

Post violence as a sociological issue*

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Abstract

Two discourses dominate analyses of peace processes and post violence adjustments, those of governance and human rights. Where sociological analysis is undertaken it is focused on issues of truth and justice and tends to be restricted to discussion of truth recovery processes and restorative justice. This paper distinguishes between three types of post violence society and identifies the impact of relational and spatial closeness on their ability to deal with adjustment problems in the post violence setting. It provides a schematic overview of one type, where peace accords attempt to balance relational distance with spatial closeness, in order to draw a much broader picture of the sociological dynamic that accompanies the ending of communal violence. Its central argument is that this sociological dynamic is neglected with the attention given to governance and human rights issues but that the successful management of this sociological dynamic in this one type of post violence society is equally important to its future stability.

Key words:

Violence, post-violence, peace processes, genocide, governance

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Introduction

Violence has long been a feature of sociological interest, manifested in concern with domestic violence, violent crime, crowd behaviour, terrorism, war, racial conflict and ethnic cleansing, among others. Some forms of violence are interpersonal, others communal. It is the latter with which we are concerned here, and specifically the sociological aspects of the transition from communal violence towards a measure of peace. This offers sociology the opportunity to reflect less on the dynamics of communal violence and more on the transition process that has brought it to an end. This paper begins to chart the parameters of a sociological category it calls 'post violence societies'. After identifying some of the different kinds of post violence society, it focuses on one type, in which peace accords have been developed as a strategy for managing the fissures that previously provoked communal violence. However, peace accords tend to reduce the transition process to the introduction of good governance and human rights law. While these measures are important, it is argued that an exclusive focus on them neglects several social issues equally vital to the transition process, and the paper begins to sketch an outline of these issues by drawing on the experience of several countries that exemplify this type of post violence society.

Communal violence and post violence societies

Communal violence is epitomised by ethnic, 'racial' and religious-cultural clashes within societies and thus differs from conventional war between nations, although communal violence can spill over into neighbouring states and provoke conflict between nations. Communal violence features as a critical dimension of some of the major developments

in sociology. It forms an essential part of theories that seek to deconstruct two Enlightenment meta-narratives, that of social progress, showing itself in studies of genocide and the holocaust as examples of social regression in advanced modernity (see Bauman 1989), and progressive rationality, which focuses on how we objectify the 'truth' about mass killings and atrocities (see Cohen 2001). It also features in sociology's concern with globalisation, where communal violence is often linked to local forms of resistance, in which the survival of what Giddens (1996: 15) calls 'little traditions' as a resistance to global cultural hegemony can reinforce violent conflicts over such cleavages as 'race', ethnicity and religious fundamentalism. More recently it has become part of the discipline's venture into International Relations as an extension of historical-comparative sociology, to provide sociological analyses of communal violence in the new post-Cold War international order (see for example, Mann forthcoming; Shaw 2003). Whether or not it is thought of as new kinds of war wrought by globalisation or as older conflicts appropriating new forms (Kaldor 1999), in the contemporary world there are many societies racked by communal violence. If violence is a mark of late modernity, as Giddens contends (1996: 60-4), or of the clash of advanced civilisations as Huntington argues (1996), it appears also as a feature of societies at different stages of development, wrenching apart post-colonial societies, former Communist countries, advanced industrial societies and countries rapidly modernising.

However, there are a number of societies that have progressed from violent communal conflict to a measure of peace and stability, with much reduced levels of communal violence. We can call these 'post violence societies'. These are social formations that have undergone a transition from communal violence to relative non-

violence. The transition is effected by profound social and political changes which differ in each case (for an analysis of the factors behind the Northern Irish and South African peace processes see Brewer 2003). Post violence societies are characterised by having a policy agenda directed to the maintenance of peace and to the management of the risks surrounding the outbreak of renewed communal violence, such as that mobilised by warlords for whom the continuance of conflict maintains their local control and patronage or what Darby (2001) calls 'spoiler violence' deliberately intended to undermine the peace agreement. Hayes and McAllister (2001: 901) make the point that there is a naïve assumption that where violence is a consequence of problematic politics, once a permanent political settlement is reached, communal violence is thought to irrevocably and swiftly disappear. In the short to medium term however, post violence societies have to continue to work hard at the maintenance of non-violence.

There are too few of these cases to yet formulate a definitive sociological typology but it is clear that post violence societies are of different kinds. We can distinguish three, depending on the means by which peace was primarily achieved, which for the sake of alliteration can be called 'conquest', 'cartography' and 'compromise'. Although there is currently a plethora of peace accords attempting to solve communal conflicts around the world (see INCORE 2000 for the details of most of these, including their various iterations), there is no inevitable progression toward compromise as the organising principle of post violence societies. However, the focus here is primarily on this type because of the greater problems these post violence societies face in managing the transition process. Nonetheless, the other types are worth briefly mentioning.

Military conquest is normally associated with conventional wars between nations, but there are some historical instances where internal communal violence has been successfully terminated by conquest, such as colonial and civil wars. (A sub-type might be those conflicts settled by military intervention under the auspices of the United Nations, but this is not addressed here; for analyses of UN peacekeeping see Chesterman 2001; Findlay 2002; Ramesh and Thayer 1995.) Post-violence adjustments after conquest tend to be easier where there is relational closeness between belligerents, such as the American and Spanish civil wars or the denazification process in post-war Germany, since there are few differences other than the allegiance around which the conflict was based, although this should not be disparaged (the idea of relational distance is taken from Black 1976: 40-6, who uses it in his discussion of legal relativity). Post-violence adjustments after conquest are more problematic where relational distance is greater (as with the ethno-cultural and religious differences between settlers and the indigenous population). In these instances, conquest usually succeeds at the cost of the cultural annihilation of the vanquished or their effective subjugation. Many forms of military conquest therefore impose peace in the short term only by coercion, which is sustained in the long term by social practices, belief systems and power structures that continually reproduce the subjugation and marginality of the 'other'. Where this is not so, these societies become susceptible to renewed communal violence in the long term around decolonisation or the competing claims of communal groups, although there are a few examples of colonial conquest where the cultural annihilation has been so complete as to almost obliterate memory of the history of communal conflict, such as North and South American treatment of indigenous Americans or the fate of the Aboriginal peoples in

Australia (Barkan 2000 argues that these cases represent some of the less obvious instances where reparation should be used by 'guilty nations' to address historical injustices). Nonetheless, conquest is rarely the organising principle of post violence societies in the modern world (except for UN military intervention) because it contravenes human rights principles in an international order where human rights constitute the dominant discourse (there is an immense literature on this point in law and international relations, but for recent sociological contributions see Sjoberg, Gill and Williams 2001; Woodiwiss 2002).

Other post violence societies are peaceful now only because cartographers have redrawn national borders and new states or devolved regions have developed as a way of dealing with the social cleavages that formerly provoked communal violence. This suggests that post-violence adjustments are perceived to be easier where former adversaries are separated spatially. Accordingly, both partition and federal devolution are popular post-violence strategies for separating warring factions. However, the historical evidence for the effectiveness of partition is mixed; sometimes it works, as in Cyprus, on other occasions it merely delays the eruption of communal violence later, as in the partition of Ireland, or transforms it eventually into conventional wars between nations, as with the India/Pakistan conflict. Nonetheless, imposing spatial separation continues as a strategy to eliminate problems of adjustment after the conflict. The new Balkan states are good examples, with new borders attempting to keep apart various ethnic blocs, and partition is proffered as the basis on which the Palestine and Israel conflict can be solved with the 'two states' road map. Kaufmann (1996, 1998) has made the strongest case for partition as a post-violence strategy, arguing that conflicts that have been based on

communal identity and which resulted in significant civilian casualties require physical separation of the factions.

However, many communal conflicts around the world do not involve belligerents with relational closeness or who can be separated spatially, ensuring that compromise functions alongside conquest and cartography as motifs to define types of post violence society. Indeed, it is this kind that offers sociology the most profound challenge, for, as yet, peace processes are not central to the discipline and this type of post violence society has the more difficult task in managing the transition since problems of post-violence adjustment are not wiped away in the short term by cartography or conquest.

The third type of post violence society is one that has kept its territorial integrity and has had to find ways of managing internally the social cleavages that formerly caused communal violence through peace accords in which second-best solutions have been negotiated as part of a compromise deal. Peace settlements however, are not always effective ways to stop communal violence. As MacGinty and Wilford wrote (2003: 5), peace processes are universally fragile affairs, rarely prospering over the long term without active public support. Wallensteen and Sollenberg (2000) estimate that of 110 armed conflicts between 1989-99 only 21 were ended by peace agreements and only a minority of those survived. It is easy to understand why: maintaining territorial integrity is itself problematic for spatial closeness is preserved often in the face of continued relational distance. Cultural differences of 'race', religion, ethnicity or national allegiance remain despite the peace accord and are open to manipulation by those who seek to retain their local power and patronage. The transition process in this kind of post violence society thus involves implementing peace settlements that eliminate the communal

violence while allowing the reproduction of the cultural differences and relational distance that formerly provoked it. South Africa is the prime example of where this is succeeding; Northern Ireland of where it threatens the peace accord. The effect of relational distance is even more problematic when the state is weak, since this sustains the patronage power of warlords who use communal violence as an economic opportunity (Keen 1998; Braithwaite 2002: 180-4). This suggests that this type should be sub-divided according to the viability of the state, since the compromise peace settlement is easier to sustain where the state is stronger.

There are some examples of relatively viable states that are dealing with relational distance and keeping their territorial integrity and where the transition is prolonged enough to permit some reflection on their experience, such as South Africa, Brazil, Northern Ireland, El Salvador, Peru, Rwanda and Guatemala. While these societies might not yet have eliminated all forms of communal violence nor emerged unambiguously as peaceful nations, the economic imperatives that can sustain violence are not destabilising and their transformation offers sociology an opportunity to problematise the nature of post violence as a sociological category, for up to this point the transition has been understood solely as a political question.

Peace accords and governance

Peace accords are about instituting good governance. This is usually understood as democratic forms of governance and human rights law, where new institutional structures and forms of representation are thought either to solve the violent conflict or institutionalise it in ways that do not threaten the compromise deal. The failure of simple

majority rule to accommodate the political dynamics of post violence societies is well known and peace accords mostly produce more complicated systems of governance. For example, consociationalism as a political model is based on European societies formerly divided by language and ethno-national identity but has since been applied to post violence societies (Adam and Moodley 1986; Lijphart 1996; O'Leary 2001). The advocacy of human rights law as part of good governance in these settings is also commonplace (for a short selection see: Dunne and Nicholas 1999; Gready 2003; Harris and Livingstone 1998; McEvoy 2003). Political scientists, international relations specialists and academic lawyers have thus naturally championed the analysis of peace processes and post violence adjustments.

Governance is not unfamiliar to sociology but the discipline's focus has been on the regulation and social control dimensions of governance, particularly in areas such as security, penology, policing and crime. Sociologists have not critiqued governance as it applies to post violence societies, yet there are limits to an exclusive focus on governance and human rights. This focus often ignores social redistribution and leaves untouched the wider issue of equality. South Africa's peace settlement is an excellent example. It is based on the dual illusion that as a result of the settlement, nothing would change for Whites and that everything would for Blacks. In fact, while Black South Africans now control the state, they do not share in the country's economic wealth to any greater degree (Kunnie 2000). It represents the typical African and Asian post-colonial deal, where the majority group inherit politically, while the privileged minority retain the economy. However, the peace settlement endures precisely because the state's viability is girded by its legitimacy, which highlights the risk of renewed violence in weak states where

significant sections withhold legitimacy. This testifies to the importance of governance. The stability of peace accords depends in large part on people's experience of governance and law after the violence has stopped and the way resistance to the accord is managed within the new governance and human rights parameters. Nonetheless, changes in governance and law alone are no guarantee that communal violence will end even in viable states. The Basque region of Spain, for example, received devolved government over a quarter of a century ago but ETA terrorism continues sporadically. Pinheiro (2000) has shown the extent to which Brazil suffers from endemic communal violence even though democratic governance and the rule of law have been effectively established. Important as governance is, this paper argues that there is a sociological dynamic to post violence societies that are based upon compromise settlements which impacts as much as governance on people's perception of the peace accord. Successful peace accords therefore require more than good governance and human rights law, or at least, good governance in this type of post violence society has to be understood broadly to cover a range of sociological issues that shape the success of the transition.

A methodological note

As a prelude to analysing the sociological dynamics of this kind of post violence society, it is perhaps necessary to justify the adoption of a comparative approach, for the peculiarities of specific cases appear richer than any general features. O'Malley (2001: 279), for example, denied the possibility of comparison between the Northern Irish and South African peace processes (it is popular nonetheless see: Brewer 2003; Guelke 1996; Johnston 1997; Knox and Quirk 2000; McGarry 1998), arguing that 'each beats to the

rhythms of its own contradictory impulses, distortions of reality, warped perceptions and insatiable demands for revenge that are the legacy one generation bequeaths the next.’ Comparative analyses are inherently ahistorical, or at least, so condense the historical depth of each case as to distort history (see Abrams 1982). This raises the issue of whether post violence societies of this type need to be situated in the historical processes that generated the violence and their unique political negotiations that furnished the compromise.

It is obvious that even this one type of post violence society includes countries which differ in their history of violence, both the scale of conflict and its nature. In some cases it is full-scale war that is being transformed, such as Rwanda, in others sporadic, intermittent acts of communal violence. They also differ in who the victims were. Sometimes the violence was directed at the state, leaving much of the population unscathed, once supporters of the old regime are discounted. In these situations the old regime or toppled dictator can be used to assign away blame. While the abolition of the apartheid regime still leaves issues of reconciliation to be dealt with, its dissolution has confined issues of responsibility to the past enabling the apartheid regime to be a convenient commode into which to pack all the problems that beset the present and explain away responsibility. The fall of Hitler, the ending of the Franco regime in Spain and the toppling of Latin American dictatorships also served this purpose. But in cases where there is relational distance, the communal violence is often focused on members of other ethnic groups, as in Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland and the Philippines, spreading the scale and intensity of victimhood, limiting the capacity to assign responsibility to the past and leaving the problem of maintaining non-violence in the

midst of relational distance. Finally, post violence societies of this type also differ in the lines of social cleavage that structured the communal violence (varying from 'race', ethnicity, religion, national origin and identity to political ideology). Some of these cleavages are less easily reconcilable than others, in that they are perceived as absolute categories rather than contingent social constructions; some can be more readily accommodated by constitutional and institutional rearrangements, while others leave a permanent strain on the accord by expanding the relational distance and increasing the danger of renewed violence. Attempting a comparative analysis thus risks oversimplification and historical distortion.

On the other hand, one of the claims of the usefulness of sociology is that it rises above the particular to focus on the general. One of its purposes is to try to continually advance the grounds on which comparisons between cases are possible, increasing the potential for drawing policy lessons and advancing knowledge. It seems particularly apposite with post violence adjustments that some sort of learning be facilitated from the experiences of individual cases (which is why political scientists have made comparative studies of peace processes popular, for example: Arnson 1999; Cejka and Bamat 2003; Darby and MacGinty 2000). What social analysis has been done up this point is limited by the case study approach and has accordingly been narrow. Social analysis has focused on one or other specific case (mostly Northern Ireland and South Africa), and then exclusively on adjustment problems around the issue of truth recovery, and hence the desirability of truth commissions (as examples of a vast literature see: Chapman and Ball 2001; Ensalaco 1994; Hayner 1994; Jeffrey 1999; Rotberg and Thompson 2000; Smyth 2003; Wilson 2001), and the relevance of restorative justice in post violence adjustments

(for example: Braithwaite 2002; Ciabattari 2000; Dinnen, Jowitt and Newton Cain 2003; Justice Network nd; McEvoy 2003; Roche 2002; Wilmerding 2002). One of the advantages of a comparative approach to the sociological dynamics of this type of post violence society is that it discloses this dynamic to be much broader than the issues of truth and justice.

Post violence as a sociological problem

From reviewing the experience of several post violence societies that are based upon a negotiated compromise, it is clear that violence leaves a legacy of social issues for this type of post violence society that constitute a sociological dynamic that is as critical to their future as governance. The main social problems that this type of post violence society throws up are:

- The tension between ‘truth’ and ‘reconciliation’.
- The tension between ‘justice’ and ‘peace’.
- Experiences of victimhood.
- The problem of remembrance and commemoration.
- The social reintegration of former combatants.
- The development of ‘citizenship education’ for the new society.
- Extenuating the mundane over the sense of crisis.

It is argued here that these are constitutive of the sociological dynamic of a type of post violence society. It is not being suggested that countries which exemplify this type necessarily experience all these problems only that together these issues comprise the

range of social problems that adhere to this type. Much of the detail from individual countries is passed over in favour of the heuristic exercise of clarifying the type.

The tension between 'truth' and 'reconciliation'

In the transition to post violence there is a desperate need to know the 'truth'. It is for this reason that truth commissions proliferate (for a review of earlier examples see Hayner, 1994; for later comparisons see Chapman and Ball 2001) or take different forms as judicial enquiries, recovered memory projects (in Guatemala's case see Recovery of Historical Memory Project 1999; in Northern Ireland's see Smyth 2003) or commemoration projects through the collation of people's narratives (for example Lundy and McGovern 2001). This wish for the 'truth' is widely recognised as part of people's healing and is a necessary element of reconciliation (Hamber 2001) and truth recovery processes form a necessary part of post violence adjustment. The idea of truth however, is problematic; hence the universal complaint that truth commissions only disclose partial truths. Analysts know that 'truth' tends to be relative, truth-from-a-perspective and is subjective, but common sense renders the idea of truth as objective, unaffected by partisan standpoints (Shapin 1994). Not unnaturally therefore, lay people often wish to know what happened and who was responsible and tend to believe that there is but one objective course of events and decisions in the past that represent this 'true' account. They want to know whose hands are dirty and bloodstained and believe such identification is unproblematic and non-partisan. Thus, while 'truth' is therapeutic and part of the healing process, it can re-open wounds and hinder or slow the process of reconciliation because the 'truth' may be used from one standpoint to damn a particular

group. People's perception of the peace process may be negatively affected by the 'truth' behind the former violent acts of negotiators, peace activists or politicians, or by feelings of anger, shock or rage at finally 'proving' the identity of the culpable. In short, 'truth' can be incompatible with 'reconciliation'. Post violence societies therefore need to manage two problems: finding the balance between the need to know what happened in the past and moving forward, and encouraging people to see the truth from someone else's standpoint. This allows people to know about the past in such a way as not to keep them locked there.

The tension between 'peace' and 'justice'

All too often peace can be understood narrowly to mean the ending of violence and fails to address wider issues of justice. The wish for the shooting and bombing to stop is natural enough. However, peace incorporates well-being and a sense of flourishing, and narrow notions of peace can misunderstand the range of issues that post violence societies need to address around the question of social justice, such as social redistribution, the introduction or restoration of equality and fairness in the allocation of scarce resources, and the opening up of life chance opportunities that were once closed to some groups, thereby undercutting the economic imperatives to continued violence. The peace accords in Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka (both suspended) are dogged by the incompatibility of the dominant groups' emphasis on peace (the ending of violence) and the minority groups' demand for justice (social redistribution and equality of opportunity), which has ended up making a whole raft of peace issues (such as disarmament) equally contentious. Post violence societies therefore need to address both

peace and justice equally, with measures to maintain non-violence and effect social redistribution.

Experiences of victimhood

Communal violence brings victims; sometimes the victims are from within one group or class but mostly from all sections. Victimhood produces grieving relatives, dominated by their hurt and loss, and survivors, maimed physically or psychologically by their involvement, who take their victimhood into the future as a burden of grief and pain. These experiences can be foundational to the progress of peace accords in post violence societies. Peace processes offer the prospect of ontological security in the long term but in the short term they may threaten ontological security because they require change and the overthrow of familiar ideas and behaviours. Lederach refers to this as victims' 'identity dilemma' (quoted in Knox and Quirk 2000: 26): people who have defined their identity for so long in terms of 'the enemy', suddenly find in peace processes that they have to reshape their sense of who they are. Their anxieties are reinforced by the habit of peace processes to become almost the sole public issue, enveloping and encapsulating all public events. In the public domain all they hear is peace, while privately all they feel is grief. The victims and their families are asked to release the bitterness, forgive old enemies and witness them now in parliament, see perpetrators receive amnesty or prisoners released, and generally move forward from their hurt, loss, and pain. This is particularly divisive where all groups can claim themselves victims, for experiences of victimhood thus continue to divide people and victimhood can lend itself to easy mobilisation by opponents of the peace accord. Experiences of victimhood thus impact

greatly on the success of peace accords and post violence societies need to find ways of dealing with these experiences in such a way as to permit victimhood to be recognised and the victims honoured while moving them and the rest of society beyond the memory.

The problem of remembrance and commemoration

Post violence societies have the problem of how to remember and commemorate the conflict in such a way as to permit people to move forward. Fortunately memory as a process facilitates post violence adjustment for memory is selective. Nor is memory just a property of the person, for it is part of social practice and therefore always open to change. Culture can reinforce certain memories or encourage collective amnesia, memory is also socially reproduced in acts of public commemoration and in public memorials, in public images, texts and rituals, and memories can be invoked for social purposes, such as in helping to shape group identity formation or encouraging public sentiments, such as hope (on hope as part of South Africa's post violence adjustment see Shearing and Kempa forthcoming). Memory is therefore private and public at the same time (Misztal 2003 calls this 'social memory'; for a discussion of memory as a problem in 'genocidal nationalism' see Ray 1999). The issue for post violence societies is not so much a question of what individuals are able to selectively remember and in what way; there is no hope of determining what is in people's heads. There are two sociological issues around public memory: what it is that the post violence society publicly remembers and what it forgets; and what social practices should be adopted to culturally reproduce these selective public memories. Amnesia has been part of the nation-building project in many post violence societies in the past where there has been relational closeness, such as post-

Franco Spain and post-war Germany. In settings of relational distance, public memories can be recast and reconstructed by means of historical re-envisioning of the conflict (in which, for example, it might be denuded of its ethnic origins, blamed on third parties – normally colonisers – or shown to have affected all groups equally rather than one victim group alone). There are even cases where memories have been publicly recovered (and people's personal memories now publicly acknowledged) when they pertain to a pre-conflict past or become convenient as part of the reconciliation of social divisions (as in the new public recognition of Tamil contributions to Sinhalese culture in Sri Lanka, or Irish Catholics who served in the British armed forces in two world wars or in the colonial Royal Irish Constabulary). However, these social readjustments in public memory can be achieved normally only in the long-term. In the short term, even in societies with relational distance, it is sometimes possible that members of post violence societies can agree very quickly to a pluralistic approach to public memory in which they adjust to other groups' public commemorations and memorials, as occurred in the new rainbow nation of post-apartheid South Africa (notably Afrikaner commemorations of the Battle of Blood River). But when memories continue to divide people in the transition to post violence and on to the medium term, post violence societies have a shadow that causes continual strain. Post violence societies therefore need to find ways of handling divided memories and to develop a 'social memory' that honours all people, victims and perpetrators, combatants and civilians, in ways that release society collectively from the burden of people's personal memory.

The social reintegration of combatants

Just as victims need to be incorporated into the peace process, former combatants need to be socially reintegrated. Victims and their relatives chiefly desire to incarcerate them but most peace accords involve amnesty for combatants of every side. The release of prisoners and the escape from criminal prosecution of other combatants is ubiquitously problematic in post violence transitions and risks continued disharmony. However, the eventual outcome of the transition process requires that this tension be successfully managed, which explains why in most cases amnesty is made a formal part of peace accords or new governments either conspire to evade their responsibility to pursue combatants, as in Ardenauer's West Germany (see Frei 2003) or utilise restorative justice as an alternative way of reintegrating combatants. Braithwaite (2002: 202-4) stresses the contribution of restorative justice in dealing with problems around amnesty, epitomised by Rwanda's use of traditional *gacaca* courts to rehabilitate belligerents (on which see Ciabarra 2000; Justice Network nd). South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission also had strong restorative justice elements (see particularly Leman-Langlois and Shearing 2003). Social reintegration however, is broader than restorative justice and can take the form of economic integration through the provision of jobs and education (thus eliminating the patronage power of warlords and reducing the economic incentive to communal violence), cultural reintegration to avoid feelings of ostracism and marginality, and psychological readjustment through various support structures. Failure to address social integration in this broad sense can be damaging. For example, nearly an entire generation of Black South African combatants sacrificed their education to the township struggles in the 1980s, and many of those without education and skills but in possession of arms have essentially been forced to resort to violent crime to survive in the

post violence society (on the problem of crime in post-settlement societies see Mark Shaw 2001). The Northern Irish experience is an instructive counterweight. Republican ex-prisoners often gained education and employability skills inside prison and belong to paramilitary organisations that are committed to assisting ex-prisoners through prisoner support groups, employment in legitimate businesses like bars and taxi companies and subsequent involvement in Sinn Fein's political campaigns; indeed, many of the militarists now out of jail are amongst the leaders of Sinn Fein's peace strategy in the local community and are actively involved in community development projects and economic regeneration schemes. Social reintegration is thus foundational. However, whatever is done for ex-combatants needs simultaneously to avoid dishonouring victims if the social reintegration mechanisms are not themselves to reproduce the old conflict.

The development of 'citizenship education' for the new society

Violence can sometimes be all that young generations have known, and marked social cleavages can leave most people without the citizenship skills for living with their former 'enemies' in the new post violence society. Division may have solidified to create worlds within worlds where people have not integrated or learned the skills for living together. Even post violence societies in Latin America with longer established peace accords have more or less failed to develop citizenship education that brings the groups together at the bottom. This is also the case in South Africa, except perhaps for wealthy South Africans in the affluent areas where the market has brought people together with different coloured skins but who in most other respects are exceedingly alike. Citizenship education is about acquiring the knowledge and learning the skills for tolerance, that is, for recognising,

dialoguing with and understanding ‘the other’ sufficiently to conduct orderly social relations. It does not involve idealistic and romantic notions of coming to love one’s former enemies, applying theological notions of forgiveness or of giving up on one’s own identity in order to merge with ‘the other’ into a hybrid identity. Citizenship education involves the more prosaic process of tolerance (peace activists in Northern Ireland refer to this quaintly as the public practice of manners). Tolerance is both a personal and public quality. It is something that is practised in people’s private lives in their perceptions of ‘the other’, in their ways of communicating with and about ‘the other’ and in the relationships they conduct with them. It a public virtue that can also be reinforced and enhanced by civil society and the state, and in this respect, post violence societies need to address the ways in which civil society and the state can create tolerant social relations. For example, the school curriculum has been amended in Northern Ireland and the Philippines to impact the teaching of history but also to encourage children to meet together. Non-governmental agencies and para-church organisations in Northern Ireland have developed voluntary citizenship education courses for assisting people with issues like identity, memory, forgiveness and moving beyond sectarianism (for example see Liechty and Clegg 2001). It is important that opportunities be provided for people from all sides to come together to tell their personal narratives in a non-threatening setting by means of local networks whereby groups from across the former divide meet to create a dialogue and seek understanding of each other. Bridge building is an essential part of the transition to post violence, but this needs to be more than elites coming together to agree new forms of governance; the bridges must be purposely erected at the local level to allow former enemies to traverse the divide in their understanding and perception of each

other, to facilitate tolerance toward 'the other' and to work out dialogue for communicating and relating with each other (on grassroots peacemaking in several post violence societies see Cejka and Bamat 2003).

Extenuating the mundane over the sense of crisis

Perhaps with the exception of the most genocidal of conflicts, situations of communal violence involve people trying to maintain the daily routines of life as a way of managing and routinising the violence (this is a much broader process that subsumes those 'islands of civility' (Kaldor 1999) that survive in conflict situations). Conventional war might not evince it, but communal violence is contradictory: violence occurs in the midst of the reproduction of social routine. This is assisted in some cases by the geographic containment of the violence to specific milieux (such as the African townships in South Africa's case or to the Northern part of the island in Sri Lanka), allowing people elsewhere to successfully distance themselves from it. Sometimes it reflects the nature of the violence itself, in that it is sporadic or targeted in very limited ways. The need for ontological security means that even during the worst times of widespread civil unrest in areas of high violence, ordinary people try to maintain a semblance of routine to enable them to continue with their ordinary lives. People tried to get to work and children to school. Barricades were removed to permit workers to earn wages and then put back again at night; shopping had to be done and businesses tried to remain open. Hospitals, schools, unemployment offices continued to function. This is but one example of how people in areas of high violence, like those living elsewhere, try to normalise the violence (although we know from Northern Ireland that alcoholism, depression and mental illness,

as the usual signs of social stress, were higher in areas of intense violence, showing that it remained as a personal trouble irrespective of attempts to reduce its ontological effects). Ironically this extenuation of the mundane, which helped in the normalisation of the violence as a way of managing its ontological effects, can be disrupted in the peace process as disputes over the negotiation process or over the actual settlement come to dominate the public agenda, increasing people's senses of ontological insecurity. Victimhood can attach a special price to peace, but more generally the public obsession with the inevitable lurching ebbs and flows and vicissitudes of the negotiations can unsettle the mundane and cause crises to be manufactured out of dramas. Post violence societies therefore need to find ways of maintaining perspective; of dealing in the public domain with war and its amelioration, while extenuating in the private sphere the same mundanities and daily routines that allowed most ordinary people to cope while the violence raged.

Conclusion

With the proliferation of communal conflict in the modern world comes the obligation upon sociology to understand the dynamics of the small number of cases that can be described as post violence societies. Three types of post violence society have been identified here according to how they manage the relational closeness-distance of belligerents and impose spatial separation as a post violence strategy or retain territorial integrity (see Figure 1). Within this framework attention has been focused on that type of post violence society that presents sociology with the most interesting challenge: that based on compromise peace accords. The challenge is in understanding the dynamics by

which these societies can reproduce relational distance in non-violent ways while retaining their territorial integrity. Relational distance in conquest societies is managed either through the cultural annihilation of others or coercion, while societies where cartographers have separated warring factions eliminate the problems entirely by spatial separation. Compromise peace deals however, cannot rely on force or partition as post violence strategies, and thus face the greater difficulties. Peace accords are unstable since territorial integrity is itself the problem; and the weaker the state, the greater the risk of renewed communal violence and the collapse of the peace settlement. However, even in viable states, it is inadequate to address exclusively the political dynamics of this type of post violence society. Sociology faces another challenge in identifying the range of social problems this type of post violence society confronts and which are not satisfactorily captured by governance and human rights issues. The experience of several post violence societies has been drawn on schematically to examine heuristically the sociological dynamic that accompanies the ending of communal violence. A series of social problems has been identified as constitutive of this sociological dynamic, the successful solution to which is as important as good governance and human rights to the stability of peace accords in this type of post violence society. Explicating this sociological dynamic allows the discipline to play an important public role. Sociology can:

- Extend the understanding of the problems post violence societies face beyond the strictly political issues of governance and legal reform.

- Encourage peace negotiators to link issues of governance in post violence societies with a range of sociological issues that are equally important to the success of the transition.
- Identify lessons for societies who are at earlier stages in developing peace accords, that both teach about the types of issues they will need to resolve and provide the experience of how other societies have dealt with them.
- Build into the analysis a study of those societies where peace accords are fragile and the violence frequently overt, such as Israel and the Philippines, in order to establish whether the failure to address this social dynamic impacts negatively on the stability of peace accords.

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Figure 1

Types of post violence society

