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RECONCILIATION: ASPECTS, GROWTH, AND SEQUENCES

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Abstract

This paper explores the several aspects of the process of reconciliation: the units engaged in reconciliation, the dimensions of reconciliation, and the degree and symmetry between the units along each dimension. Various combinations of these aspects characterize diverse patterns of reconciliation over time. Attention to these aspects help account for the expansion of reconciliation efforts and alternative sequencing of reconciliation acts. Four sets of factors help explain these variations: trends in ways of thinking, trends in material conditions and social relations, contextual events, and local conditions. The analysis yields implications for theory and practice.

Throughout history, many people have engaged in personal or representative acts of reconciliation.[1] In recent years, such reconciliation efforts are widely discussed and frequently undertaken (Kritz 1995; Weiner 1998). Reconciliation between antagonists in a destructive conflict is often an important part of establishing a mutually acceptable coexistence between them. The condition of reconciliation, however, varies in degree and over time. It also varies along many dimensions and differs among the diverse groups constituting the opposing sides. The process of antagonists reconciling with each other, therefore, is hugely complex. This article focuses on three issues: the increase in reconciliation efforts around the world, the patterns of reconciliation, and alternative sequences of various aspects of reconciliation.

Processes of reconciliation between large entities such as peoples and countries are unending; whatever kind of reconciliation is attained is not permanent. Changes in the reconciliation achieved between peoples occur years, decades, or even centuries after an inter-communal accommodation has been imposed or mutually reached. For example, the nature of the relationship between Native Americans and the dominant ethnic groups in the United States has undergone many transformations. Recently, examples abound of compensation and apologies made by representatives of the dominant party to the group whose members have been victimized and marginalized. The U.S. government apologized and provided some compensation to the Japanese Americans who were interned during World War II, the Spanish government acknowledged that the expulsion

of Jews from Spain in 1492 was wrong, and the Canadian and Australian governments only recently acknowledged their long denial of basic rights to indigenous peoples.

Too often, the multi-faceted character of reconciliation is disregarded, resulting in misunderstandings, unspecified generalizations, and unrealistic expectations. Therefore, I first explore the many, sometimes contradictory, dimensions and other aspects of reconciliation. Then, explanations for the variations in reconciliation and for changes in reconciliation over time are analysed. Finally, I discuss the implications of this analysis for theory and practice regarding the sequences of various components of reconciliation, following destructive, large-scale conflicts.

Aspects of Reconciliation

The term reconciliation generally refers to the process of developing a mutual conciliatory accommodation between enemies or formerly antagonistic groups. It often refers to the process of moving toward a relatively cooperative and amicable relationship, typically established after a rupture in relations involving extreme injury to one or more sides in the relationship. Reconciliation, clearly, has more than one meaning and people disagree about the relative importance of those different elements (Kriesberg 2007a; Lederach 1997; Kriesberg 1999). Thus, people vary in their emphasis upon forgiveness, redress for past injustices, and provision for future safety. Four aspects of reconciliation deserve attention: the units engaged in reconciliation, the dimensions of reconciliation, the degree of reconciliation, and the symmetry of each aspect.

Units

Reconciliation occurs between many different kinds of parties, ranging from persons to nations, and it occurs between individuals and groups from antagonistic sides, at the grass roots, middle range, and elite levels. Reconciliation may be expressed at the interpersonal grass roots level, in friendships, marriages, and private conversations, or egalitarian work relations. Some persons may claim to be and are regarded as representatives of larger units; indeed, some of them can make commitments for those entities. In such cases, people typically speak of reconciliation between countries and peoples, or between political and religious organizations, or between cities, regions, and neighborhoods. For example, in recent decades, leaders of the Catholic Church have met with leaders of the Jewish faith to find common ground in understanding and acknowledging what the Church did and did not do during the Holocaust and in earlier periods of Catholic and Jewish relations (Willebrands 1992).

When considering reconciliation between large-scale units, it is well to recognize that members of the units generally differ considerably in the kind and level of their reconciliation with members of antagonistic peoples. The reconciliation may be

comprehensive and profound for many people or for only a few persons on each side. The proportions and the status of such persons obviously have great significance for the likely stability of whatever accommodation may exist. Many Serbs and Croats were reconciled with each other after the atrocities of World War II in Yugoslavia; they shared in the governance of their common country and engaged in amiable even intimate personal relations. Many other Serbs and Croats, however, also harbored feelings of resentment, of hatred and fear, and a sense of unredressed injustices. Ethno-nationalist leaders, in order to garner support, then aroused such sentiments when social-political conditions deteriorated and terrible atrocities ensued (Glenny 1992).

The reconciliation of certain groups with each other sadly may be at the expense of still other parties. In the United States, after the Civil War ended in 1865, the Federal government undertook to restore the union and to ensure security and greater justice for the freed slaves, as part of the reconstruction effort. The Federal government in cooperation with the newly enfranchised African American men and many whites in the South established social programs to assist the freed slaves. Many of the white former rebels, however, organized the Klu Klux Klan and with the support of some local officials and the tolerance of many Federal officials, they lynched, massacred, tortured and otherwise terrorized blacks so as to restore and sustain their domination (Kennedy 1995). Southern officials who resisted such terrorism were themselves threatened, assassinated, and driven from office. Then in 1876, a deal was struck between leaders of the Republican and Democratic parties so that the Republican candidate for the presidency, Rutherford B. Hayes, would be elected, the union military forces would be withdrawn from the south, and the southern states would be ruled by the white oligarchy. Many aspects of reconciliation were realized between various elements of the North and South, but the failure to establish basic levels of security and justice for all the parties impacted by the civil war resulted in legacies that would take almost a hundred years again to begin to be significantly overcome.

Dimensions

Four dimensions of reconciliation can be usefully distinguished (Kriesberg 2004; Lederach 1997). Each has subjective qualities, including feelings, values, and beliefs and manifest qualities, including social conduct, institutions, and material goods. Reconciliation incorporates some combination, at varying levels, of the following dimensions: truths, justice, respect and security.

Truths. A fundamental aspect of reconciliation is the recognition of the injuries suffered and the losses experienced by members of one side at the hands of former antagonists. Members of the group who suffered hurts are generally aware of them, while associates of the perpetrator groups usually deny or minimize them. Consequently, the former antagonists often do not believe the same truths. The dimension of truth in reconciliation refers minimally to the recognition of those hurts by members of the party

that inflicted the injuries. Truth in reconciliation is greater insofar as the members of the formerly opposing sides share understandings about who has suffered or continues to suffer by whose acts.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa consciously held hearings in different locations in South Africa, televised many of them, and held meetings throughout the country to bring people from diverse communities together to discuss the findings of the TRC. Such efforts were effective in convincing many whites that apartheid was sustained by gross violations of basic human rights and that their failure to oppose apartheid made them complicit in exploitation and in the commission of atrocities. Those efforts also convinced many blacks that their past suffering was recognized and that a new relationship was emerging. In the United States, there is some acknowledgment that the experience with the police and the justice system differs for African Americans and for European Americans. Among most European Americans, unlike most African Americans, however, this is regarded as due to idiosyncratic behavior of particular officials, not systematic racism.

Shared understandings gain support and significance by being manifested publicly (Borer 2006). Official investigations, judicial proceedings, literary and mass media depictions are all ways to openly face abuses that had been hidden or denied. Reconciliation is further increased insofar as those who had inflicted the harm acknowledge their deeds and accept responsibility for what happened.

Justice. Many persons who have suffered oppression and atrocities in the course of an intense struggle seek redress for the injustices they endured (Llewellyn and Howse 1999). This is not a simple matter, since justice itself is multifaceted and the facets are variously related to other dimensions of reconciliation (Rigby 2001).

In current discussions about justice and reconciliation, the distinction between retributive and restorative justice is usefully made. Retributive justice refers to punishing those who committed crimes, or more generally perpetrated acts of injustice. For advancing reconciliation, punishing individuals for past violations of human rights is a way of identifying individual responsibility and avoiding attributing collective guilt, which may create new injustices and be a source of new resentments. Restorative justice refers to arrangements, often made between the victims and perpetrators of a crime, in which tangible restitution or compensation for what was lost is made by the perpetrators of the crime to the victims. More generally, justice may be served by providing compensation to survivors and/or enhanced opportunities to members of groups who have suffered past discrimination.

A third way of promoting justice also is important for reconciliation. This pertains to the future and entails policies that avoid future injustices. Punishment does not restore past losses, even if it assuages some people's desire for revenge and retribution. Nor can there be full compensation for severe losses, such as those involving death and torture. Avoiding the recurrence of such injustices is an important way of promoting justice as a part of reconciliation between peoples. Thus, officials may institute policies that provide

protection against future discrimination or harm to members of the victimized group or other potential targets.

Many actions of the Federal Republic of Germany regarding the period of Nazi rule in Germany illustrate these methods. For example, compensation has included payments to Jewish survivors of the Holocaust and assistance to the State of Israel; trials have been held of persons charged with crimes against Jews and other victims of Nazism; and laws were enacted against organizations advocating racism and to provide asylum for victims of political repression (Feldman 1999).

Respect. The third important dimension of reconciliation involves at least a measure of respect by members of one side toward members of the adversary side. In intense conflicts, antagonists tend to demonize the opponents and often believe the opponents have grievously hurt them. To accord the opponents respect as humans may require overcoming feelings of anger, resentment, hate, and the desire for revenge. To gain respect from those who suffered may require feeling and expressing remorse, guilt, regret, and shame. Persons belonging to opposing sides may feel some of these emotions, but feelings such as remorse and forgiveness are typically expressed in a complementary fashion.

These emotions are manifested in many ways. Remorse is expressed in the form of apologies and articulations of regret and guilt, conveyed privately or publicly. Mercy and forgiveness are also variously expressed. At one extreme, the survivor of torture or a family member of someone who was murdered might accept with compassionate tears the expression of remorse by the person who committed the torture or murder. The difficulties in such exchanges were evident in the workings of the South African TRC (de Ridder 1997). Family members sometimes differed among themselves about extending forgiveness to the perpetrators, with some objecting to granting specific perpetrators amnesty. For many survivors, re-living the experiences raised emotions they did not want to feel. Counseling was made available to those testifying, before and after their public appearances; but this was quite limited. Of course, for some victims/survivors/fighters, testifying about what had happened was a release and a vindication of their suffering.

More indirectly, survivors may be unforgiving of individuals who committed atrocities and seek their punishment, but reject collective punishment of the people claimed to be represented by those persons who perpetrated the atrocities. Frequently, recognition of the other side's humanity entails only expressing the thought that many members of the adversary community did not personally and directly carry out harmful actions, and the next generation is not responsible for the acts of previous generations. Even less directly, persons from communities who had suffered injury may engage cooperatively in projects relating to past harms with members of the community who had inflicted the harm, but not express either apology or forgiveness.

Security. Finally, concern about safety and the desire for security are particularly important for those who have endured atrocities or oppression. But such concerns are

also important for persons who committed gross human rights violations, since they may fear personal retribution or collective punishment. Amnesties, for them, provide safety; but for those they injured, amnesties may hamper attaining justice.

In the process of reconciliation, adversaries look forward to living together without threatening each other, with mutual respect and security, perhaps even in harmony and unity. This may be in the context of high levels of integration or in the context of separation and little regular interaction. The nature of the anticipated peaceful relations varies, but the realization of the mutual preferences is critical.

Security is largely dependent on the strength of legitimate nonviolent conflict management procedures. The effective maintenance of the rule of law is an important safeguard for all persons in a social system. To do so, of course, societal members must regard the law as legitimately enacted.

Relations among Dimensions. Combining high levels of reconciliation along all dimensions and resolving the paradoxes arising from various combinations are crucial in the process of reconciliation. Reconciliation is never complete in all these dimensions and is not the same for all members of each former adversary party. Furthermore, some of these aspects of reconciliation are even contradictory at times (Minow 1998). Thus, mercy and justice often cannot be satisfied at the same time; however, they may be compatible if pursued sequentially or even simultaneously if done so by different members of the previously antagonistic sides. Indeed, in some ways these various elements are interdependent. If some members of one party acknowledge that members of another community have suffered great injury by their actions, forgiveness or at least acceptance of the other's humanity becomes easier to feel and to express.

Insofar as the existing combination of these dimensions has been legitimately formulated and implemented, it will tend to be regarded as appropriate. If those who lack legitimacy externally impose the combination, its acceptance is undermined. Free and orderly elections, in the contemporary world, are an important vehicle for gaining legitimacy for officials and for policies, but not without other institutional support (Lyons 2005; Paris 2004).

Degree

The degree of reconciliation varies in the extent and intensity to which all the dimensions are fulfilled. Defining high levels of reconciliation along each dimension so that they are regarded as mutually supportive enhances this. For example, truth may be regarded as a way of ensuring justice and security and making forgiveness possible. Post apartheid South African leaders often modeled how they thought this was possible.

The variation also occurs in terms of the proportion of each side's members who exhibit relatively high levels of reconciliation in its various dimensions. High degrees of reconciliation occur when members of all social ranks, within each formerly antagonist group, concur in the reconciliation. Impressively, Franco-German reconciliation after

World War II is evident among many Germans and French at all social ranks (Feldman 1999).

Another indication of the extent of reconciliation is the minimal size and marginality of those group members who reject the reconciliation that has been achieved. Sometimes, however, those who reject various aspects of reconciliation constitute significant groups within one or more antagonist sides, and they prove to be effective spoilers (Stedman 2002). Often, this has been the case in the Israeli-Arab conflict, hampering reaching a comprehensive resolution of the conflict and often undermining whatever steps toward reconciliation had been made (Kriesberg 2002).

Finally, the degree of reconciliation also varies by the intensity with which the collectivity as a whole demonstrates commitment to the reconciliation. Commitment is manifested by legislation, judicial processes, or other institutional arrangements. It is also demonstrated by non-governmental patterns of conduct and symbolic events, and in popular culture as well (Ross 2006). Efforts may be made to incorporate the reconciliation within a larger collective identity. For example, Nelson Mandela, as the first post-apartheid President, often spoke of South Africa as the rainbow nation.

Symmetry

One meaning of reconciliation is to bring people back into concord with each other; but another meaning is for people to acquiesce or submit to existing circumstances. The latter meaning is not one that is used in contemporary discussions of reconciliation. Noting it, however, is a way to highlight that reconciliation frequently is not symmetrical. To bring members of different sides into accord often means that members of one or more sides accept losses that they cannot recover, and are reconciled to the losses. Furthermore, coming into concord does not mean equal gains and losses for the former adversaries. One side may have more to atone for and the other more to forgive. Hence, reconciliation may mean that members of one side accept the painful reality of their circumstances after losing a struggle in which they committed gross human rights violations.

What constitutes increasing symmetry varies with the historical relations between the former antagonists. Symmetry refers here to moving toward greater equity between the opponents. Thus, a triumphant settler people may make greater concessions toward an indigenous people, defeated long ago, than they receive. That may seem appropriate to both peoples and moving toward greater equity increases symmetry in their relationship, at least a little.

Symmetry may be expressed in symbolic ways, and in constructing those ways foster mutual respect. In the aftermath of civil wars, monuments and memorials may be constructed, after extended negotiations, which give space to both sides in the past struggle. Cultural narratives, ritual expressions and enactments can be created that are

relatively inclusive and so express and contribute to reconciliation (Long and Brecke 2003; Ross 2006).

The degree of symmetry often differs for each dimension of reconciliation. The truth about past oppression and atrocities may be widely acknowledged by members of the injured side, but not by members of the other side. In addition, victors may insist upon revealing the full story about what members of the other side did, but hide their complicity in the conduct of the former enemy or in their own atrocities. This was true for many people who collaborated with Nazi Germany during the Nazi occupation of their country. Justice may mean that no individuals suffer punishments for past misdeeds, except that leaders of one side may lose effective power and control over societal resources and members of the other side gain protection for their civil and human rights in the future.

Convergence in thinking is a major way in which the aspects of reconciliation approach relative symmetry. Convergence may result from persuasion or conversion. Members of one group may come to believe that the political, religious, or other belief systems of another group are more valid than those they previously held. In the light of such changed assessments, past relationships and events are re-evaluated. This was the case, in great degree, for former Nazi followers in Germany after the victory of the alliance against Fascism.

Finally, another way in which relative symmetry is increased involves reciprocated remorse and forgiveness. Reciprocation may be initiated by expressions of either forgiveness or of remorse and may be responded to with appreciation or acceptance. This aspect of reconciliation is relatively important in the Christian tradition. It played an important role in the reconciliation between French and Germans after World War II, among the peoples of South Africa in ending apartheid, and between African Americans and European Americans during the Civil Rights struggle in the latter half of the twentieth century.

This kind of symmetry, however, is not universal. In Israeli-German relations, for example, Israeli leaders avoid the term 'reconciliation' assuming that connotes a "religious element of forgiveness which, they believe only the murdered victims of the Holocaust, or G-d (on Yom Kippur) can pronounce." (Feldman 1999:341). Indeed, the term reconciliation has no exact equivalent in Hebrew and has Christian overtones.

Varying Combinations of Reconciliation Aspects

Each aspect of reconciliation is fulfilled in various degrees for different parties, at any given time in a social relationship. They are combined into a variety of types of reconciliation, depending on the parties involved and their social context. Consider the differences in the relations between adherents of an authoritarian government and the subordinated classes, between members of antagonistic ethnic communities and between adherents of antagonistic religious communities. Patterns of reconciliation differ greatly

between communal groups in countries such as the United States of America, Germany, Chile, Argentina, Spain, South Africa, Lebanon, and Russia.

In some circumstances, people accord great importance to security. The past victims want safety and assurances that their ordeal is over; many prefer living peacefully with their former oppressors to continuing a destructive conflict. At the same time, victimizers also want assurances of safety and protection from retribution. Mutual security may be more important to many people than seeking retributive justice, which appears to threaten peace. This preference for safety often is particularly strong among the leaders of the antagonistic groups who feel themselves threatened by legal prosecution and punishment or by non-official revenge seekers.

In other circumstances, primacy is given to sharing information and learning the truth of what had happened in the past. In still other situations, little official reconciliation is undertaken directly concerning the past. Reconciliation processes are largely left for informal action. This may be accompanied by establishing social, political, and cultural relations that would prevent the recurrence of the oppression and human rights violations that had previously occurred. In varying degree, this may be seen in Spain, after Francisco Franco's death in 1975 and in the former Soviet Union after its dissolution in 1991.

Most members of a society often share cultural patterns for managing reconciliation. These patterns may be structured and sustained by religious beliefs, legislation, or folk traditions. Thus, in Lebanon and other countries of the Arab-Islamic culture area, rituals of settlement, *Sulh*, and of reconciliation, *musalaha*, may be used to reconcile parties after blood feuds, honor crimes, or cases of murder (Antoun 1997; Irani and Funk 1998). Conducted within a tribal or village context, local leaders form a delegation, *jaha*, to investigate and arbitrate the conflict. Accepting this intervention, the aggrieved family agrees to a truce. After a period of mourning, the aggrieved party receives the payment of symbolic compensation, arranged by the *jaha*. The families gather for a ritual of hand shaking, the family of the victim offers bitter coffee to the family of the offender, and then the family of the offender serves a meal to the family of the victim.

Explanations

The preceding discussion contributes to understanding three matters: the recent expansion of governmental and non-governmental programs to foster reconciliation, the variations in the patterns of reconciliation, and the sequential changes in aspects of reconciliation. I emphasize four sets of factors that help explain these developments, namely: 1. trends in ways of thinking, 2. trends in material conditions and social relations, 3. contextual events, and 4. local conditions.

Trends in Thought

Among the many trends in human thought during the last century, three are particularly relevant for this inquiry. They are developments first, in religious beliefs; second, in thinking about human relations (especially in the social sciences); and third, in views regarding democracy and human rights.

Religious beliefs. All religions have relevant interpretations and prescriptions about proper human social relations at the individual and the collective level. The major religions have sufficient complexity and historical experience to be open to contradictory interpretations. One pair of differing interpretations is especially relevant in this context: that is, exclusiveness and inclusiveness.

Some adherents of major religions stress that they are chosen by God, or that their beliefs are the only correct ones and therefore other persons are inferior or even damned, in which case they must try to win over those who are in error in order to save their souls. Adherents of such exclusive perspectives often act in ways that others find extremely oppressive. Such exclusiveness hampers a process of reconciliation between groups maintaining differences in religious adherence. Certainly, in many of the major religious communities such exclusiveness seems more evident in recent decades. This can be seen in increased fundamentalism within Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism.

Despite the above observations, the major religions of the world are profoundly inclusive. Each is open to anyone to join. Important traditions in each of the monotheistic religions recognize all humans as children of the same God. Mercy and peace are admired and sought in human relations. Indeed, recent decades have seen great movements away from doctrinaire exclusiveness and toward active inclusiveness, tolerance, and respect for people in different religious communities. For example, the Catholic Church has acknowledged and corrected the ways its teachings contributed to anti-Semitism (Willebrands 1992); it has also worked to improve relations with many non-Catholic churches and denominations. Activist Catholic groups have undertaken campaigns against war and for increased justice between social classes and ethnic communities.

Among the traditional peace churches, Quakers have long been advocates of peace and justice, even between groups and peoples who had engaged in destructive conflicts and oppressive relations. Through organizations such as the American Friends Service Committee, they provide humanitarian service and nonofficial mediation. Mennonites have practiced pacifism, but in the past had not been active peace workers. However, particularly after World War II, some members have become highly active in peacemaking. They provide mediation and conflict resolution training in many parts of the world. In addition, Moral Rearmament has focused on forgiveness and reconciliation as fundamental to peace making and it contributed to reconciliation in French-German relations and in the transformation of Rhodesia to Zimbabwe (Luttwak 1994; Henderson 1996; Smith 1984).

Secular thinking about human relations. Like religious thought, some secular thinking is conducive to inter-communal antagonism and hampers equitable reconciliation. But the long-term trends in secular social thought during the last two hundred years support cooperative and equitable human relations, a sound basis for peace and reconciliation. Before discussing trends supportive of reconciliation, counter developments also should be noted.

Some analysts have emphasized the great human capacity for aggression, greed, and chauvinism. Competition and violent struggles among people are therefore regarded as inevitable and coercion is believed necessary to maintain peace and order. In addition, particular racist doctrines view other humans as inferior or even lesser beings. Thus, ideas asserting biologically based race differences in intelligence and other aptitudes have been recurrently raised.

On the whole, nevertheless secular ways of thinking have developed that provide increasing recognition of the importance, use, and contributions of reconciliation to human life. First, intellectual support for racism has gradually declined. Recent intellectual work has demonstrated how ethnicity is socially constructed and that races too are social constructs, their nature varying from one culture to another (Anderson 1991; Winant 1994).

Second, ideas about material progress increasingly point to the limited effectiveness and even counterproductive results of warfare and other coercive methods to gain relative advantage. Cooperation and exchange are increasingly thought to provide more reliable ways to achieve material progress than unilateral exploitation.

Finally, recent ideas about building productive human relations by mutual respect are increasingly recognized in many spheres of social interaction. These ideas have been part of the greatly expanding feminist approaches to social life and to the growing practice of problem solving conflict resolution. For example, the ideas about transforming social conflicts into shared problems to be solved are increasingly being applied to a wide variety of conflicts, including inter-communal struggles (Kriesberg 2007b).

Views of democracy. Some versions of democracy, subscribing to ideas of ethno-nationalism, can be a basis for exclusiveness and intolerance of others. The popular will, as interpreted by a charismatic leader, can be mobilized to silence dissenters and exclude persons not deemed to be members of the same ethnicity.

The increasingly dominant view of democracy, however, tends to support mutual respect and consideration by each person of all others. It includes popular participation in self-governance, but often also incorporates the protection of fundamental human rights of individual persons and communal groups against the tyranny of the majority.

Trends in Material and Social Conditions

Many trends in the living conditions also affect the attention to reconciliation, in its many aspects. I emphasize three major trends: growing economic and social interdependence, expanding means of communication and interaction, and increasing productivity.

Growing Interdependence:

The rapidly increasing integration of the world's economy is widely recognized. International trade, transnational investments, and the global movement of labor have expanded greatly in recent decades. This globalization of the economy means that the actions of persons in every part of the world impact on each other's lives. The costs for different groups if they do not get along with each other have increased.

One consequence of this globalization is the growth of international and transnational organizations to help manage and exploit the resulting interdependence. These organizations include intergovernmental institutions relating to economic, political, and environmental matters. The United Nations (UN) is the most comprehensive of such organizations and it plays an increasingly important role in fostering reconciliation as part of peace building, as noted earlier regarding Guatemala. The great increase in transnational organizations certainly includes a vast array of non-governmental organizations as well (Smith, Chatfield and Pagnucco 1997). Another consequence of this globalization is that people in various parts of a region or the whole world are attentive to what is happening elsewhere. If groups escalate their conflicts destructively or persist in them without any resolution, governments, non-official groups, and international governmental and non-governmental organizations are increasingly likely to intervene. These entities and their actions embody, reflect, and create the ways people think about proper social relations between humans. For example, they significantly contributed to the non-violent transformation of relations in South Africa.

Admittedly, all these developments also are the source of new strains in human relations. Peoples within each country and region of the world are thrust into new competitive situations. People with different traditions, values, and ways of life are increasingly interacting and face the challenge of cooperating with each other. Thus, as the needs for cooperative coexistence grow, so do the difficulties of adequately satisfying them.

Expanding Communication:

Globalization is also increasing rapidly in the arena of communication. Technological advances enable more and more people in the world to quickly exchange images and words with each other. They also enable people to experience and react to the same events as conveyed on television, in films, and through the internet. One

frequently noted consequence of this is greater salience to conditions that support mobilizing people to intervene to alleviate what they regard as dreadful occurrences.

Another consequence of these and the previously noted developments is that along with individuals' increased movement from one place to another is their increased ability to maintain relations with the people in the places they left. More easily than in the past, immigrants can return to their homeland for visits, speak with relatives there, and read newspapers and watch television from their countries of origin. Therefore, they not only can play a role in influencing events in their home country, but also are more likely to retain a sense of identity with their country of origin while living in their new country (Anderson 1992).

These developments provide new opportunities for mutual understanding between different peoples. Diaspora groups can provide intermediary functions between their countries of origin and their new countries of residence and also, with other Diaspora groups, between peoples in their region of origin. For example, the increase of Arabs in the United States is a source of information and resistance to stereotypical portrayals of Arabs. Furthermore, the presence of Arab Diaspora communities in the United States facilitates communication among different Arab peoples and with Jews (Schwartz 1989).

However, these changes also may exacerbate challenges to reconciliation. Immigrant groups, in closer communication with their countries of origin, may sustain traditions and identities that are not readily accepted by the people in their new country of residence. Another kind of complication is that Diaspora groups may help sustain destructive struggles in their homeland, supplying weapons and supporting uncompromising objectives.

Increasing Productivity and Changing Priorities:

Technological advances in production and the provision of services, together with the globalization of information, contribute greatly to increase productivity. This enables wealth to increase and living standards to rise. Insofar as such expansions occur, the costs of improving the conditions of subordinated groups in a society are eased. Conflicts are not as likely to be regarded as zero-sum struggles. Note that changing beliefs and values that reduce the priority of consumerism and raise the priority of sustainable development can have similar effects (Dobkowski and Wallimann 1998).

Contextual Factors

Global and regional political, social, and economic conditions help shape various aspects of reconciliation between particular adversaries in specific localities. Contemporary external events, whether directly or vicariously experienced, impact on reconciliation. The events may be past disasters that people seek to avoid in the future or previous successes that people would strive to emulate. Finally, the availability of interveners also often fosters reconciliation.

Disasters:

The persistence and recurrence of destructive struggles sometimes provide lessons about what should be avoided. This has been the case in Franco-German enmity; the wars of 1870, 1914-1918, and 1939-1945 revealed self-perpetuating cycles of humiliation and revenge (Scheff 1994). The absence of adequate reconciliation hampered the resolution of that conflict and many others. Persistent or renewed claims by one of the parties in a past struggle are more likely to be made, if their enmity remains unreconciled, as new justifications for claims arise or as new capabilities by the claimants emerge.

The Holocaust suffered by the Jewish people of Europe has become a great object lesson of the evils that can come from anti-Semitism, and by extension from other ideologies dehumanizing any group of people. Another lesson widely drawn from the Holocaust experience is that people who do not actively oppose inhumane treatment of other humans are themselves complicit in creating the atrocities.

Furthermore, disastrous conflicts sometimes prompt actions with enduring general import for reconciliation efforts. Thus, they sometimes spur the growth of new organizations and institutions to mitigate destructive conflicts. This was the case for the establishment of the International Red Cross in 1863, the United Nations in 1945, and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in 1993.

Successes:

The example of effective reconciliation efforts also encourages other such efforts. Thus, the success of the Franco-German reconciliation is credited in part to the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community and the subsequent steps toward the European Community (Haas 1958; Kriesberg 1960). Similar, but less successful efforts were attempted in East Africa and Central America.

The South African TRC was established in 1996 after a review of earlier truth commissions in other post-conflict societies. These include the National Commission on the Disappeared (established in 1983 in Argentina), the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (established in Chile in 1990), the Commission of Inquiry into the Crimes and Misappropriations Committed by Ex-President Habre, His Accomplices and/or Accessories (established in Chad in 1990), the Commission on the Truth for El Salvador (1992), and Study Commission for the Assessment of History and Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in Germany (established in 1992). The South African TRC is a model for later efforts in other countries.

Interveners and Other Social Actors:

Contextual factors also include external interveners. They may be governments of large powerful states or of relatively small powers with control of limited resources or they may be nongovernmental actors. Interveners sometimes have a greater interest in bringing a conflict to an end than the primary actors in either camp bring. Too often,

antagonists have reasons for persisting in the struggle because they fear they will suffer greatly if they stop fighting.

Adversaries in each conflict are also engaged in other struggles, and those other struggles affect the course of the conflict between them. Reconciliation may be hastened in the context of an external conflict. Thus, the Cold War competition between the United Sates and the Soviet Union for influence in the developing world provided African Americans leverage in their struggle for more justice within the United States, and added incentive for U.S. government officials to support their civil rights struggle in a reconciliatory manner. This in turn contributed to the quality and effectiveness of U.S. official actions in Africa. On the other hand, Turkey's engagement in the First World War was used as to conduct genocidal massacres against Turkish citizens of Armenian. The Turkish governments' subsequent denials and failure to undertake reconciliation efforts not only embitters relations with Armenians, but hampers aspects of the government's other domestic and international relations (Balakian 1997; Dadrian 1995).

The end of the Cold War contributed to the striking decline in civil and international wars since the end of the 1980s (Human Security 2006; Marshall and Gurr 2005; Wallensteen 2002). Some protracted civil wars were settled because the support by the Soviet and the U.S. governments to opposing sides in the wars was ended. In addition, the end of the Cold War enabled the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to operate more effectively and avert destructive conflicts, to negotiate settlements, and to help sustain agreements.

Local Conditions

Every conflict has unique qualities, as does every post-violent situation. An important component of the relationship among groups is the balance in resources among them. This includes their population size, economic resources, organizational strength, moral claims, and many other elements. A tiny, isolated people may be particularly vulnerable if its members seek to maintain a distinctive life style, as has been the case of Roma in many countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

The local conditions also include the specific history of the relations between particular antagonists. This refers to the past humiliations, atrocities, and exploitation that one group believes it experienced at the hands of another. Some of these experiences may be traumatic for many of the people involved, and such traumas are severe obstacles to many of the steps that may be taken toward reconciliation (Chesterman et al. 2006). The history, however, also includes past cooperative undertakings, such as struggles waged in alliance. This allied work may then be used by one group to make claims for justice against another, as African-Americans have effectively done by pointing to their military service in wars against shared external enemies.

Changes in the degree to which the parties to be reconciled are part of the same social system with a common identity greatly affect the extent and nature of

reconciliation between them. For example, the reconciliation between Germans and French was greatly facilitated by their increased sense both of a common threat from the Soviet Union and of a common European identity (Ackermann 1994). Conversely, the absence of a strong common identity hampers reconciliation, as in Jewish-Arab relations. The weakening of a previously important common identity contributes to the eruption and escalation of destructive conflicts and obstructs reconciliation, as in the breakup of Yugoslavia.

The terms of the accommodation reached by former adversaries and the kind of reconciliation attained have consequences for the next steps along the path toward greater or toward lesser reconciliation. The nature of the constitution, judiciary system, the political parties, and other agencies create a vested interest for pursuing some courses and not others.

Implications

The failure to carry out any measures of reconciliation endangers the stability in the relationship between former enemies. For example, the atrocities committed during the Second World War in Yugoslavia, particularly by the Croat Ustasha forces against Serbs were not explicitly and openly adjudicated or investigated by the Yugoslavian government headed by Josip Broz Tito. The government leaders, partly on ideological grounds and concerned about stirring up ethnic animosities, treated the internal struggles among Yugoslavs in terms of class and ideological differences. In 1945, the government, however, killed many Chetniks and Ustashi as they fled with the retreating German armies. Milovan Djilas came to believe that the purges and executions of that period contributed to the resentment of Slovenians and Croatians toward the new state led by Tito (Ignatieff 1999). The unresolved ethnic hostilities were available to be aroused later and contributed to the breakup of Yugoslavia in bloody wars.

Actions that foster reconciliation need not await the ending of a conflict. Even when a conflict is being waged and escalated, attention to future coexistence and ultimate reconciliation can affect the way a struggle is conducted. For example, if the opposing ethnic group is not treated as a single unit and all its members are not dehumanized, reconciliation will be more readily attainable when the fighting ceases.

In de-escalating and ending a struggle, reassurances about seeking an equitable relationship can hasten a settlement and even a resolution of the conflict. Ethnic and other communal conflicts often are protracted and seem intractable because one or sometimes both sides feel that their very existence is at stake if they are defeated. Convincing assurances that their existence as individuals and as a people are not threatened becomes an important step toward settlement. For example, this is evident in the non-racist strategy that the African National Congress pursued in its struggle against apartheid.

Efforts to attain certain aspects of reconciliation, however, sometimes hamper ending a conflict and establishing a stable relationship. For example, demands for justice by the aggrieved party may seem to pose unacceptable demands to the dominant party. Thus, insistence upon judicial trials of the leaders of the dominant collectivity charged with human rights violations are likely to be rejected by those leaders. This obviously was a complicating factor in efforts to end the war in Bosnia in 1996. But without some measure of justice, the resulting outcome may be the imposition of injustice and a relationship that is far from equitable and therefore also is prone to renewed destructive struggle.

Changes such as increased popular participation in governance, globalized interdependence, and speedier and more extensive communication affect who engages in reconciliation work and the effectiveness of their engagement. Elites alone are less likely to initiate and sustain reconciliation work; sub elites and grass roots leaders now play a greater role than in the past. External interveners are also very important in sustaining agreements after they have been reached (Stedman et al. 2002).

The sequencing of various aspects of reconciliation are affected by the general trends in thought and material social conditions as well as the historical experience and local conditions previously discussed. For example, the growing attention to claims for respecting human rights and the increasing visibility of transgression of those rights isolates and weakens even dominant groups who would try to sustain their dominance by violent coercion. Consequently, relatively more importance is likely to be accorded to justice and security than in earlier periods.

Yet, the path toward increased recognition of the value of reconciliation in transforming destructive conflicts is not a straight line. It will continue to take twists and may even turn backward, and it will have many rough places that are hard to overcome. Atrocities will sometimes be perpetrated, justified by earlier atrocities suffered by people with whom the perpetrators identify. This is evident in events at the outset of the twenty-first century, in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. The U.S. government, under the leadership of President George W. Bush, in response to the terrible attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, shows little regard to advancing mutual and broad ranging reconciliation with peoples, organizations or governments who indirectly or directly have harmed or been harmed by the United States (Kriesberg 2007c).

Conclusions

This analysis indicates that there are many kinds and degrees of reconciliation, with different mixes of elements. In large-scale conflicts, full reconciliation in all its aspects is improbable. Often, trying to build one component undermines constructing another; but this analysis also indicates that what cannot be accomplished at one time can be built later on the foundations previously laid. Moreover, policies that might seem

incompatible, for example between ensuring justice and ending a fight, may be complementary in particular formulations and in certain contexts (Babbitt Forthcoming).

Reconciliation is not an inevitable stage in every conflict. The obstacles to comprehensive reconciliation often are so great that it is not achieved to a significant degree. The result may be ongoing embittered relations, sometimes recognized by only one side while members of the other side are unaware of those sentiments or deny them credibility, as in Turkish-Armenian relations after the 1915 massacres of Armenians.

Furthermore, the reconciliation that does occur may be fundamentally one-sided, incorporating only a few elements of a full and mutual reconciliation. That kind of accommodation would not generally be regarded as reconciliation at all. Yet it may prove to be the basis for future efforts toward substantial reconciliation. This is illustrated by changes in the relations between African-Americans and European Americans since the end of the Civil War.

The levels of reconciliation achieved are not static, but remain in flux. Different aspects of reconciliation have their own dynamic of change and also affect each other. Furthermore, various social conditions affect the workings of the many processes of reconciliation. This complexity may appear discouraging since foreseeing all the consequences of pursuing one strategy rather than another is unlikely. On the other hand, the complexity is such that many actions can make useful contributions. There is reason to believe that better information and understanding of how different sequences of steps can contribute to reaching a fuller reconciliation can help formulate and implement more effective reconciliation policies.

Notes

1. Probably, most people have undertaken some acts of reconciliation in one setting or another. I mention a personal story. Among my many identities, I am American and I am Jewish. In 1950, as a college student, I spent a summer in West Germany. In addition to other activities, I spent a short time at an international work camp, in Donaueschingen, where we helped construct housing for German refugees from the Sudetenland. Before going there, I visited a Displaced Persons camp, near Frankfurt, where Jewish survivors of the Holocaust were still waiting to emigrate and get settled out of Germany. In a conversation with one DP, I mentioned that I was going to this work camp for a while. He asked me, "How can you do that?" I understood that at that time this man could not do what I was doing, but I could, somehow, and I thought therefore I should. I felt a wide variety of emotions, contradictory and quickly changing, during that summer in Germany.

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