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Anomie and Violence in Indonesia and Timor-Leste, 1997–2009

John Braithwaite

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Abstract The Indonesian social system began to disintegrate in 1997. In the aftermath of social collapse, many forms of state crime, organized crime, terrorism, ethnic violence, religious violence, assassinations and other political violence escalated. An anomie theory interpretation is offered of this rise and the subsequent fall of a complex of serious crime problems. Security sector reintegration, reintegration of perpetrators and reconciliation (without truth) played important parts in enabling the rebuilding of institutions of security.

Keywords Indonesia · Timor-Leste · Anomie · Violence · Reconciliation

Collapse

The Indonesian economy suffered more than any other from the Asian Financial Crisis beginning 1997. Financial collapse was followed by collapse of the political order in 1998, then progressive unraveling of the social order for regulating violence between 1998 and 2001. Amidst horrific violence and the razing of most of the infrastructure of society, Timor Leste seceded from Indonesia as an independent nation in 1999.

This essay interprets the violence of the late 1990s and early years of this decade in Indonesia as a product of anomie. Yet it seeks to summarize how that society transcended the sense of normlessness it suffered as the old regime of President Suharto collapsed and a democratic transition began to consolidate. As anomie subsided, so did violence of many kinds.

From being the society with the biggest terrorism problem in the world in 2002 (Kivimäki 2007: 50)—a place thereafter lost to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan—it became the first Muslim society with a massive terror problem to get on top of it. Indonesia showed

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J. Braithwaite (✉)
RegNet, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific,
The Australian National University, Canberra, ACT 0200, Australia
e-mail: John.Braithwaite@anu.edu.au

a better path for solving it than a crude war on terror. It is hard to see Indonesia's peacemaking as having been accomplished by truth, reconciliation and tackling structural injustices as I advocated 8 years ago when Indonesian conflict was at its height (Braithwaite 2002: Chap. 6). Rather, our forthcoming book (Braithwaite et al. 2010) finds a great deal of peace to have been secured in Indonesia through non-truth and reconciliation. While political gameplaying by the security forces continues to be a risk to peace in Indonesia (especially in West Papua), in most parts of Indonesia the military moved from being a large part of the problem to being a big part of the solution.

Anomie

Theoretically, my argument is that between 1997 and 2004 Indonesia experienced a period of anomie (Durkheim 1897/1952)—breakdown of the regulatory order that secures the institutional order (the rules of the game). A military and a police that pursued their own interests by taking sides instead of preventing violence from all sides was one important part of that wider problem of anomie. Abuses of the security forces escalated communal defiance before finally helping to bring violence under control. A Mertonian reading of anomie theory that dissects legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures in a micro-macro way is found to be fertile for understanding the onset of these conflicts. Emulation (modeling) of strategies for seizing illegitimate opportunities contributed to the diffusion of violence. Remarkable accomplishments of reintegration of combatants from organizations like Laskar Jihad, in which religious leaders showed great leadership for peace was a feature of Indonesian peacebuilding. So was reconciliation through sharing power combined with sharing of work (*gotong royong*) for reconstruction.

Various books have documented how the Asian financial crisis ushered in the collapse of Suharto's regime in May 1998 (Aspinall 2005; Bertrand 2004; Rinakit 2005). What is relevant to this analysis is that all the conflicts of transitional Indonesia, plus the conflict in East Timor, escalated markedly after the Suharto regime collapsed, even though those in Aceh, Papua, East Timor and West Kalimantan had begun before the collapse. In addition to eight armed conflicts that each resulted in more than a 1,000 deaths, in many other parts of Indonesia there was an upsurge in ethnic and religious rioting, targeted mainly against Chinese, that incinerated many homes and businesses and cost thousands of lives (Lindsey and Pausacker 2005; Purdey 2006).

Recovery from Anomie

The anti-Chinese violence peaked first in 1998, when there were at least 34 serious outbreaks around the nation, falling to only 3 in 1999 (Purdey 2006: 219–220). While the structural inequality between Chinese and non-Chinese Indonesians was the widest in the nation, this ethnic conflict ended first because of widespread revulsion/shame/denial over the dozens (perhaps hundreds) of rapes of Chinese women that occurred in May 1998, the shock at the loss of around 1,200 lives in Jakarta, mostly of looters caught in fires, and the widespread belief that the riots, rapes and anti-Chinese hysteria had been provoked by pro-Suharto military leaders. For all kinds of violence combined, 1999–2001 were the worst years in Indonesia (Varshney et al. 2004: 23). Terrorist bombings by Islamic groups, particularly Jemaah Islamiyah, was the last form of violence to fall sharply. There was considerable decline in terror after both the first Bali bombing in 2002 and the second in

Table 1 Terrorist fatalities recorded in the Global Terrorism Database, University of Maryland and US Department of State 'patterns of global terrorism' report http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/s00s/pdf/index.htm (Downloaded 15 March 2009). These public databases exclude large numbers of terrorist incidents in Indonesia, but nevertheless portray accurately the pattern of their rise and fall

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
9	71	79	52	233	12	49	79	9	3	0

2005 (Table 1).[1] But 17 July 2009 saw nine deaths in Jakarta hotel bombings suspected at the time of writing to be revenge attacks for the execution of the Bali bombers by a Jemaah Islamiyah splinter group masterminded by Malaysian holdout Noordin Top, killed by the security forces in September 2009.

The years 1999–2002 seemed to many commentators to forebode a breakup akin to the Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia. Two leaders, President Habibie and President Wahid, lost their jobs in quick succession because they were unable to control the violence perhaps more than for any other single reason. Indonesian politics had also taken a radical Islamic turn away from its traditional commitment to preserving a secular state based on religious tolerance. In the 7 years after the fall of Suharto, Indonesia's terrorism problem worsened dramatically, as hard as its leadership attempted to suppress news of the extent of what was going on. Few nations have experienced anything like the simultaneous bombing during Christmas Eve services of 38 Christian churches across Indonesia in 2000. Only two of these incidents are recorded in the databases that generate the numbers in Table 1. Indeed, few of the Indonesian terrorism incidents known to me, even one incident where possibly 200 perished in a mosque bombed by Christians, are recorded in the international databases. This is because their main source is searches of wire services and 'major international newspapers', which took little interest in the remote islands of the Indonesian archipelago. Moreover, the international media were denied access to them by the army when they did show some interest at times of acute violence. Beyond terrorism, we look back with amazement at vividly filmic battles that were not reported by the international media, where thousands of Muslim fighters were arrayed against Christian 'armies' led by pastors leading the faithful into battle singing 'Onward Christian Soldiers'.

Beneath the surface during these terrible seven post-Suharto years, Indonesia was actually renewing itself rather than disintegrating. A corrupt, violent and anti-democratic military was at the heart of Indonesia's problems during this period, and still today. But, in 2004, the leader of the democratic reform faction in the Indonesian military, General Yudhoyono, became President in an election with an 84% voter turnout. That was the last year of the fighting in what had been the most deadly conflicts of the previous decade in Aceh and Maluku. Deeper reform dynamics were in play in Indonesia than simply the assumption of power by a non-corrupt President who was a democrat, a reformer of the military and a peacemaker. The lifting of authoritarianism had also engaged a renewal of Indonesian civil society and business. According to a Reporters without Borders index, Indonesia had acquired one of the freest presses in Asia and the Pacific (UNDP 2006). The devastating effects on the country of religious conflict energised widespread leadership from all faiths, but especially from Islamic *ulamas*, for religious tolerance. This is not to argue that suddenly all was rosy in Indonesia. One interviewee expressed the change as everything moving in the right direction now but far, far too slowly. President Yudhoyono is seen by many as pushing for deeper democracy and freedom. But he is also seen as weak and easily deflected by opposition from ultra-nationalists and military conservatives who he feared, with good reason, could unseat him. We see the effects of this weakness of the President in his failure to confront military and police violence and torture in West Papua (compared to the willingness he showed to do so in Aceh). Caveats aside, and Papua is a huge one, what we have seen in the past 6 years is a remarkable renaissance of peace, unity, tolerance, improved governance and democracy in Indonesia. While most of these changes have been painfully gradual, the decline in violence has been remarkably sharp. These are the key elements of the renaissance:

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[1] By 2005, public opinion poll support for *al Qaeda* had also fallen dramatically from support by 58% of the population in 2002. During the second Gulf war, Saddam Hussein was the most popular name for babies born in Indonesia (Kivimäki 2007).

- While few, if any, nations would have experienced more terrorist bombings than Indonesia between 1999 and 2002, the years since have seen a sharp decline, though the problem was still acute until 2005.
- For the seven conflicts in our forthcoming book (plus East Timor), we have seen a shift to positive peace in all but one, Papua, which at least has a (fragile) negative peace.[2]
- Ethnic rioting targeting Chinese homes and businesses has reduced to near zero from a remarkably widespread pattern of ethnic vilification in the 1990s (Purdey 2006).
- Indonesia had one of the highest number of ‘Recorded Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances’ by the Geneva Declaration (2008: 135) for the years 2000–2003, 43, declining to just 1 for 2004–2007 (though there were unrecorded cases in West Papua in this period). Like the terrorism numbers, this database gets the pattern right, but the absolute numbers are way too low (Hernawan 2008).
- The Indonesian homicide rate today of probably around 1 per 100,000 is lower than that in most continental European and Anglo Saxon societies, as is the imprisonment rate of 45 per 100,000. This is a big change from the 1970s and 1980s where unrecorded murders, particularly of citizens the military believed to be criminals were widespread, and when Indonesia maintained a vast carceral complex for unknown numbers of political prisoners. It is also a big improvement since a decade ago when people lived in acute fear of armed gangs in many parts of Indonesia.
- While corruption is still a very large problem in Indonesia, vibrant anti-corruption efforts escalated after 2004 that have included undercover and sting operations. Dozens of national leaders and many hundreds of local politicians have been prosecuted for corruption since then.[3]
- Notwithstanding sharp falls on the Jakarta stock exchange in the worldwide recession of 2009, the Indonesian economy had been recovering well before then (Hill 2007) and still grew strongly during 2009, its banking and other institutions renewed by improved private and public governance. An example has been institutional renewal of tax administration, which resulted in steep increases in voluntary compliance and in tax collected by 2008.

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[2] Negative peace means the absence of war in the *Peacebuilding Compared* project, while positive peace means a peace secured through commitment to the justice of the post-conflict institutional settlement [see Galtung (1969) for the original formulation]. And see in turn the foundations for this in the seventeenth century thought of the Dutch philosopher Spinoza: ‘Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice’.

[3] At the time of writing in 2009 there is concern that political support for tough corruption enforcement may be waning, with President Yudhoyono being publicly critical of sting operations against fellow politicians during the 2009 election campaign, for example.

- Democracy has become slowly yet progressively more deeply institutionalised. Indonesia shifted in a decade from being one of the least democratic countries in South-East Asia to perhaps the most democratic, along with its former province, Timor Leste. Dissent and freedom of the press is vibrant. Not only can elected national presidents, provincial governors and district *bupatis* be defeated at the next election without violence, but Indonesia has become an interesting experiment in bottom-up democratisation of development planning from the village and subdistrict levels upwards through the World Bank funded Kecamatan Development Program and the Indonesian government's *Musrenbang*. Most chapters of our forthcoming book describe the successes and limits of this new local participatory decision making in the part of Indonesia discussed in the chapter.

Amy Chua (2004: 293) opined in the final paragraph of her interesting book on how democracy can unleash violence against 'market-dominant minorities' (like the Chinese in Indonesia) that 'the results of democratisation in Indonesia have been disastrous'. Like many others, she reached a conclusion too soon. Democratic integration of 300 ethnic groups dispersed across 13,000 islands and building new institutions after four decades of autocracy are not overnight challenges. We can interpret such a sharp rise and steep fall in conflict in Indonesia before and after the millennium in anomie theory terms (Durkheim 1897/1952; Merton 1949). The Greek etymology of anomie is from 'a' (without) and 'nomos' (law). Norms is a much wider concept than law today: it means customary expectations of behavior that coordinate interactions with others. Anomie is instability resulting from a breakdown of the regulatory order that secures norms. We might also interpret the sharp rise in the size of the Indonesian underground economy at the end of the New Order (Wibowo 2001; van Klinken 2007: 49) in these anomie theory terms.

The source of anomie in many parts of Indonesia from the late 1990s was the collapse of Suharto's New Order in conditions of uncertainty created by the Asian financial crisis. Jacques Bertand's (2004: 5) analysis is that this was a 'critical juncture' in state development: 'when institutions are weakened during transition periods, allocations of power and resources become open for competition'. Jemma Purdey (2006: 203) articulated this in a slightly different way: 'many Indonesians interpreted *reformasi* [post-Suharto] as a new freedom to resolve injustices, perceived or real, by means of mass mobilisation'. In some contexts of anomie, violence became an effective form of competition. Institutions are a society's most embedded rules of the game. The situation in Indonesia in 1998 was that the old rules were swept away for a period. What the new rules of the game would be was up for grabs.

Merton (1949) gave anomie a specific meaning in terms of the structure of institutions. The unfettering of individuals and organizations from settled norms arises in conditions where there is a discrepancy between widely shared societal goals and the legitimate means to obtain them. Structural shifts in society prevent actors from achieving valued goals legitimately. So they experience strain to resort to illegitimate means of attaining those goals. Armed violence is one such illegitimate means. Merton's way of building on Durkheim is attractive here because what happened in Indonesia in 1997–1998 was both a rupture of the normative order and a rupture of the opportunity structure. Both were involved in the scramble for new kinds of illegitimate opportunities.

Anxiety and uncertainty about what the rules of the game would be in the new institutional order led to acutely defensive reactions to political events that might have been interpreted more benignly in other times. For example, among many Christians in Central Sulawesi, Maluku and North Maluku, Jusuf Habibie becoming president in May 1998 was feared to be the completion of an Islamic takeover of a formerly secular state (Sidel 2008). The reason for this interpretation was that Habibie had been the leader of the Association of Indonesian Islamic Intellectuals, whose mission had been to increase the influence of Islamic norms and values within the state, and political leadership by the faithful.

In some of our cases of armed conflict (Maluku, North Maluku, Central Sulawesi, to a lesser extent Aceh), though not others (Papua, West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan) anomie was mediated by a security dilemma. The valued goal at issue for village leaders was security for the village. The legitimate means to that goal was calling in protection from the security forces. Unfortunately, in a case like Maluku it was often the security forces that did most of the killing. Local Christian police were killing many Muslims and (mostly non-Malukan) military accounted for much of the slaughter of Christians. The security dilemma was that both Muslim and Christian villages wanted peace; yet Christians came to believe that unless they drove out Muslims first, Muslims would attack them, and vice versa. The blockage of legitimate means to security resulted in resort to illegitimate means—forming militias, making home-made weapons to attack neighbors, burn their homes to the ground and drive them out.

The security dilemma was in turn driven by security sector anomie. The Suharto regime had been forged by the military. When it collapsed, there were various factions within the military. Some generals wanted the military to step back from its political role and submit to democratically elected leaders. Others wanted to destabilize the emerging Indonesian democracy and reassert political control by the military elite. Others simply wanted to exploit the climate of instability to make money by demanding protection payments from frightened people, by selling weapons or ammunition. In Maluku there were even military snipers who sold their assassination skills to both sides. In short, when legitimate paths to power were blocked for the military, many seized illegitimate opportunities to recoup wealth and power.

Security sector anomie played a role in all of the conflicts in our forthcoming book (Braithwaite et al. 2010), and in East Timor as well, as did attempts by political opportunists of various kinds to impose new rules of the game in conditions where the old rules collapsed. Yet most regions moved through to the new millennium without any escalation of political violence. Three factors distinguish the regions where national anomie played out as regional violence: (1) regional grievances that were structurally deep; (2) leaders with an entrepreneurial determination to connect those grievances to an identity politics that could mobilize organizations and people to violence, and (3) security sector anomie sufficiently deep (in that locality) to accelerate the violence.

The Indonesian patterns of transitional violence fit the finding from quantitative studies that semi-democracies are more likely to suffer civil war than full democracies or autocracies (Esty et al. 1998; Hegre et al. 2001; Gurr 2000; Marshall and Gurr 2003: 19–20; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Mansfield and Snyder 2007). In a case like the initial outbreak of Kao grievances against the Makians in North Maluku (Braithwaite et al. 2010: Chapter 3), the state was 'neither democratic enough to reduce grievances by allowing greater participation nor autocratic enough to be able to suppress opposition during the early stages of rebellion' (Doyle and Sambanis 2006: 35). Indonesia also fits de Toqueville's ([1856] 1955: 182) hypothesis that 'Usually the most dangerous time for a bad government is when it attempts to reform itself' (see also Huntington 1991). Regime change triples the risk of civil war soon after the change, reducing to double the risk a year later (Hegre et al. 2001). In effect, Indonesia stumbled violently from being a stable autocracy to being an unstable semi-democracy. Ultimately, however, the resilience of its civil society and political leadership saw it through on the other side to become a society with good prospects of being a stable full democracy. It is not there yet and, at the time of writing, it faces the formidable challenge of surviving the 2009 world recession less violently than it did the 1997 Asian financial crisis. While 2009 saw another escalation of armed violence in West Papua, the 2009 national election campaign that re-elected President Yudhoyono was overwhelmingly peaceful and honest.

Our interviews suggest that after West Kalimantan erupted in 1997, anomie effects on conflicts were accelerated by modelling or emulation effects. The Central Kalimantan attempt at ethnic cleansing of Madurese involved considerable modelling of ethnic cleansing in West Kalimantan. The attempts of Muslims to cleanse Christians and vice versa in other locations also involved some emulation of provinces where this had happened and of Kalimantan. Demands for referenda backed by insurgency in Aceh and Papua involved considerable emulation of East Timor.

Age and Violence

In the inter-religious conflicts in Maluku, North Maluku and Central Sulawesi, when a security dilemma ensued from escalated fighting and house burning by semi-organized youth gangs, the age structure of the combatants changed.[4] When older men (and sometimes women) felt that the situation had deteriorated as their village descended into a dilemma of attack or be attacked, they became leaders of the conflict, organizing younger fighters into disciplined units and mobilizing the resources for the acquisition and production of weapons. In all of the cases that started with youthful fighting there were also older male political opportunists who saw leadership of organized combatants as a path to their personal political and economic ascendancy in a time when uncertain rules of the political game seemed to open up opportunities for opportunists. When a conflict becomes ripe for peacemaking as exhausted fighters find themselves in a hurting stalemate (Zartman 1985), we found the key players tend to become even older men and women. In Barron, Kaiser and Pradhan's (2004: 27) study of 4,872 outbreaks of local conflict across Indonesia, the presence of a female village leader was statistically associated with a lower level of conflict in rural areas. Religious and *adat* (customary) elder statesmen and women whose sermons pleading for peace pushed them to the margins of political influence when the conflict was hot were increasingly turned to as it cooled into a hurting stalemate. Again, an important role of the security forces, often not realised in these Indonesian conflicts, was to prevent such prophets of peace from being assassinated at the height of the tension.

Opportunity Theory

We saw earlier how in Robert K. Merton's (1949) institutional interpretation of anomie theory, when legitimate opportunities for achieving socially valued goals are blocked, there is strain to resort to illegitimate means. Cloward and Ohlin's (1961) elaboration of Merton says not only must legitimate opportunities be blocked, illegitimate opportunities for violence must also be open. So when the Kao ethnic leaders in North Maluku concluded that Makians so dominated the circuits of power in their province that civil servants, legislatures and courts would simply dismiss their grievances again and again, they concluded that legitimate opportunities were closed to them (Braithwaite et al. 2010: Chapter 3). They then had to decide that the illegitimate opportunity to drive the Makians from their lands was open. To conclude this, they had to weigh whether they could mobilize superior forces and arms to drive all the Makians into the sea and whether they would then have the political clout to ensure this new fact on the ground would be allowed to stand. They calculated rightly about the first aspect of the illegitimate opportunity as they completely razed all Makian villages on their traditional lands. But they miscalculated that their traditional support from the Sultan would allow this to stand. What happened was that the Makians managed to redefine the conflict as one between Christians (the Kao) and Muslims (the Makians) rather than the ethnic conflict it was over land and resources. The Makians projected the attacks on them as Christianization even though there were significant numbers of Muslims among the Kao forces.

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[4] Wilson's (2008) research on North Maluku, as discussed in Braithwaite et al. (2010), highlights the role of youthful masculinities, the pursuit of excitement in the onset of that armed conflict. Just as a demography of a youth bulge can be important to sharp upward movements in rates of common crime, so our systematic empirical work over time may show that youth bulges are associated with increased risks of armed violence, including in some of these Indonesian cases.

We have seen that the collapse of the Suharto regime closed off legitimate opportunities for many older elites, especially military elites. However, it also opened up many new illegitimate opportunities, especially because of the conditions of military and police anomie, which in some places left the security sector, or at least some factions within it, up for sale to the highest political bidder.

One of the illegitimate opportunities often supplied by the military was guns and ammunition. Arms are the most recurrently important part of the illegitimate opportunity structure for severe violence. The army often found it could expand its legitimate opportunities to acquire resources to fight an insurgency while also seizing illegitimate opportunities to make money by selling arms to the enemy. Hence, for example, in some cases it used intelligence operatives or double agents to organize a contact where the military and the insurgents would arrive at the same place at the same time, feign a fight by both firing in the air, then the military would retreat leaving behind guns or ammunition to be ‘captured’ by the insurgents in return for cash. This kind of classically anomic security sector crime happened in most, perhaps all of the conflict areas in the years immediately after the fall of Suharto. Laskar Jihad, the Free Aceh Movement and the Free Papua Movement were the combatant groups that benefited most from arms supplied by the Indonesian military, but other fighting groups also benefited in smaller doses.

International diasporas are important to constituting this part of the illegitimate opportunity structure for armed conflict. The quantitative literature shows that insurgent movements that have large diasporas of support in wealthier nations sustain more persistent insurgencies (Collier and Hoeffler 2001; Collier et al. 2005: 9). Such a wealthy diaspora is precisely what the Free Papua Movement lacks, but the Free Aceh Movement benefited considerably from international support from a moderately wealthy Acehnese diaspora a short boatride away in Malaysia. While Laskar Jihad received most of its arms from the military, there was almost certainly some funding from a far-flung Islamic diaspora that included Saudi Arabia.

Gerry van Klinken (2007) has made a particularly important contribution to understanding why some parts of Indonesia suffered more conflict than others around the turn of the millennium. This contribution is framed in opportunity theory terms here. Van Klinken aptly characterises a number of the Indonesian conflicts as ‘small town wars’. He focuses on the decentralisation reforms legislated in 1999 in Indonesia that subsequently shifted control to the local level of many formerly centrally controlled resources. It shifted a lot of both legitimate and illegitimate contestation, and a lot of corruption, from the national to the local level of politics. Van Klinken's imaginative empirical work reveals that armed conflict was most likely to erupt in provinces that experienced the most rapid deagrarianization. This is not quite the same as urbanization; it means declining dependence on agriculture as a result of penetration of town life into rural areas. West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, Aceh, Papua, Central Sulawesi, the Malukus and East Timor were also all provinces in the 1990s where the ratio of civil servants to non-agricultural workers was much higher than in the rest of Indonesia. So conflict broke out where economic opportunities were shifting to small towns and particularly into government jobs in those small towns.

In an environment where the rules of the game were up for grabs, there was often a no holds barred grab for political power in those towns of the Indonesian periphery. Some ambitious local politicians seized power by mobilizing violence against their opponents. Sometimes they both organized support for themselves and opposition to their enemies by mobilizing around religious or ethnic divisions. In many of these small towns religious and ethnic organizations were the only well formed organizations available for mobilization at a time when democratic parties had yet to become strong at the local level. So they were coopted to projects to seize local control and thereby distribute government contracts and government jobs to supporters. These political entrepreneurs 'managed to create a climate in which the only positive course of action was to support a district chief who belonged to their communal group' (van Klinken 2007: 143).

In West Kalimantan in particular van Klinken also identified a class dynamics in some of the power shifts that occurred. He pointed to the evidence that the lower middle class is unusually dominant in small towns and has more acute interests in small town politics than upper class elites whose gaze casts more to Jakarta. So we saw the lower middle class get behind projects of ethnic cleansing in West Kalimantan that enabled them to seize opportunities to control many legitimate businesses such as town transport and inter-town river transport (and to cartelize local pricing) and illegitimate businesses such as gambling, prostitution and human trafficking. We saw Malay organized crime groups get behind cleaning out the Madurese organized crime groups for the same reason. It was local politics by illegitimate means. In the late 1990s there was a wave of attempts to criminalize the state at the local level not in those localities where legitimate business opportunities remained plentiful, but in those where they were not, and where government employment and contracting opportunities were low hanging fruit. This seems to us the brilliant insight in van Klinken's interpretation of the pattern of armed violence. It is also important to note that van Klinken brings this conclusion together with the conclusions of those who identify a security dilemma in some of these cases: 'In each case ordinary people felt moved to action by the politics of fear, while local elites made their calculations on the basis of the politics of opportunity' (van Klinken 2007: 143).

We can read van Klinken's (2007) work as showing, as van Klinken (2007: 19) himself concludes from his review of the empirical research, that the explanation of ethnic and religious conflict is not to be found in the quantitative distribution of ethnic or religious fractionization (see also Barron et al. 2004; Mancini 2005).[5] Rather we read it as showing that, like resource politics, ethnic and religious politics matters to explaining violence to the extent that they open new illegitimate opportunities when legitimate economic and political opportunities close.

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[5] Barron et al. (2004) and Mancini's (2005) research shows, however, that areas with high unemployment, low human development index scores and differential child mortality rates between groups had more communal conflict and deadly violence in Indonesia.

The Military Opportunity Structure

At every juncture in the history of the Indonesian state, right up to the present, the military has been the most concentrated focus of collective political power. The sharpest decline in that political power, however, was experienced in the few years after the resignation of President Suharto, the very years when armed conflict seemed to presage the disintegration of the state. The Asian financial crisis caused most of the military's business interests to become unprofitable or insolvent (Human Rights Watch 2006: 14), decreasing the purchasing power of the military by 30% in the 1st year of the crisis alone (Bourchier 1999: 152). The nature of these business investments was so tied to Suharto's crony capitalism that they never recovered their former profitability. Budgets were pruned most in the far-flung regions of Indonesia where most of the violence occurred. It was here that the truncation of legitimate opportunities at first seemed so sharp that illegitimate opportunities quickly opened up for military officers working with provincial political entrepreneurs.

The decentralisation law reforms of 1999 created opportunities for the military to compensate for its loss of power in Jakarta by grabbing a large part of the action in far-flung districts of the nation. As power fragmented in Jakarta and the military became more marginal in the institutions of the capital, they no longer had a stake 'in defending a specific political regime, either at the centre or in the regions … Accordingly, the TNI provides security services to an individual power-holder rather than offering institutional support' (Mietzner 2003: 256). Whereas control of logging during the New Order had been franchised to Suharto cronies from Jakarta (McLeod 2003: 7), after 1998 countless local commanders in forested areas got into the illegal logging business. Smuggling was another lucrative area. When oil prices hit US $70 a barrel for the first time in the mid-2000s, global consumption of oil moderated in response to the market signal, yet it surged in Indonesia. The reason was that the Navy responded to the price signal by increasing its smuggling of oil purchased at the government-subsidised price, sold into the Singapore market at twice that price, then sold back to Indonesia a second time. Business regulatory challenges in Indonesia must be understood more than in other nations as challenges of the Minister for Defence rather than, as in this example, challenges simply of an anti-cartel, competition regulator or some other civilian regulator.

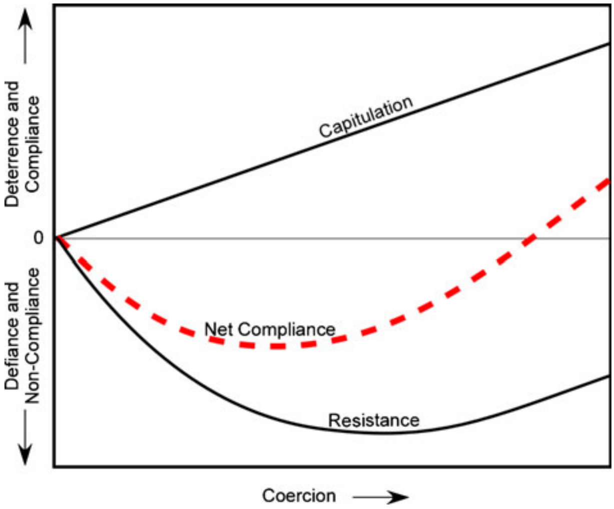
The Puzzle of Military Force and Defiance

In every conflict narrative in Braithwaite et al. (2010), the Indonesian security forces and the moves they made were at the heart of turns toward war and peace. In every conflict the security sector made mistakes or commited crimes that made the conflict worse. In Papua, Aceh and Maluku—the three most deadly conflicts—murder, brutality and human rights abuses by the military was a very major factor in conflict escalation. It was also a rather major factor in escalation in Central Sulawesi. In the six conflicts that have ended, the effective application of Indonesian military force was a critical factor in bringing it to an end. Aceh is perhaps the least convincing of these five critical contributions of central government force to the ultimate peace. In 2003 and 2004 Indonesian counter-insurgency was much more sophisticated, better resourced and effective than it had ever been in Aceh. It displaced GAM from control of most of the villages it had previously controlled and killed perhaps 20% of GAM fighters, leaving GAM so exhausted and devoid of hope of victory that the conflict became ripe for peace talks. The paradox was that those peace talks recognised that the military was a cause of, a solution to, and a risk factor for re-ignition of the conflict. So unarmed foreign soldiers and police came in as the Aceh Monitoring Mission to oversee the withdrawal of most Indonesian troops as part of the peace deal.

A peace agreement of this kind is probably what is needed if Papua is to achieve a positive peace. It is the seventh case where military force was a major causal factor in the conflict. But the military never became a causal factor in producing a credible peace. Yet tactics like sabotage attacks on Freeport pipelines were abandoned by the Free Papua Movement at various stages of the conflict because they feared a repeat of reprisals in the form of slaughter at villages where the insurgents were believed to have come from. In the context of Aceh, however, at least until 2003–2004, such reprisals against civilians had served only to strengthen the insurgency by increasing hatred of the military, defiance, and the will for revenge. Partly this was connected to a GAM recruitment strategy of training the sons of partisans murdered by the military. Partly it was about the centrality to Acehnese identity of vindicating the sacrifices of past generations who had struggled for *merdeka* (freedom) for Aceh from infidels and colonial oppressors.

But I hypothesise that something more general is needed to theorise the contexts where military force increases conflict and where it reduces it. Punitive military force almost always has a deterrent effect and almost always has a defiance effect which runs in the opposite direction (Fig. 1). The deterrent effect of the deployment of force reduces future violence; the defiance effect increases it. Our interviews with many combatants in both Papua and Aceh clearly suggest both deterrence and defiance effects were in play in both places; it was just that the deterrence effects were less and the defiance effects greater in Aceh (at least until 2004) for the reasons outlined above. We rely on the body of experimental psychological research marshalled by Brehm and Brehm (1981) that reveals the shape of the deterrence curve and the defiance curve that arises in response to the use of force. In short, there is an evidence base for arguing that, at low levels of force, defiance effects exceed deterrence effects, so force actually makes things worse. There is a point, however, at which force becomes so overwhelming that the deterrence effect exceeds the defiance effect. Past this point, force succeeds in crushing resistance.

Fig. 1 A theory of the effect of coercion on compliance as the net result of a capitulation effect and a defiant resistance effect. Based loosely on the experiments summarized by Brehm and Brehm (1981)



Redundancy in Peacebuilding Strategy

Five of the eight Indonesian conflicts we have studied (the exceptions being the separatist conflicts in Aceh, Papua and East Timor) were ethnic or religious riots or gang fighting of young men that escalated into organized armed conflict. This led in these five cases to temporary or permanent ethnic cleansing. Braithwaite et al. (2010: Chapter 3) discuss the evidence from cases of rioting and 'people power' throughout history that major political change never occurs in this way when the security forces are determined enough and organized enough in their use of force to clear the streets. Moreover, very few of the countless ethnic and religious riots that have occurred throughout history have resulted in the loss of dozens of lives, let alone hundreds or thousands (as in our cases), if the security forces act decisively to stop them before they get out of hand.

It does not follow from this that the efficient strategy for foiling ethnic conflict is simply to get the security sector working properly. Our narratives demonstrate that there are many reasons why the security sector fails to do its job. Sometimes these are more complex in their politics than the reasons for the ethnic conflict itself. Without tackling the political problems that produce security sector anomie, there can be no guarantee that the security sector will 'work' in nipping violent rioting in the bud before it escalates to civil war. Without grappling with the drivers of security sector grievance and greed, the peacemaker cannot count on the military and police to control the violence born of the grievance and greed of others. And where the military, or large factions within it, share the same grievances as the rioters, and seek to seize complementary entrepreneurial opportunities to make money out of the disorder, the military, far from supplying the solution, can become the largest part of the problem. This is what happened in Maluku.

Because empirically there are many reasons why security forces fail under pressure, it is best we limit the frequency with which they have to face down mobs throwing bombs. How much better it might have been in a number of our cases if the security sector had never been put to this test (and then failed it). How much better it might have been in North Maluku, for example, if management of the Newcrest gold mine had used its knowledge of what was happening on the ground around its mine to mobilise the preventive diplomacy that was within its power? Why rely on a fallible last line of defence when earlier lines of social defence are available? Redundant defence works best when radically different kinds of peacebuilding strategies are attempted. The theory is that redundancy in prevention works best when weaknesses of one preventive strategy are covered by strengths of another. This means societies should invest in resolving structural causes at the root of the conflict—like discrimination against an ethnic group—as well as proximate causes, and in addition they need effective community policing that smothers sparks that could ignite conflicts. As a last resort they need the capability to halt riots and out-gun rampaging militias. Societies strong at all these capabilities may be less likely to experience civil war. At least that is a hypothesis we explore in our empirical work.

Reintegration of Combatants

For all the major ethnic and religious conflicts in Indonesia, once the security forces were fully mobilised and did their job, combatants were eventually brought to heel. It was generally not necessary to offer combatants reintegration payments or other benefits to get them to put down their arms and return to their villages. In the case of Laskar Jihad, cutting off payments to them was part of a sophisticated strategy for persuading them to put down their weapons that included both the threat of arrest and persuasive appeals by their home and host religious leaders to end the jihad.[6] An exception was the longer-term hold-out jihadists in Poso who were given considerable reintegration benefits to abandon their bombing campaigns and other means of terrorizing Christians in Central Sulawesi. In the much longer running separatist insurgencies in Aceh and Papua, insurgents had normally been cut off from legitimate opportunities for many years living in the mountains and really wanted and needed reintegration support in exchange for their surrender. Free Aceh Movement and Free Papua Movement leaders who renounced the armed struggle were given real opportunities to share local power. In Aceh many former GAM leaders have become major figures in Aceh's shadow economy of government contracting, protection rackets and other semi-organized crime (Aspinall 2009). In West Kalimantan, leaders of Malayan semi-organized criminal gangs who led the seemingly permanent ethnic cleansing of Madurese in Sambas have taken over Madurese organized crime, becoming bigger, more organized criminals with stronger links to the local state.

There is some concern in Poso that terrorists who persisted with bombing campaigns until January 2007 and had a degree of integration into national and international Islamic terror networks were bought off with generous reintegration deals and are now corrupting government contracting in Poso, establishing themselves as organized criminals. The remarkably non-punitive, reintegrative approach in Indonesia to assisting serious terrorists to find opportunities in the worlds of legitimate work and business has had considerable success. Again families and religious leaders received sometimes generous financial assistance to assist in reintegrating terrorists into a life of non-violence.

At one level we have to be impressed at Indonesia's success in hugely reducing all forms of political, ethnic and religious violence, including terrorism. In international comparative terms, Indonesia has become a low violence, low terrorism society, falling from being one of the nations in the world most riven with deadly violence and terrorism in the years around the millennium. At its peak in 2002 Indonesian terrorism deaths accounted for one-third of global deaths due to terrorism (Kivimäki 2007: 50). It is hard to resist the conclusion that the utterly inconsistent policies of the Indonesian state in 'doing what it takes', with kindness and understanding, to persuade perpetrators of politicised violence to renounce it has played a significant role in securing their desistance. At the same time we have seen that not all of the perpetrators of political violence have been reintegrated into legitimate businesses. Some have been reintegrated into semi-organized crime and the underground economy, solving one social problem by contributing to another.

Reconciliation

As a research team who have long been interested in restorative justice, we came to the literature on the post-1990 conflicts struck by how little attention the question of post-conflict reconciliation has attracted. This when Indonesian approaches to reconciliation seemed so distinctive. For example, *gotong royong*, a core tenet of Indonesian philosophy meaning mutual aid or 'joint bearing of burdens' (Geertz 1983) is a widespread modality of healing. The military, whose actions in fuelling the conflict in Poso, and whose inactions in preventing it, caused so much resentment on both sides, participated widely in *gotong royong* by rebuilding Poso houses that had been lost to victims on both sides. One reason reconciliation has been less studied in Indonesia is perhaps that little of it has been done by national elites or even provincial elites. The politics of reconciliation that matters happens bottom-up as a micro-politics massively dispersed among thousands of leaders of villages, clans, churches, mosques and sub-districts.

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[6] Of course it would have been better had they been prevented from ever arriving in Christian areas as happened in 1999 when the first 300 of what was said to be a contingent of 800 Laskar Jihad were intercepted and sent back by police on their way to Manado in Christian Northern Sulawesi (source for this is an undated manuscript by David Henley, Mieke Schouten and Alex Ulaen entitled 'Preserving the Peace in post-New Order Minahasa').

Reconciliation is a word that might mean many things. We can see the point of view of some restorative justice scholars who think it a concept with too little precision (Parmentier and Weitekamp 2007: 109–144). Some research suggests that restorative justice may be more effective in changing hearts than in changing minds (Braithwaite 2002). This includes Californian research showing that after restorative justice encounters between Palestinian and Jewish people, empathy for the suffering of the other increases, but political views about the politics of Israel do not change. Changing hearts, changing minds, forgiveness, apology, helping one another through *gotong royong*, former enemies shaking hands and agreeing to put the past behind them; these are all very different things. Yet we do, perhaps unproductively, perhaps not, lump them together in a discussion of types of reconciliation.

There are two definite patterns to post-conflict reconciliation in Indonesia. One is that while the Indonesian legislature passed a law to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2004 (which was declared unconstitutional in 2006) and made this an important term in peace agreements with combatants, the post-Suharto pattern is of non-truth and reconciliation. At first we found the low level of political commitment to high integrity truth-seeking at all levels of politics and in most civil society networks disturbing, especially when non-truth meant not just forgetting, but lies. The most common kind of lie was widespread blaming of ‘outside provocateurs’ for atrocities that were mostly committed by locals against locals. To some degree the provocateur script came up in all of our cases, mostly, though not always, in contexts where its truth value for actually explaining events was limited.

I have been associated with the development of a theory of restorative justice where high integrity truth seeking is central and temporally prior to reconciliation (Braithwaite 2002, 2005). There is an alternative view that forgetting and moving on is an easier way for people to cope with atrocities and for political systems to rebuild after it. This is not the stage of this project to rejoin that debate. It is a time, however, for reflection on the Indonesian data and to question the centrality of a sequence from truth to reconciliation.[7] So how was reconciliation without truth accomplished in most of these cases?[8] Thousands of meetings across these conflict areas in the early 2000s were called reconciliation meetings. Some included only a dozen or so leaders, quite a number had hundreds of participants, some over a thousand. The most common number was more like 30 people who were key players from two neighbouring villages or the Christians and Muslims from the same village, who had been at war with each other not long before. Other meetings were called inter-faith dialogues, others *adat* rituals bearing various customary names for reconciliation meetings among the ethnic groups of that locality.

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[7] Maria Ericson identifies three elements in securing reconciliation:

- The establishment of safety, including bodily integrity, basic health needs, safe living conditions, financial security, mobility, a plan for self-protection, safe and reliable relationships, and social support.
- Remembrance and mourning, telling the story of one’s trauma.
- Reconnection with ordinary life (Maria Ericson, paraphrased in Daly and Sarkin (2007: 47).

On reflection, none of these require learning the truth of the root causes of the conflict.

[8] Papua and West Kalimantan are the cases where least reconciliation has been secured.

Sorrow, even remorse, for all the suffering was commonly expressed at these meetings. Tears flowed and there were often deeply sincere hugs of forgiveness. But no one ever, in any of the reports we received of these meetings, admitted to specific atrocities that they or their group perpetrated against the other. Most of the agenda was dominated by practical concerns of rebuilding and reintegration. Sometimes the ethnic group that ended with control of the village would invite back only a small number of trusted families of the ethnic other as a first step toward rebuilding trust. Much of the discussion at these reintegration meetings was with government officials and humanitarian agencies who attended to offer practical assistance with the resettling of people into their old villages. A common gesture of practical reconciliation was for a Christian community to start rebuilding a mosque they had burnt down or a Muslim community to start rebuilding a church they had razed. The cleansed group might be invited back to the village to see this for themselves as a sign of the sincerity of the desire for reconciliation and to give advice on how to do the rebuilding. Then they might do some work together on the project.

When they returned, their former enemies would often organize a moving welcome ceremony for them. They would be showered with gifts of food and other necessities from a steady stream of visits to their home by former enemies who, before the conflict, had also been friends and neighbours. The point of this summary narrative is not to say this always happened. There was also bitterness, unpleasant exchanges and people who were shunned. The point of our narrative research is to give a sense of how reconciliation without truth worked when it did work, which was quite a lot. When a mosque substantially built by Christian hands was opened, the Christian community would be invited and sometimes Christian prayers would be said inside the mosque. We also found rituals of everyday life to be important to reconciliation. Christians attending the funeral of a respected Muslim leader and embracing Muslims soon after the conflict were sites of reconciliation. So were Christians being invited to the celebration of Muhommed's birthday, Muslims to Christmas celebrations, to *halal bi halal* (a forgiveness ritual among neighbours that occurs at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan), and so on. In our interviews we were told of simple acts of kindness that were important for building reconciliation bottom-up—an *ulama* who picks up an old Christian man in his car and drops him at the market, the loan of a Muslim lawnmower to cut the grass of the Christian church. Peace zones where peace markets could operate to reopen old trading relationships were central to the trust-building of the *Baku Bae* reconciliation movement in Maluku. All these were included among the great variety of locally creative and meaningful ways that people reconciled without ever speaking the truth to one another about who was responsible for crimes.

Compared to governments in other post-conflict societies, the Indonesian state was also rather consistently generous in helping even those who had been the state's most ardent separatist enemies. They were given financial assistance to rebuild destroyed homes (of which there were hundreds of thousands across the conflicts in this book), schools, churches and mosques (of which there were thousands). State-supplied building materials helped greatly for poor people who wanted to show the ethnic other that they could be trusted and could live and work together again. For all this evidence of reconciliation being real and for all the statements in our fieldwork notes that informants believed it contributed greatly to what they expected to be the likelihood of long-term peace in their communities, our theoretical prejudice is still to believe that while non-truth and reconciliation is so much better than no reconciliation, truth and reconciliation would be an even more solid foundation for the future; truth, justice and reconciliation better still.[9] This is not only because of the contribution truth and justice can make to reconciliation, but because truth and justice can promote 'contentious coexistence' (Payne 2008: 4), a more resiliently democratic form of sociality.

In some ways the need for high integrity truth-seeking seems greater in Indonesia than elsewhere, given the centrality of the 'narrative of the broken promise' (Birchok 2004) to the motivation of many war-makers and the perception the Indonesian state has among its citizens of failing to make commitments that are credible. Peter King (2004: 69) more pointedly suggests that it is 'a moot point whether there is an Indonesian learning curve on Timor, Aceh and Papua—or only a forgetting curve'. Nevertheless, we can but listen to the local voices when they say that given their traditions, reconciliation without truth is what they can manage for now.

If non-truth is the first pattern of Indonesian reconciliation we have identified, *gotong royong* manifests the second. This has already become apparent in many of the examples above. Healing happens through sharing in community work projects, in building that mosque or school together. Indonesians are good at having fun when they work together; they bond through work more than Westerners do partly because the division of labour in village society is less divided, but also because sharing communal work and community welfare burdens is overlaid with cultural meanings of *gotong royong*. Back breaking work that must be done to rebuild might be seen as a burden on reconciliation in the West, infused with resentment as people struggle to do it. In Indonesia, it is much more a resource for reconciliation. Valerie Braithwaite (2009) thinks power sharing is a way to transcend disengagement and dismissive defiance more broadly. Perhaps *gotong royong* offers prospects of a different form of re-engagement through doing, through sharing in work rather than sharing in power.

For some village folk who have limited interest in sharing even local political power, there can be a kind of empowerment through work, in deciding where and how the mosque will be rebuilt. This may be confidence-building and ultimately commitment-building by other (rural Indonesian) means, especially when the military also joins in the *gotong royong*, as it did from Aceh to Poso to Papua. Power sharing and work sharing together enable a dual assault on post-conflict disengagement and game playing. To make this more concrete, a village forum envisions what their village would look like in 20 years if they chose to use the planning resources they are empowered to spend to build a bridge at a particular spot. That is what they then decide to spend their local infrastructure money on. Then, together, in a spirit of *gotong royong*, with some outside engineering help, they build it. Deciding together and doing together may weave a stronger fabric of peace.

The intertwining of sharing power and sharing rebuilding work through *gotong royong* that we can take to be lessons of reconciliation in Indonesia may also be important as means of restoring dignity. All our Indonesian cases pulsate with assaults on peoples' dignity as drivers of conflict. Talk to fighters who are Acehnese, Papuan, Dayak, Madurese, Kao, Laskar Christus or Laskar Jihad and one is struck by the way they see their armed struggle as a stand for the dignity of their people, their faith, dignity that had been trampled under the feet of their enemies. Indeed we can conceptualise many of these wars as moral panics that construed colonising, Christianizing or Islamizing others as folk devils. The moral panics led those folk devils to strike back at their stigmatization (Cohen 1972). We give dignity back to people who feel a loss of it when we agree to share power with them and when we pitch in to work with them on projects that they are empowered to shape and that they care about more than we do. We hope our readers will learn something about the politics of indignity and the reconciliatory politics of dignity from our telling of this recent history of Indonesia.

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[9] The justice enforcement effects we have found also deepen rather than resolve the puzzles of truth, justice and reconciliation. North Maluku, like Bougainville in the second volume of *Peacebuilding Compared*, is a case where everyone involved in the conflict was amnestied, a condition for peace demanded by militia leaders. A contrast is Central Sulawesi where there were a considerable number of criminal prosecutions and even executions for war crimes, but where the feeling on both sides was that scapegoats rather than the major elite criminals of the conflict were put on trial. With the exception of thousands of arrests of GAM members in Aceh during that war (almost all amnestied in compliance with the Helsinki peace accord), impunity was overwhelmingly the justice norm across these conflicts and was mostly accepted by elites and ordinary people alike as part of the spirit of a non-truth and reconciliation that put the horror behind them and moved on.

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