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Peacebuilding and state formation in post-conflict Bougainville

Paper presented at the International Peace Research Association conference

Sydney 6 – 10 July 2010

Peace and Development Commission

Session 4: Hybrid Political Orders, Peacebuilding and State Formation – Experiences from Africa, the Pacific and Asia

1.Introduction

For almost ten years (1989 to 1998) the South Pacific island of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea was the theatre of a large-scale violent conflict. Over the last decade Bougainville has undergone a comprehensive process of post-conflict peacebuilding, and currently Bougainville is in the phase of state formation (be it as an autonomous region within Papua New Guinea or as an independent state).

Peacebuilding has been a success story so far, and the prospects of state formation look promising. I shall argue that this success is mainly due to the fact that peacebuilding and state formation take into account the hybridity of political order on the ground in Bougainville and are driven by actors and institutions not only from the realm of the state, but also from the local customary sphere and civil society. I am going to explore the specific features of post-conflict peacebuilding and state formation on Bougainville, focussing on the interface of local customary and international liberal approaches. Based on the Bougainville experience, I shall develop a critique of the Western liberal peacebuilding-as-statebuilding approach to fragile post-conflict situations and its focus on capacity-building of state institutions.

Before I'll address these issues, let me give a very brief introduction to the place, the people and the violent conflict. This will provide the necessary background information for understanding the peculiarities of building peace and order on Bougainville.[1]

Violent conflict and peacebuilding

The island of Bougainville in the South Pacific, with an area of about 9,000 square kilometers (approximately the size of Cyprus) and 200,000 inhabitants, geographically belongs to the Solomon Islands archipelago. Politically, however, it is part of the state of Papua New Guinea (PNG). Bougainville society is characterized by a complex web of societies, cultures and languages that evolved in the course of thousands of years.[2] Segmentary, highly egalitarian communities on Bougainville consist of social groups of different sizes and with different functions (clans, sub-clans, lineages), with descent being the organising principle. Matrilineal descent is widespread. This provides an important social role for women; rights to land and other resources are mainly based on descent. Access to land depends on the membership in a kin-based group; the group and the land are closely interwoven. Land belongs to the whole group. Land is at the heart of life on Bougainville. Loss or scarcity of land does not only pose economic problems, but has far-reaching effects on the social structure, the spiritual life and the psychic conditions of the affected groups and their members.

Violent conflict on Bougainville in the 1990s was caused by the negative social and environmental effects of a giant mining project, the Panguna mine, which in the 1970s and 1980s was one of the largest open-pit mines in the world. For the British-Australian mining company that ran the project it brought enormous profits, and it brought considerable revenues for the central government of PNG in the far-away capital city of Port Moresby. Over the years the mine caused immense environmental destruction, thus endangering the land-based way of life of the people. An influx of large numbers of workers from outside Bougainville added to the pressure local communities were experiencing. Local people blamed outsiders—workers, expatriate company management and the agents of the central government—for not respecting indigenous culture and their special status and rights as the owners of the land.

The people in the mine area demanded meaningful environmental protection measures, compensation for environmental damage and a larger share of the revenues generated. Both the

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[1] This paper is based on fieldwork conducted in Bougainville in 2007and 2008 (and before) which explored the attitudes and activities of actors from the state, international organizations, civil society and the customary sphere with regard to peacebuilding and state formation. For earlier explorations of this topic see Boege 2006, 2008, 2009a, 2009b.

[2] For a comprehensive overview of history, society, culture and politics in Bougainville see Regan and Griffin 2005.

mining company and the PNG government rejected these demands, and this triggered the longest and bloodiest violent conflict in the South Pacific since the end of World War Two. Members of local clans brought the mine to a standstill by acts of sabotage in late 1988 and established the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). The fighting between the BRA and the security forces of the PNG government which started in the mine area soon spread across the whole island. The BRA adopted a secessionist stance and called for independence for Bougainville. BRA fighters managed to over-run and shut down the Panguna mine in 1989, and the mine has remained closed ever since; even today it is in the hands of a faction of the secessionists.

In its war against the BRA the PNG military was supported by local Bougainvillean auxiliary units, the so-called Resistance Forces. It was the Resistance that bore the brunt of the fighting on the government side. This changed the character of the conflict. From being a war of Bougainvilleans against "foreign" government troops, it became a war among Bougainvilleans themselves. Traditional local conflicts between clans were also fought under the umbrella of the "great" war of secession. Parties entangled in local conflicts either joined the BRA or the Resistance which both were made up of largely independent units. The leadership had only a limited influence on the the local fighting units on the ground. Over time the war became more and more complex, and the frontiers blurred. There were no two clear-cut sides fighting each other over one single distinctive issue as in conventional wars.

The main victims of the war were the civilians, who were subject to massive atrocities, massacres, torture, murder, arbitrary arrests, looting of property and destruction of houses and villages, rape and other gross human rights violations. They also suffered from the collapse of basic services such as health and education and the breakdown of infrastructure. Large numbers of the populace were forced to flee their homes or were forcibly resettled during the war.

One has to comprehend the Bougainville war as a hybrid social-political exchange, shaped by a patchwork of actors and interests both from the local social and the modern state sphere. The interaction and overlap of these spheres with regard to the causes of conflict, the issues at stake, the perceptions, values and motives of the conflict actors as well as the forms of their (violent) behaviour and activities gave the war its specific features.

The cornerstone of post-conflict success: customary peacebuilding in the local context

After almost ten years of privation and bloodshed a stalemate had developed in which neither side believed there was anything to be gained by continuing the war. The avenue for a peaceful solution to the conflict opened in 1997.

The history of the successive steps and stages of the political peacebuilding process, starting with talks in New Zealand in 1997 and culminating in the establishment of an Autonomous

Bougainville Government (ABG) in June 2005, shall not be recounted here. Suffice to say that an agreement in January 1998 provided for a “permanent and irrevocable” cease-fire. Since then a stable process of political peacebuilding ensued, with the Bougainville Peace Agreement (BPA) of August 2001 and the adoption of a new constitution for the Autonomous Region of Bougainville in November 2004 representing the most important political results.

Instead of going into the details of these political arrangements, I’d like to draw your attention to some of the main general features of post-conflict peacebuilding on Bougainville.[3] Of utmost importance was the utilization of local customary institutions and ways of operating. As has been said, the conflict was not just a war of secession, but a complex mixture of such a political war and localized sub-wars between societal entities such as clans, lineages, or villages. Therefore peacemaking had to address not only the ‘higher’ political level but also the ‘lower’ level of (inter-)communal conflicts. Negotiations and agreements between political and military leaders at the top were not sufficient. Agreements and reconciliation at the grassroots were of at least similar importance. This (inter-)communal peacebuilding was largely based on local customary approaches.

Local customary institutions had experienced a resurgence during the time of war when ‘the state’ and its institutions had been forced to withdraw from Bougainville, leading to a period and situation of statelessness. The PNG government was no longer able to maintain a monopoly over the legitimate use of force, nor did the secessionist movement manage to establish one. This opened the space for a resurgence of non-state customary institutions. In many places elders and chiefs once more became responsible for regulating conflicts and organizing everyday community life. In doing so, they referred to customary norms and ways of operating.

Elders and chiefs as well as women leaders were also entrusted with an important role when violent conflicts had to be settled in the transition phase from war to peace. “In many areas the dispute settlement role of the chiefs was of great importance to the peace process. It reduced the tensions that were often the driving force in violent localised conflict, including that between BRA and Resistance Forces. In some cases the roles of chiefs in promoting peace went much further. Some exerted control over local BRA or Resistance Forces, limiting them to defensive roles. Some played major parts in initiating reconciliation between groups in conflict” (Regan 2000: 297). Chiefs and elders were widely successful in achieving reconciliation at the intra- and inter-communal level, applying customary ways of conflict resolution. Many customary peace processes have taken place at the local level between enemy villages and clans all over the island since the end of the war, some of which have not been concluded even today, and more are still to come.

[3] For the description and discussion of various aspects of peacebuilding on Bougainville see the contributions in Carl and Garasu 2002.

At the core of customary peacebuilding is the restoration of social harmony among the conflicting parties. To achieve this, a lengthy and complicated process of negotiating is necessary, carried out by authorised leaders of the parties involved who are esteemed for their detailed knowledge of the history of relations between the parties, of kinship ties and of social circumstances prevailing in the conflict setting. In the process a common understanding of the causes and the history of the conflict has to be developed and the – material and spiritual - conditions for reconciliation have to be determined. Only after consensus has been established - shared by all the members of the conflicting parties - a peace agreement can be reached and reconciliation ceremonies conducted.

Reconciliation is cemented by the exchange of gifts (compensation) for damage done and wrongs committed. The exchange takes place in the context of peace ceremonies when former adversaries feast together, eating, drinking, dancing together, chewing betel nut together, symbolically breaking spears and arrows etc. In peace ceremonies, Christian elements like church services and prayers are combined with more customary activities. As the great majority of Bougainvilleans are devout Christians, the combination of indigenous and Christian spirituality is of major importance for peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Moreover, the customary local peace processes were 'modernized' in various other forms. Local 'peace committees' or 'district reconciliation steering committees' were formed, and local mini 'peace treaties' were elaborated, put into writing and signed. Local peacebuilders also took over 'foreign' conflict resolution knowledge and adjusted it to their specific needs. For example, the NGO Peace Foundation Melanesia (PFM) commenced training of locals as mediators, facilitators and negotiators in conflicts at the local level as early as 1995, at the height of the war. Over time, PFM has conducted mediation courses for several thousand participants. Several hundred village leaders have been trained as facilitators, and several dozens as trainers. These village-based, elicitive courses did not introduce fixed western-style concepts of conflict resolution into the Bougainvillean environment, but built on the customary indigenous experiences, in particular by heavily referring to the concept of restorative justice, revitalizing customary ways and adapting them to contemporary needs, e.g. by introducing more 'modern' training techniques (Howley 2002). After the war, PFM initiated the establishment of so-called 'Peace and Good Order Committees' in many Bougainvillean villages. Even today these committees often substitute for the judicial and police institutions of the state which are still very limited in their capacity, effectiveness and legitimacy.

Peacebuilding in the various locales on Bougainville thus was a local-liberal hybrid, with a clear preponderance of local agency.

High-level political peacebuilding activities were also hybridised, although local agency at this level was less visible. At first sight it looks like these activities followed a typical international liberal template that is too familiar from other post-conflict peacebuilding theaters – negotiations

facilitated by an external third party, a cease-fire, a peace agreement, a constitution, elections etc. At the same time, however, the high level activities were also to a large extent imbued with local ways of operating.

This becomes clear when one takes a closer look at, for example, the issues of process and inclusiveness.

Different concepts of time, depending on cultural contexts, are of major significance for success or failure of peacebuilding processes. “Melanesian time” or “Solomon time” or “Bougainville time” differ from western time regimes. “Unmelanesian haste” is no good for peacebuilding in a place like Bougainville. The local actors on Bougainville succeeded in maintaining their pace of doing things and in adjusting international peacebuilding timetables to local needs and customs. This meant first and foremost that the Bougainville peace process was and is framed in a long-term perspective. This holds true for the process as a whole as well as for its single elements. Peacebuilding on Bougainville is now in its twelfth year, and it has not been completed yet. Dozens of rounds of talks and negotiations and a host of intermediate agreements, memoranda of understandings, protocols and so forth were necessary to make progress – very slowly as it might seem from an outsider’s perspective. However, each and every step and the time needed to take those steps helped to stabilize the peace.

During negotiations participants took their time, too. The first rounds of talks between the parties in New Zealand in 1997/1998 used to take weeks. The New Zealand hosts were so prudent as not to dictate a timetable. Rather they provided for a lot of ‘free’ time, so that there was enough time for the representatives of the parties to adjust, to spend time with each other without the duress of a tight time schedule.

Of utmost importance, too, was that no time frame was given regarding demobilisation and weapons disposal. At the beginning. there was only general agreement on a three-phased open-ended weapons disposal process. The real weapons disposal only started in December 2001, that was four years after cessation of armed conflict, and no dates were set as to when the single stages of the process had to be accomplished. Weapons disposal was not finalised officially until the year 2005.[4]

The focus on process and on long time frames is very much in line with local customary principles and methods of peacebuilding. At the same time it poses a major challenge for the international actors whose mindset is determined by the notion of ‘getting things done’ and ‘getting things done as quick as possible’.

[4] Even today there are still weapons in the communities so that the ABG had declared it necessary to have a new round of weapons disposal, which produced first results in 2009 and 2010.

In sum, the pace of the process was owned by the locals, and the time frames were their time frames.

Another important dimension of the Bougainville peacebuilding process was its inclusiveness. This also reflects local ways of operating. As has been shown, customary dispute settlement necessitates the participation and commitment of all members of the parties involved in conflict. Respectively, in Bougainville a very broad process of debate was organised, trying to include all stakeholders at all levels of society. 'High-level' peace talks were each attended by dozens, if not hundreds of Bougainvilleans, not only by the political and military leadership. Truce and ceasefire agreements were not only signed by those leaders, but also by the local commanders of the BRA and the Resistance Forces as well as by traditional authorities and by representatives of civil society, e.g. church leaders and village elders. This made the agreements more binding and easier to implement. Of special importance was the involvement of women. On account of the matrilineal organisation of most of the communities on Bougainville, women have a strong social position, particularly in the context of village and clan. Although women were mainly active in peacebuilding at a local level and in the background, there were also women representatives attending all the high-level rounds of negotiations.[5] The presence of women, representatives of civil society and traditional authorities was of utmost importance for the success of the negotiations. They constituted a third party, reflecting the feelings of the grassroots, and their authority to speak on behalf of the people was recognised by the leaders of the conflicting parties.

Local actors managed to impose their understanding of proper representation and participation in political negotiations, and this differs from conventional international practice. Accordingly, the forms of negotiations differed from what would be seen as 'normal' through the international/liberal lens. Extended times of prayer and singing together, for example, were integral parts of the negotiations – activities which from the external actors' point of view can easily be misjudged as folkloristic and tokenistic accessories to the 'real' business.

In sum, high-level peacebuilding on Bougainville was a liberal-local hybrid, following a liberal international template, but significantly imbued with local ways of operating.

Putting together the findings on the top-bottom and the local-international interface, it can be said that the Bougainville peace process owes it success to a combination of activities at the top and at the bottom as well as to a combination of liberal introduced and local customary ways of operating. While the peace process 'at the top' followed more the international/liberal peacebuilding template, the processes 'at the bottom' were dominated by local customary practices. However, the logic of local customary peacebuilding also permeated the 'top' processes, and the liberal approach coloured and re-formed processes at the 'bottom'. What

[5] For an account of the role of women in peacebuilding see the contributions in Havini and Sirivi 2004.

ensued was a liberal-local or a local-liberal hybrid. And it was due to the permeation of liberal forms with local agency that the negotiations at the 'higher' political level led to a comprehensive peace settlement while the sustainability of this settlement depended on the maintenance of everyday customary conflict resolution practice in the local context.

The international assistance: helpful, but not dominating

Although the success of peacebuilding in Bougainville is rooted locally, external support has to be acknowledged. Mention has to be made of the activities of the New Zealand government, the United Nations observer mission and the everyday routine operations of first an international Truce Monitoring Group (TMG) and later an international Peace Monitoring Group (PMG).

New Zealand played a positive part initiating the peace process. It offered Quiet Diplomacy and Good Services and acted as a facilitator. All conflict parties trusted the New Zealanders. It was only because the New Zealand government provided logistical assistance, hosted the initial rounds of talks and offered an open and warm atmosphere to participants that the peace process got off the ground.

The UN sent a small, but highly effective Observer Mission. Its symbolic value, demonstrating the international community's interest in events on Bougainville, as well as its contribution to conceptualising and implementing the weapons disposal process should not be underestimated. The UN personnel on the ground proved to be patient, culturally sensitive and committed. The engagement was long-term, it was only at the end of June 2005, after the ABG elections, that the observer mission came to an end.

Neighbouring countries provided the personnel for first a Truce Monitoring Group (TMG) and later a Peace Monitoring Group (PMG), which stayed on the island until June 2003 and over time won the trust of all sides.[6] Co-operation with the conflict parties ran smoothly, and in many places cordial relations with villagers and elders were established. Given the significance of personal relationships in a Melanesian cultural context this relationship building was of utmost importance.

The make-up of the international TMG/PMG deserves special attention: in contrast to the mainstream tendency of having so-called robust peace-keeping mandates and interventions, the TMG/PMG was an unarmed unit, comprised of both military and civilian personnel, men and women, stemming from Australia, NZ, Fiji and Vanuatu. Of major significance was the participation of women. Bougainville women had female counterparts among the outsiders of the

[6] For a comprehensive account of the TMG/PMG see the contributions in Monica Wehner and Donald Denoon 2001 and in Adams 2001.

TMG/PMG. The participation of personnel from Fiji and Vanuatu was also important given their Melanesian cultural background that they shared with the Bougainvilleans.

The willingness and capability of the PMG to accept local traditions and behave with appropriate cultural sensitivity laid the grounds for its success. This meant, for example, that Sunday after Sunday the peace monitors had to sit through five-hour long church services, or that they had their faces rubbed with oil from a traditionally cooked pudding during village welcome ceremonies.

The Bougainvilleans managed to control of the extent and content of the activities of the external actors at all times. This was mainly due to the fact that the local actors were successful in their insistence on having an unarmed intervention. This arrangement was carried through by the locals against considerable initial concerns of the interveners who felt unease about being unarmed in a volatile post-conflict situation, and it meant that the interveners were dependent on the locals for their security and protection and not capable of enforcing anything against the locals' wishes or interests. Hence the power relations between the internationals and the locals were in the latters' favour (while in most other cases of internationally assisted peacebuilding the former have the upper hand).

Moreover, the locals were extremely smart in utilizing the capacities provided by the internationals for their own purposes. For instance, transport by PMG helicopter was extensively used by chiefs to get them to and from local peace meetings, or villagers made comprehensive use of the PMG medical facilities, and the men used the paper of all the leaflets, flyers, newsletters etc. distributed by the TMG/PMG for rolling their bush tobacco in. So one may argue that it was not such much the TMG/PMG's 'core business' prescribed by the liberal peacebuilding agenda (supervise the cease-fire, assist in weapons disposal) which made it really useful in everyday life, but more the 'collateral goods' that its presence provided for the locals.

A home-grown variety of the state

Peacebuilding on Bougainville has been going on for more than a decade now, and it has not come to an end yet. The focus of political endeavours, however. has shifted to the necessities of building new state institutions. The framework for this is provided by the Bougainville Peace Agreement (BPA) of August 2001. It has as its two core political provisions: firstly, the establishment of the 'Autonomous Region of Bougainville' as a special political entity within the state of PNG; and, secondly, a referendum on the future political status of Bougainville—either complete independence or autonomy within PNG. The referendum is to be held ten to fifteen years after the establishment of an autonomous government for Bougainville (which took place in 2005). State-building in Bougainville will therefore provide for either a completely independent state in the future (with autonomy as a transitional phase to independence) or for a

widely autonomous political entity within PNG. Both options necessitate the establishment of new state institutions.

In the process of state-making Bougainvilleans can and do rely heavily on the positive experiences of the post-conflict peacebuilding phase. As local customary institutions have proven to be effective in peacebuilding over the last years, there is a case for their utilisation in the current process of state formation as well.

Many Bougainvilleans—out of bitter negative experience—nurture a deep distrust of western-style centralised government structures and processes. They prefer a system of governance based on their own indigenous norms. The Bougainville Constitutional Commission (BCC) reflects this popular attitude by criticising introduced forms of governance and the colonisers who imposed them: "We feel that kastom has often been the missing ingredient from past governments imposed on Bougainville, and from the laws of PNG that have applied in Bougainville. This probably happened because our various colonial masters were suspicious about things they did not understand. There was also a patronising view that the colonial approach must be better. As a result during those times there developed an undue reliance on colonial approaches and the style of laws and enforcement used in the homelands of the colonisers" (Bougainville Constitutional Commission 2004, 117).

The BCC distances itself from those approaches and commits itself to building political institutions for the new Bougainville that overcome the over-reliance on introduced liberal forms.

"The people have made it clear that they want their government to be built firmly on the basis of kastomary authority. It must recognise the existing authority of traditional chiefs and other traditional leaders, and must build linkages with those leaders. The people wish to see kastomary authority recognised within the formal government arrangements" (Bougainville Constitutional Commission 2004, 55).

There is a strong desire to "marry" local customary and introduced liberal institutions and processes for the purposes of state-formation. And in fact, political order on Bougainville today comprises of elements of the Western model of statehood (a constitution, a president and a parliament, free and fair elections, a public service etc.) and elements of customary governance (chiefs and elders, village assemblies, councils of chiefs, councils of elders, customary law). To a certain degree these domains merely co-exist, with complementarities and synergies, but also frictions and incompatibilities; and to a certain degree there are efforts towards deliberate combination and integration (the above-mentioned 'marriage').

What can be witnessed in Bougainville today is the development of a home-grown variety of the state, based on the hybridity of political order on the ground.[7] In hybrid political orders, diverse and competing authority structures, sets of rules, logics of order and claims to power co-exist, overlap and intertwine, combining elements of introduced western models of governance and elements stemming from local indigenous traditions of governance and politics, with further influences exerted by the forces of globalization and international civil society. In this socio-political environment, the 'state' does not have a privileged position as the political framework that provides security, welfare and representation; it has to share authority, legitimacy and capacity with other structures. In particular, the Weberian concept of the state monopoly of violence is not applicable to hybrid political orders.

Indeed, the state monopoly over the legitimate use of force, which is seen as the decisive means for the maintenance of order and peace in fully-fledged states, does not exist on Bougainville. The ABG has not established such a monopoly, and it demonstrates astuteness as it deliberately abstains from trying to enforce it, as every attempt to do so will likely result in new unrest and trouble. What is generally seen as a *sine qua non* of statehood, namely the capacity to implement and enforce the 'rule of (state) law', is lacking in Bougainville. This 'deficiency', however, has not hindered post-conflict peacebuilding and order maintenance.

The maintenance of peace, order and security is based on the complementary efforts of formal state and informal customary actors as well as civil society. The actors from these different spheres recognise the contributions made by the institutions of the other spheres, and nobody is of the opinion that the institutions of one sphere could entirely substitute for the institutions of the others.

This situation poses a major challenge to state actors. They have to concede that a core state function—namely maintenance of order and security—is not only (and even more so, not primarily) fulfilled by the respective agencies of the state. The chiefs and other traditional authorities have considerable capacities in this regard in the local context, and they certainly have the legitimacy to fulfill this function. In the main, state actors do not question this.

[7] The concept of hybrid political orders has been elaborated by a research team at the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies over the last few years. This concept flowed from a critique of the current mainstream discourse on so-called fragile states and situations as well as its corollary, the promotion of conventional state-building along the lines of the western OECD model state. It is an analytical instrument to grasp the realities of governance in fragile regions of the Global South. In hybrid political orders different types of authority can be found that co-exist, compete, overlap and blend, and hybrid forms of legitimacy prevail. The term 'hybrid' is used because it is (1) broad enough to encompass a variety of non-state forms of order and governance on the local 'traditional' side (from (neo-) patrimonial to acephalous), because it (2) focuses on the combination of elements that stem from genuinely different societal sources which follow different logics, and because it (3) affirms that these spheres do not exist in isolation from each other, but permeate each other and, consequently, give rise to different and genuine political orders that are characterised by the closely interwoven texture of their separate sources of origin. See Boege, Volker, M. Anne Brown, Kevin Clements and Anna Nolan 2008; Boege, Volker, M. Anne Brown, Kevin Clements and Anna Nolan 2009; Maren Kraushaar and Daniel Lambach 2009.

On Bougainville today, legal pluralism reigns, with unwritten customary law being strong in relation to the written law of the state. The formal justice system is relatively weak, removed from the everyday life of most Bougainvilleans. It is the chiefs who routinely maintain peace and order in their villages. Problems are solved the customary way, and only if this is not possible, recourse to statutory law might be taken into account. Accordingly, the services provided by the police (and the courts) are of only minor relevance. Police function relatively effectively and gain legitimacy only when working together with the chiefs and communities. Indeed, the police are constitutionally obliged to closely cooperate with Councils of Elders and traditional leaders in the communities (Bougainville Constitution, clause 148). Police can only gain access to most villages after invitation by the chiefs (although this is not a legal provision, it is the reality on the ground). Restorative justice in the community context is preferred to retributive/punitive justice in the state context.

Summary and conclusion: hybrid forms of peace and political order

Bougainville has become a success story of peacebuilding and state formation based on positive mutual accommodation of local customary and introduced liberal institutions and procedures, thus bringing about a unique Bougainvillean form of political community and of 'post-liberal peace' (Richmond 2009a; Richmond 2009b), grounded in the hybrid political orders of the locale.

Local agency drove the peacebuilding process, with the external actors feeding in their resources, interests and aims. Based on customary institutions and ways of operating, the locals successfully maintained agency in the everyday interaction with external actors. Customary institutions have proven to be remarkably resilient and of major significance for the organisation of the everyday life of local people, not least during the 'stateless' times of the violent conflict and its immediate aftermath. Accordingly, kastom played an important role in post-conflict peacebuilding. Kastom as everyday practice was the main resource that local actors were able to draw upon in their endeavours to build peace and in their interactions with external (international and central government) actors. Based on kastom, they managed to maintain autonomy and agency; they were neither forced into outright acceptance of the international liberal peace agenda nor into outright resistance. Rather, they were able to negotiate the local-liberal interface largely on their own terms. In the process of the everyday local-international exchange, the locals succeeded in implementing specific hybrid forms of peace and political order.

The Bougainville case is evidence that the Western perception of the weakness of state institutions as a problem for the maintenance of peace and order is too short-sighted – at least when dealing with communities with working norms of local governance, as is its corollary, the promotion of liberal state-building along the lines of the OECD state model as *the* ideal and only acceptable model for controlling violence and building sustainable peace and development. The Bougainville experience demonstrates that the conventional Western perception which equates

the absence of state-induced order to a complete absence of order is much too narrow. Beyond the state there are other actors and institutions, local customary ways of operating and means of maintaining peace, controlling violence and resolving conflicts. The maintenance of peace, order and security in Bougainville depends on the cooperation of formal state and informal non-state customary (and civil society) actors. Functions that in fully-fledged Western liberal states are considered to be core domains of the state are fulfilled effectively and legitimately by non-state actors and institutions.

So what can be witnessed in Bougainville today is the development of a hybrid form of peace and a home-grown variety of the state, based on the hybridity of political order on the ground. From a liberal Western standpoint both the everyday peace on Bougainville as well as 'the state' might look quite 'fragile', 'incomplete', 'fragmented', 'deficient' - which is to say that they simply do not fit the model of the liberal state and the model of liberal peace. But for the Bougainvilleans their own way of doing 'peace' and 'state' opens avenues to create peaceful political community beyond the liberal packages offered by the international peacebuilding and state-building industry. Hybrid governance structures are emerging that might differ considerably from the Western liberal state but that at the same time can become more efficient and legitimate in controlling violence and providing a framework for the non-violent conduct of conflict, as they are grounded locally.

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