacebuilding politics would benefit from more attention to what Reconciliationists are advocating. Even research performed by Traditionalists seems to show that institutional change and coalition building are in themselves insufficient for positively changing war-torn societies. A fruitful direction for the future, then, seems to be bringing the Reconciliationist arguments to the mainstream and engaging in a research program inspired by their agenda.

Consensus on the Post-Accord Peacebuilding Process

I uncover two perspectives on peacebuilding in my analysis of these six works.² The first I call “Traditionalism” because it provides a traditional, political science view of the process, focusing on building state institutions and constituencies for peaceful interactions in post-settlement societies. The second approach, “Reconciliationism,” contends that institutional change and new coalitions are insufficient because they do not address the emotions and the damage to the social fabric that impede politics in war-torn societies. Instead, Reconciliationists maintain that states and citizens that have experienced and perpetrated evil need additional strategies to uncover truths, as well as to mend and heal the national community. *Leashing the Dogs of War* (CHA) and *Constructing Peace and Security* (C) are primarily written from the Traditionalist perspective, while *Telling the Truths* (B) and *The Politics of Past Evil* (P) are firmly in the Reconciliationist camp. *Violence and Reconstruction* (D) and *Human Rights and Conflict* (MH) include contributions from both perspectives.

2. Mertus and Helsing discuss three schools, which they term the “conflict resolution,” “humanitarian and law,” and “human rights” approaches. The range of my reading is broader, as many of the contributors in the Notre Dame volumes are not active in policy or political science circles. Thus, my two categories will likely imperfectly capture all of the people that Mertus and Helsing include, but will bring to the fore voices for reconciliation not adequately included in previous schemes.

The two schools are in accord on several aspects of the post-settlement process. Both agree that it is complex and prone to violence, even after officials have publicly pledged to resolve differences peacefully. They also note that international efforts to promote political change in post-settlement societies have often focused on building democracy by holding elections. Traditionalists and Reconciliationists alike object to policymakers' tendency to equate democracy with voting, recognizing that "electoralism" is an incomplete substitute and frequently breeds internal violence. Instead, both schools emphasize state building.

In the 1990s, some specialists on post-accord situations were optimistic that settlements would translate into peace. Today, these hopes have been replaced by sober assessments of the tenacity of violence. As Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall acknowledge, "it is almost impossible to call off the dogs [of war] once they have been let slip or unleashed" (CHA, 3). Not surprisingly, then, most contributors in the works reviewed here carefully eschew the term "post-conflict" when referring to the period after war has officially stopped as a means of stressing that confrontation—even its violent elements—does not end with the signing of an accord.³

But why should violence continue? Don't parties conclude settlements because they have reached "hurting stalemates" and decide that agreement is preferable to continued conflict?⁴ Post-accord violence has many sources. Some leaders engage in negotiations, but are not necessarily committed to living in peace for the long term. Talks, then, may be an alternative strategy of conflict (Sisk, D, 123–24). Also, each side experiences internal politics, and while one faction may prefer a settlement, others might disagree (Höglund and Zartman, D; Zahar, D). These "spoilers"—opponents to agreement trying to wreck its underlying compromises—can then engage in violence in an attempt to thwart the peace.⁵ Spoilers can be inside as well as outside the political process and be opposed to peace on principled or financial grounds. In addition, war efforts in communal conflicts typically depend upon official as well as paramilitary organizations, many of which have links to the underground economy. Because the challenged state is often subject to international sanctions and rebel groups lack the power of official taxation, combatants engage in illicit and frequently brutal activities to sustain their efforts. The cessation of the conflict, then, can mean the end of a way of life for people inside and outside of the official war-making structures. Militaries, paramilitaries, and organized criminals, used to living by and profiting from violence, may seek its continuation (Ayoob, CHA, 104–05; Collier, CHA, 200–02). Whether real "grievances" (dissatisfaction with

3. The sub-title of Borer's volume is an exception to this rule.

4. I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989).

5. John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security* 22 (1997): 5–53.

past and continuing political, social, and economic hierarchies and injustices) or “greed” (the desire for economic gain) are motivating such violence is unclear and subject to debate (Collier, CHA; Gurr, CHA; Steward and Brown, CHA; Schirch, MH, 70–71). Still, both the nature of post-accord societies and contemporary war enable many groups to continue fighting if they choose: countries wracked by war typically have underdeveloped economies and are often too weak to thwart illicit activities, combatants are plentiful, fighters have few skills useful in “normal” economies, guns are readily available, and a culture of violence has been inculcated over the years of conflict (MacGinty, D; Gamba, D). Thus, anticipating continued aggression and remaining committed to the progress of peace are essential for its strengthening (Sisk, D, 138, 140).

In addition to these characteristics internal to post-settlement societies, some scholars claim that external pressures also contribute to continuing violence. The global “War on Terror” has made fighting “terrorists” a high priority of some post-accord regimes seeking to win American favor and aid. In addition, the larger process of globalization enables continued confrontation as groups opposed to settlements have greater access to resources through world-wide economic, technological, criminal, and social networks (Gurr, CHA, 147–50; Gamba, D).

While some argue that democracy can be established through force, regardless of whether coercion is employed, scholars also argue that the *process* of democratizing is fraught with violence (Mansfield and Snyder, CHA). When democratizing, a state’s administrative structure and key institutions—the rule of law, property rights, a functioning economy, an independent media, and civil society—are typically weak; yet, instead of putting the resources into developing these building blocks, states and external supporters have focused on electoral politics as the key indicator of successful democratization. But equating democracy with elections has led to a politics of exclusion and antagonism. In democratizing states, leaders typically use political contests to rally constituents around “enemies” and choose aggressive policies to win votes. Thus, students of peacebuilding note that democratization is not a guarantee of peacefulness and must be carefully undertaken if this system is to produce peace (Ottaway, CHA; Mansfield and Snyder, CHA; Beidas, Granderson and Neild, C; Hampson and Mandeloff, CHA; Marten, CHA; Lund, MH).

Instead of emphasizing elections, both Traditionalists and Reconciliationists argue that building an effective but constrained state should be the top priority (Ottaway, CHA; Krasner, CHA; Lund, MH; Call, C). These works repeatedly stress both state authority over the territory and the rule of law (to prevent abuse and compel respect for human rights and other civilian safeguards).⁶ Indeed, state

6. In doing so they rectify a significant omission and provide a response to past violence and present crime.

efficacy in formerly rebel-held or sympathetic areas is often a problem in post-accord society; building that power is vital for reintegrating the state and society (Rotberg, CHA; Krasner, CHA). As the state demonstrates its ability to deliver political goods—which Robert Rotberg defines in rank order as first and foremost security, followed by “the rule of law,” “free and open participation in politics,” and an “economic environment conducive to prosperity”—it undermines challengers and builds citizen support (CHA, 86–87).

Disagreements Regarding the Course and Outcome of the Post-Accord Process

Despite this consensus, the two perspectives disagree on several fundamental points, including the centrality of institutional reform; the value and importance of reconciliation; the definitions of peace, justice, and security; the threat that crime poses to post-settlement societies; and the responsibility of outsiders when violence engulfs a territory. For Traditionalists, a war-torn society needs to transform its political institutions, outlast and undermine spoilers, and thereby develop numerous constituencies in support of the regime. Such policies and patience will yield legitimate, procedurally just systems in which conflict is managed through normal political processes. Combating crime—which some see as a new manifestation of the old violence—is essential to the state- and peace-building project. Uncovering history and pursuing justice, on the other hand, are never-ending and destructive processes of settling scores that should be avoided. Finally, Traditionalists are cautious about outsiders’ abilities to promote the evolution of peaceful politics, and they are circumspect about intervention to protect citizens from carnage.

Reconciliationists, however, reject the idea that a ravaged society can achieve “normalcy” without special efforts aimed at addressing the horrific past. Although liberal philosophical analysis is quite suspicious of reconciliation, Reconciliationists are convinced that a process requiring truth telling and allowing people to express regret and contemplate forgiveness is the only way to build a true peace marked by justice. As part of the reconciliation project, adherents maintain that post-settlement societies must re-write their national myths in a manner consistent with the more inclusive community being created. Because of their concern with peace, justice, and living conditions, Reconciliationists also believe that people everywhere deserve protection from violence and that the world community is obligated to intervene to stop widespread abuse when it occurs.

Fundamental to the Traditionalist position is a confidence in the power of “good” institutions to transform the politics of societies that have experienced significant violence. While earlier Traditionalist works focused on creating appropriate electoral and territorial institutions, the books under review

repeatedly stress both a capable state, with authority over the territory so that citizens feel secure, and the rule of law, so that police and security services cannot abuse their power, but rather respect human rights and protect the civilian population (Ottaway, CHA). The central idea is that if post-accord constitution writers and reformers are “wise enough” to devise effective rules and institutions that encourage compromise among past adversaries, then civility can follow. Over time, then, a healthy and well-functioning society, polity, and economy can emerge from a war-torn state. Moreover, the recent experience of post-accord societies brings the problem of continuing violence and crime to the forefront for Traditionalists. To cope with criminality past and present, they advocate extensive reforms to the security *and* justice sectors, to build societal confidence in post-settlement states (C).

Traditionalists acknowledge, however, that implementing and consolidating such changes are complex tasks. Murder, rape, torture, and disappearances characterized the old system, and these actions, their perpetrators, and victims—in addition to contemporary crime—cast a large shadow on the new polity (C). If powerful players who committed violence are to lay down their arms and engage in normal politics, they must be confident that they will not be punished for past crimes (Höglund and Zartman, D; Zahar, D; Sisk, D). Post-accord societies, therefore, have to forego justice; it is a backward-looking strategy. “Peace”—non-violence through forgetting the past—is the way forward.⁷

Traditionalists maintain, however, that states must devise ways of preventing abuses from reoccurring because a return to old ways will build constituencies *against* the new system (C). Thus, Traditionalists argue that post-settlement states must pay special attention to their security and justice institutions. According to Charles T. Call, security reforms alone only affect a state’s military and power-projection potential without addressing human rights protections for citizens. This limited approach ignores the fact that military, police, and paramilitary forces typically have been responsible for violence against ordinary people, and many citizens wonder whether the post-settlement state’s security organs will abuse them too. The quality of the judiciary and the level of respect for human rights throughout society also affect how well civil protections will be defended. When legal professionals are subservient to political leaders, corrupted, or themselves targets of violence and intimidation or when the principles of human rights are not upheld, even reformed structures are unlikely to respect the rule of law. Moreover, citizens’ support for police restraint and civil rights as well as their opposition to vigilantism help to ensure fair treatment of suspects. Lastly, effective police and judicial institutions are very important for another reason: empirical

7. Some human rights activists are uncompromising on the need for retribution and so contribute to the contention that peace and justice are contradictory (Schirch, MH, 79; Amstutz, P 160).

studies have found that new forms of violence emerge after accords have been reached, and opinion polls show publics losing confidence in democracy—and potentially some elements of the bargain underpinning the settlement—because of crime waves (C, 6–9).

Ultimately, if the state can regain autonomy and previously violent institutions can be reformed, Traditionalists have confidence that a country will be able to quell the violence on its territory. Crocker, Hampson and Aall perhaps most clearly assert the Traditionalist goal of conflict management in their text, through their title, in their introductory essay, and in their decision to cut from this edition of the book sections on “peacebuilding” (2001 volume) and “consolidating peace” (1996 version). There is no discussion, however, of why they abandoned an investigation of peace or its consolidation, although they note that this era—in which the U.S. is waging a global war on terror and “democratically elected populist authoritarian regimes in Latin America and the Middle East” have emerged—is different (5). The contributors in the Call volume see the endpoint as a procedurally fair environment that forecloses bloodshed as a societal option. They believe that reform of the security and judicial sectors will be difficult but will help to prevent future violent abuses.

Despite Call’s qualified optimism in his concluding essay, the case studies in that volume show few clear successes, and progress in transforming these key institutions seems to occur in cases where truth-telling and reconciliation mechanisms bring about attitudinal and behavioral changes that pressure recalcitrant leaderships to champion reform.⁸ As Tracy Fitzsimmons notes, however, Call’s satisfaction with restructuring is based on a view of security that is too narrow, focusing primarily on the public sphere. Fitzsimmons doubts that justice and security sector reforms will lead to comprehensive protections for all individuals, particularly a society’s most vulnerable citizens, women and children (C, 352, 353, 356; also Delaet, B). Other Traditionalists, however, take an even more circumscribed view of security, equating it with the safety of the regime and the lack of interstate conflict (Donnelly, MH).

In earlier iterations, Traditionalists also had more confidence in the ability of outsiders to bring about successful reforms in post-settlement states. The two precursors to *Leashing the Dogs of War* contained sections devoted to types of intervention and mechanisms for managing conflict. This version contains new

8. The institutional reform process in the countries under study seems to require a more negative assessment. Haiti is a disaster; Bosnia’s problems are enormous. Even Guatemala and South Africa, both frequently praised by others, are the subjects of criticism in this volume (Stanley, 124 and Rauch, 182). Although El Salvador has made significant progress, the hopes for Rwanda are placed on the use of *gacaca* courts, traditional, community tribunals that bring an accused in front of village elders and citizens (Mironko and Rurangwa 203, 198–200). Interestingly, these successes are based less upon the actual institutional reforms and more on the process of reconciliation that El Salvador (Call, 49), and Rwanda, in the *gacaca* process, have instituted.

sub-titles that remind readers not only of the “uses” but also the “limits” of “force,” “statecraft,” “institutions,” and “governance” in conflict management (vi–vii). This new sensitivity to constraints reinforces the Traditionalists’ caution toward interventions. Not only are such actions unlikely to succeed, but Traditionalists generally perceive peace to be “only a right of *peoples*—collective groups” as well as the “absence of interstate war” (Donnelly, MH, 152, 151). Thus, security is generally related to the collectivities; therefore violence against citizens in another country might be unfortunate, but not normally a reason for action (Falk, MH, 203–05).

Reconciliationists have a very different perspective on the “best” course for and outcome of the post-settlement process, as well as on the role of the global community when violence against civilians erupts. While they agree that political institutions and developing constituencies for peace are important, Reconciliationists do not place the same kind of faith in the power of institutions to change the *behaviors* of individuals and groups, thereby transforming a nation’s politics. They argue that the history of violence makes institutional reform nearly impossible, as parties lack the trust sufficient to create a well functioning state in which past enemies share power. Therefore, structural change cannot be a *first* step; rather, it follows after society has altered its fundamental precepts to accept that everyone in the political community has the right to be accorded human dignity and treated fairly. Arriving at this transformation in behaviors *and attitudes*, however, requires a politics that is shocking to traditional political scientists, because it calls for reconciliation, a process that brings truth, repentance, forgiveness, and national myth-making to the forefront of politics. Only reconciliation can create a stable and just peace, one that will weather—without violence—political differences of opinion that are bound to emerge as citizens live together.

Liberal philosophical analyses, which underpin the Traditionalist position, tend to be suspicious of reconciliation as anti-democratic, utopian, personal, and, therefore, apolitical (Torrance, P, 58–68; Philpott, P, 25–34). According to liberals, reconciliation seeks to obliterate disagreement while democracy thrives on competition and diversity of opinion. Reconciliationists retort that they are not mandating a singular perspective but asking for honesty and respect among society’s members. What would better “embody the fundamental ideal of liberal democracy . . . [than the r]estoration of people, relationships, and the dignity of those whose human rights have been violated” (Appleby, P, 237)? Regarding the utopian charge, R. Scott Appleby argues that while reconciliation seeks to build community it “does not ask people to abandon the particular in deference to the universal” (in P, 233; Wells, P). Moreover, reaching into a different “toolkit” by applying “theological principles and religious practices” to the challenge of creating peaceful politics in previously violent societies is especially appropriate

when those polities are actively seeking to establish truth and promote responsibility and understanding (Appleby, P, 234, 224).

Perhaps the most significant accusation philosophical liberals have levied against reconciliation is that restoring relationships through repentance and forgiveness is not the purview of states or collectivities (Philpott, P, 26–29; Villa-Vicencio, B, 69; Torrance, P, 69–71). Liberals have contended that (a) only individual victims can pardon their victimizers and (b) forgiveness can be neither a communal nor public act. With murder, no one alive has the right to forgive, and if forgiveness is personal, then communities have no role to play. Thus, traditional approaches leave the horror of the past to individuals to address, and typically, little has been done. Reconciliationists argue, however, that violence creates many kinds of injured parties, not just those that are killed or directly hurt, but all their loved ones, as well as the social fabric (Llewellyn, B; Villa-Vicencio, B). Therefore, since the community—even the nation—is harmed, it can and should be involved in a process of taking responsibility, seeking forgiveness, and promoting reconciliation. In fact, Reconciliationists remind readers, states have accepted responsibility for abuses and asked for forgiveness in the past (Wolterstorff, P, 101–06), as the U.S. government’s apologies and compensation to Japanese Americans interned in camps attests (Amstutz, P, 164). Doubters about the importance of collective repentance and forgiveness should consider how Japanese unwillingness to apologize for behavior during World War II, shun a notorious shrine where war criminals are interred, or admit conscripting foreign “comfort women” affect East Asian states.

Advocates of healing insist on the primacy of reconciliation in peacebuilding *politics* (Llewellyn, B; Villa-Vicencio, B; Philpott, P; Torrance, P). This process begins with unearthing the truth, or more accurately, multiple truths, because knowledge of what happened is essential to restoring dignity as well as to promoting responsibility and understanding (Borer, B, 21–22). All need to be clear about how and at whose hands different people suffered, as well as about how some bravely rejected and sought to overcome the inhumanity. These truths move the project of repentance, forgiveness, myth-making, and, therefore, reconciliation forward. As several authors note, a “truth” that is partisan or one-sided will only fuel the conflict (Nesiah, MH, 379–80; Wilson, MH, 400). Moreover, since the old narratives typically served the conflict, the state must develop a new myth, one that is inclusive and reflects multiple truths (Abu-Nimer and Kaufman, MH; Bell, MH; Wells, P; Appleby, P; Kritz, CHA). The goal of this narrative is to bring the previously disparate and hostile communities together, undermining and replacing the past myths that sustained the hatred and carnage. Reconciliationists acknowledge that truth commissions or tribunals need to be carefully constituted if such mechanisms are to promote peace (Nelson, MH; Nesiah, MH; McAdams, P; Amstutz, P; Mendez, B).

In contrast to Traditionalists, Reconciliationists embrace the notion of “positive peace,” “a self-sustaining system of non-violence and justice.” To achieve such conditions, citizens’ basic needs must be met. These requirements not only include adequate living conditions but also respect for human dignity and the recognition that society is generally just (Mertus and Helsing, MH, 9, 3). Moreover, attempting to eliminate violence without achieving justice will likely mask resentments, which will ultimately resurface as conflict. Therefore, Reconciliationists argue that achieving justice is essential for peace.

The importance and challenge of realizing justice in societies that are recovering from violent abuses is enormous. Reconciliationists note, however, that justice is more than simply holding people accountable for their transgressions and achieving retribution. Instead, they advocate a restorative path. According to Jennifer J. Llewellyn,

justice understood restoratively is fundamentally concerned with *restoring relationships* harmed by wrongdoing to ones in which all parties enjoy and accord one another equal dignity, respect and concern. Restorative justice understands wrongdoing in terms of the resulting harms: restoring relationships requires addressing the harm(s) experienced by all the parties involved in wrongdoing. . . . (B, 91) [emphasis added].

Llewellyn and others are quite aware that societies are neither literally *re-storing* relationships between all individuals nor *re-turning* to a *status quo ante* where identity conflict characterized inter-group relations, but *reconstituting* society (B, 92–93). As she explains, “The term ‘restore’ thus acknowledges the extent to which human beings are intended, by their very nature, to exist in ‘right’ relationships with one another” (B, 93). Proponents of restorative justice, then, claim that societies need to be made “whole,” “even where wholeness is no longer part of [the] historical consciousness” (Villa-Vicencio, B, 62). As Mark R. Amstutz explains, restorative justice “emphasizes the transformative subjective factors that impair community, such as anger, resentment and the desire for vengeance” (P, 167).

Truth and justice, then, are central to post-settlement healing, which Reconciliationists see as the only way to a long-lasting peace. A full accounting of crimes, admissions of responsibility and regret, and meaningful punishment help to put a society on the path to mutual understanding. Reconciliationists understand, however, that healing cannot be coerced. The state cannot “make” offenders sorry, but it can compel them to face their victims and treat them with respect. Similarly, victims cannot be forced to forgive; however, if those who were harmed can accept the humanity of their victimizers, then reconciliation is served. While the hope is that in time, reformed inner states are possible, the

practices and goals of the *policy* of reconciliation entail public acts of responsibility and consideration.⁹

Reconciliationists acknowledge that “understanding” might appear to let perpetrators off with too little punishment. In response, they maintain, first, that they believe offenders owe a moral debt but that compensation need not be an “eye-for-an-eye.” Second, Reconciliationists argue that some leniency is worthwhile, especially when it serves the greater goal of exposing the worst offenders. For those involved in the “banality of evil,” equivalent retribution is unnecessary because shame is a real punishment that helps to restore balance by demoting perpetrators in the social hierarchy while rehabilitating victims for having nobly endured or unjustly died (Torrance, P, 61–64). Third, according to Reconciliationists, meeting offenders with hostility and retribution undermines the principal project of learning what happened, convincing victimizers to take responsibility, and promoting mutual understanding between tormentors and their victims (Torrance, P, 78). Thus, Reconciliationists believe that restorative justice helps societies to achieve integrity by promoting accountability and fairness and restoring the dignity of individuals.

Since justice is so essential to their vision of peace, Reconciliationists are strongly committed to enhancing and protecting human rights. Unlike Call, however, Reconciliationists raise some questions about how and how much ordinary crime is a problem in post-accord states. Roger MacGinty argues that because the war-torn state lacked legitimate authority, offenses were underreported. After agreement, figures are higher for multiple reasons: People feel more comfortable reporting crime; the global War on Terror contributes to governments’ desire to label and distort activities as “terrorism” or “organized crime;” the police and the media have more freedom and time to discover and investigate crime; inflated expectations about peace create more disappointments and reports; and, opponents of settlement trumpet law-breaking as a way of undermining the accord (D, 107–10).

In general, Reconciliationists worry less about crime except as it affects *personal security*. This view of security is related to their understanding of peace, which, we have seen, is linked to needs satisfaction and justice. The vulnerability of citizens to dangers and threats from multiple sources in society troubles Reconciliationists, who generally advocate state intervention to address these problems (Gamba, D; Fitzsimmons, C; Delaet, B). These calls for action extend to the international level: Reconciliationists contend that the global community has a “responsibility to protect,” which obligates intervention to prevent genocide

9. Christopher Cuneen, “Reparations and Restorative Justice: Responding to the Gross Violation of Human Rights,” in *Restorative Justice and Civil Society*, ed. Heather Strang and John Braithwaite (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 83–98.

and uphold human rights of abused people throughout the world (Weiss, MH, 212–14; Said and Lerch, MH, 129).

Thus the fundamental insights of Traditionalism—the centrality of institution- and coalition-building—and Reconciliationism—the need for societies and individuals to undergo truth telling, acknowledgement, and rewriting the national narrative—provide different perspectives on the meaning of peace and security and their relationship to justice as well as on the goals of the post-settlement process. For Traditionalists, the path to a stable future is through well-designed state structures that have the power to act on the territory and can assure fairness. Such a state, by keeping societal conflict non-violent and offering the same basic opportunities to all individuals, will gain support from multiple constituencies and will become consolidated in the post-settlement period. Managed conflict, underpinned by procedural fairness, will provide stability and undermine violence. This favored circumstance will achieve security—the absence of violence—on the condition that the past is generally forgotten. Reconciliationists argue, on the other hand, that institutional competence and capability cannot occur first. Society and individuals must be healed through a process that exposes truths about the past and encourages people to come to terms with their own victimization and brutality and with the ways in which society systematically privileged some and harmed others. Unless history is confronted, its wounds will fester and contaminate post-accord politics. Reconciliationists seek a broader peace that includes tolerance and respect as well as personal security and justice for all. When progress is made on this project, then states can institute adequate reforms to structure and guide peaceful post-settlement politics.

Bringing Reconciliationism to the Fore

Ironically, the field of post-accord studies has often been uncomfortable analyzing and advocating for peace, broadly defined. As Appleby has noted, peace and the understanding between warring peoples that would underpin it have seemed too utopian for many social scientists to examine (Appleby, P, 223). The failure of institutional arrangements derived from “realistic” conflict management policies in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, and Israel-Palestine shows the need for new solutions that directly address the hatred, pain, and misunderstanding that years of violence have produced. Traditionalists are correct in emphasizing state effectiveness and the rule of law. But those reforms are insufficient. Few societies that have reached settlements have been able to consolidate peace. Some Traditionalists would attribute these failures to institutional flaws, while Reconciliationists would reply that post-accord states are incapable of constructing fair and effective institutions. Some communities typically fear the power of the state, and can often block appropriate reforms. In

these imperfectly structured societies, the consolidation of peace is easily derailed; spoilers have enormous power, elites seem incapable of resisting the temptation to demagoguery, and citizens fall back into old hatreds. The violence in Iraq and Israel-Palestine and the 2006 Bosnian elections, in the aftermath of failed attempts to implement state-strengthening reforms, are but three excellent examples that demonstrate how a focus on “good” institutions is problematic. Such structures only develop when animosity has been sufficiently defused.

Reconciliationists argue that societies and individuals require explicit projects for healing. These advocates of repairing the social fabric know that promoting truth telling and reconciliation are not easy strategies; moreover, regimes can abuse these processes and create additional victims. Yet, given the failures of the Traditionalist analysis, a better approach would be to examine how and to what extent Reconciliationism provides an accurate description and explanation of, as well as prescription for, the post-settlement process. Essential to this research would be to assess truth-telling and reconciliation mechanisms.

According to Reconciliationists, “good” truth-telling processes—ones that uncover contextualized, non-partisan truths—help lay the foundation for reconciliation by encouraging offenders to come forward and express regret. The procedure also helps victims regain dignity and may allow them to forgive perpetrators. The empirical question is whether societies that have institutionalized such practices are progressing on this path. Moreover, to what extent has finding out what happened really advanced healing in a society? Critics argue that forgetting the horrors is a better strategy; they say social conflicts typically fade with memories and as new generations grow up with no recollections of the past. Rehashing what has occurred only stokes resentments. Thus, Traditionalists emphasize that achieving an efficacious political system will serve peace, as the monotony of “normal” democratic politics will dampen old hostilities. Other skeptics, like Rosalind Shaw, argue that Reconciliationists’ faith in the healing power of truth reflects Christianity and Freudian psychology, which are rooted in Western cultures but foreign to others. She contends that for many peoples, leaving the past alone is far more therapeutic. Other scholars challenge Shaw’s contentions. David B. Burrell argues that all the Abrahamic religions (Judaism and Islam, in addition to Christianity) share elements that can help their adherents embrace truth, forgiveness and reconciliation (P 113, 119, 124), and Shari Eppel contends that people in Zimbabwe, not members of the cultural West, benefited from the exhumation and reburial of disappeared loved ones. Survivors needed the spirits of their relatives to be at rest and, therefore, were traumatized until the bodies could be properly disposed. As Eppel notes, these acts were the literal application of psychological notions about unearthing trauma and healing its victims (Eppel, B, 266–67, 285).

Thus, an exploration of truth could examine whether perpetrators and victims in societies with truth-telling procedures are more reconciled than those in similar states that lacked practices for uncovering what happened. Currently, much of the Reconciliationist work is normative, and research that traces this empirical process at the grassroots level would be quite valuable. In these analyses, scholars would need to show that truths actually helped to restore the dignity of and sense of community among ordinary people and that changes were not simply the beneficial consequence of time. Moreover, assessing the universality of the power of truths is important. Shaw claims that reconciliation is more likely to work in Christian and Western societies, while Burrell and Eppel assert that its applicability is far more widespread. Must the idea and practice of truth and reconciliation have cultural resonance for the process to succeed?

Another priority for the Reconciliationist agenda should be to focus more on the elite politics of the healing process, examining precisely how and why some societies undertake and make progress toward reconciliation while others do not. In particular, the role of leadership seems very important. In the reviewed texts, few authors examine how prominent political officials help create a post-settlement climate that promotes healing. Exceptions include Timothy Sisk (D, 138) and John Darby, who argues that leaders “harness” “public outrage” when spoilers try to undermine peace processes (D, 153). Others have specifically noted the important role of Desmond Tutu on South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Amstutz, P; Torrance, P). But where are the leaders, like Tutu, in other post-settlement societies? Are they “missing” because they do not share his faith, or do other institutional, social, cultural, or individual characteristics explain their absence? Moreover, few scholars have studied how and why top national leaders have engaged in (or failed to embark upon) the essential myth-making process. Is this, paradoxically, only a task that grassroots organizers can realize (Wells, P; Abu-Nimer and Kaufman, MH; Bell, MH)?

Perhaps the institutional constraints on cross-community cooperation in post-settlement societies are simply too much for high-level officials to overcome. Uncovering the links between domestic and international obstacles or incentives to transformative leadership is another area for Reconciliationist research. Such investigations on the domestic level can build on the copious Traditionalist work addressing state structures, but these efforts should look specifically at how institutional arrangements impede or promote *reconciliation* across the previous divides. Like the domestic arena, the international community could also be a source encouraging or undermining cooperation. Some have already noted the important role of the international community in establishing “good” truth-telling mechanisms (Wilson, MH), and more needs to be learned about how international inducements and pressures can promote, as well as hinder, the reconciliation project. For instance, the European Union and NATO recently

sought to encourage reform in Bosnia by promising associate membership in these organizations in return. Not only did these inducements fail to bring about the required restructuring, but communal tensions actually increased as a result of the reform process. Thus, improved understanding of the impact of external pressures is an important line of inquiry.

Lastly, researchers need to examine the concept and endeavor of national myth-making. While scholars have shown how discourses are used to divide peoples,¹⁰ Reconciliationists need to convince skeptics that new myths can be constructed and that these stories can unite. Investigating the process through which these narratives are developed and disseminated seems essential to the Reconciliationist agenda. Central to understanding the receptivity of societies to new myths are domestic institutions that inculcate tolerance, thereby supporting human rights and reconciliation. But contributors to these volumes spent little time on organizations that would seem to have an enormous role to play, particularly the educational system¹¹ and the media. Both of these, along with leaders and civil society organizations, are essential for propagating and legitimating the new national myth that Reconciliationists deem so important. The military and police can also be places where the state can impart appropriate values to individuals.¹² Thus, research on the development of inclusive and healing national discourses and the process through which populations accept the new stories would be quite compelling.

In sum, more political scientists who are interested in peacebuilding need to pay attention to and investigate further the logic and assertions of the Reconciliationists. These six books, in revealing the similarities and distinctiveness of the schools' positions, acknowledging the past marginalization of Reconciliationism, and suggesting the power of its policy prescriptions, indicate that a Reconciliationism-inspired research agenda will be a rewarding path for theorists and practitioners alike.

10. See David Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity and Justice in Bosnia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998) and Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

11. An exception is Lord and Flowers, MH.

12. My point is different from Call's stress on security sector reform, as I am suggesting that the state has the opportunity to instill desired values in people who are serving in its security forces.