

Enemy Friends: Silence and the Limits of Transitional Justice at Melanesian Boarding Schools

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January 2021

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of
The Australian National University

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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text. It does not exceed the ANU's maximum length for a Doctor of Philosophy thesis.

David James Oakeshott

January 2021

Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to my primary supervisor, Dr Matthew Allen, and the other members of my supervisory panel, Dr John Cox, Dr Lia Kent, and Dr Sinclair Dinnen. They have been outstanding teachers.

My PhD cohort at the Coral Bell School of Asia-Pacific Affairs also deserve special thanks for the intellectually engaging, emotionally supportive, and fun learning environment in which I have found myself. My thesis has benefited tremendously from their friendship and insightful critique of my ideas and writing.

The unfailing support from my parents, Robyn and John Oakeshott, and fiancé Jessica Phillips, have also been invaluable. With encouragement and advice from mum, dad, and Jess I have been able to take each opportunity that my teachers and cohort have offered me to grow as a scholar.

I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to the students, teachers, administrators, and friends with whom I worked in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. Without their hospitality, generosity, and patience this thesis would not have been possible. I respect and admire their commitment to each other and thus to a peaceful future for Bougainville and Solomon Islands.

Papua New Guinea's National Research Institute provided the visa, and the Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development the permit, which allowed me to travel to the region from the unceded land of the Ngunnawal people. Nor could I have undertaken fieldwork without the willingness of the Marist Brothers District of Melanesia to facilitate the journey.

My research was supported financially by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship, and a fieldwork grant and scholarship extension from the Department of Pacific Affairs.

Parts of chapters 3 and 5 appear in a forthcoming issue of *The Contemporary Pacific*. Debra McDougall and Rachel Hicks deserve special thanks for their comments on these chapters.

Truly, there has been little to stop me from writing the best dissertation I could manage, and thus any remaining errors are mine.

Abstract

Transitional justice scholars and practitioners often suggest that silence about the violent past in public discourse indicates a denial of what happened during recent civil violence. Many therefore advocate a significant role for education in post-conflict transitional justice processes. Specifically, they encourage the writing and teaching of history, including explicit coverage of the prior violence, as an academic discipline. The idea is that history education can correct important misconceptions about the conflict and its origins and help students find comfort with opposing perspectives on the events. However, having conducted a multi-sited, ethnographic, and interpretivist research project at secondary boarding schools in Melanesia's two post-conflict settings—Bougainville and Solomon Islands—I find this view of silence and its remedy not only a poor fit with Melanesian approaches to reconciliation, but a narrow foundation from which to understand schooling as a mechanism of transitional justice.

I argue that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders look back on their violent pasts through the prism of their relationships to others, and that schooling gives them ample scope to develop and practice that relationship to the past, even in the new connections they form with their colleagues and peers. I establish that their place-based forms of transitional justice, that is to say indigenous ideas about justice incorporating customary, foreign and even colonial influences, revolve around reconciliation processes that generally require individuals to refuse to discuss the violent past with others. Then I apply two concepts, concentrated on the seemingly mundane aspects of daily life, to the integrated boarding schools I studied. One is Michel de Certeau's notion of the "everyday" and the other, "cultural production," comes from critical ethnographies of schooling. I explain how refusals to discuss the violent past helped the teachers and students form meaningful relationships across their differences, including the differences at issue during the two civil conflicts. However, because of their interactions in everyday life at school, the teachers and students also developed ideas about "real culture" in which they constructed a particular vision of their constituent cultures. This vision left them susceptible to the sorts of land and identity politics that led to the civil conflicts and to perceiving an unequal relationship between the village and town as part of their national identities. Thus in this thesis I suggest how an ex-militant in Solomon Islands, George Gray, could describe his former school mates as his "enemy friends."

Given that place-based transitional justice can deny the stories of Bougainvillean and Solomon Islander women, I suggest that classical transitional justice theory may have some limited value for these women if it is responsive to their social lives. Overall, however, I question the utility of history

taught as an academic discipline for post-colonial contexts like Bougainville and Solomon Islands. Instead, I suggest that if transitional justice scholars and practitioners understand formal education in the context of legacies of colonisation, then they might find scope to address those legacies, as well as the violent past, with locally meaningful versions of social studies education.

List of Abbreviations

ABG	Autonomous Bougainville Government
BRA	Bougainville Revolutionary Army
BRF	Bougainville Resistance Forces
BSIP	British Solomon Islands Protectorate
CHS	Community High School
EA	Education Authority
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice
IFM	Isatabu Freedom Movement
MEF	Malaita Eagle Force
MEHRD	Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development
MNURP	Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace
NSS	National Secondary School
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PNGDF	Papua New Guinea Defence Force
PSS	Provincial Secondary School
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
SICDD	Solomon Islands Curriculum Development Division
SITRC	Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission
SSEC	South Seas Evangelical Church

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Few Solomon Islanders had seen their country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report when I travelled to St Joseph's Catholic Secondary School in June 2013 for a month of fieldwork into the country's post-conflict history education reform, the topic of my Honours thesis (Oakeshott 2013). The Solomon Islands government had been refusing to table the five volume report in Parliament since the Prime Minister (PM) took possession of approximately forty copies of it in late February 2012. Transitional justice practitioners and scholars, having devoted their careers to the use and study of institutional and other mechanisms through which countries emerging from authoritarianism or civil conflict "transition" to democracy or lasting peace, would have found the Prime Minister's public justification for suppressing the report strikingly familiar. According to the PM, the Solomon Islands TRC report was sensitive and its public release could threaten the contemporary peace. Nor would the transitional justice community have been surprised by the politics beneath the public rhetoric; not only was the Solomon Islands TRC report politically embarrassing for several former militants turned politicians, but the report had the potential to embroil those politicians and the government itself in lengthy and expensive mediation for compensation (Brown 2018, 226–30).

Bishop Terry Brown, who had been contracted to do the final edits before its presentation to parliament, grew increasingly impatient as the government sat on the report. The Bishop has an intimate connection to Solomon Islands that began before the country received independence from Britain in 1978 and continued during the civil conflict, when he was based in Auki, the provincial capital of Malaita Province. After over a year of waiting his patience ran out and, following consultation with Solomon Islander friends, including some ex-militants, he released the report publicly. His action garnered some media attention and was condemned by the government. In the press release he used to explain his actions he described the report as essentially what transitional justice desires for its truth commissions: "the report is very accurate and comprehensive and gives proper recognition to the victims of the conflict whose stories should be heard. It is not good enough to forgive the perpetrators and forget the victims..." (Brown 2013). Bishop Brown thought the report overcame the refusal of elites to acknowledge their roles in the violence and centred the story on the victims. Also among his motives was the master narrative about truth-telling that has informed much of transitional justice practice, and its scholarship on education. Bishop Brown said:

I am convinced that the TRC Report, as an exercise in truth telling, painful as the recollection may sometimes be, will help bring about the lasting justice, peace, reconciliation and unity that Solomon Islands so badly needs. (Brown 2013)

In other words, Bishop Brown wanted Solomon Islands to do what mainstream transitional justice urges all post-conflict settings to do: use the catharsis of truth-telling to sever the violent past's connection to the present and allow the country to move on. Education had a role in this, which the report itself acknowledged. In fact, one of the report's recommendations was that it "be used as a textbook for students to learn and appreciate the history of the conflict" (SITRC 2012, 806).

I agreed completely. The recommendation resonated with Elizabeth A. Cole's suggestion that education, particularly history education, could become for transitional justice "a kind of secondary phase that reflects and embodies the state's commitment to institutionalising transitional justice processes like truth commissions..." (2007, 123). Moreover, by 2013 a body of scholarship had emerged extolling the virtues of history education as a means to undo the pervasive silencing of minority groups in the textbooks of the past and the more general denial of state repression (E. Cole 2007; Foster and Crawford 2006). Thus, as I was due to arrive in Solomon Islands barely a month after Bishop Brown released the report, I printed large sections of it before I left Australia with the intention of leaving them behind as a resource for the teachers and students at St Joseph's. I imagined that I would be living at the school, located just outside the capital, Honiara, during a period when the controversial release of the report, not to mention the report itself, would be on the lips of many on Honiara's streets and in the staffroom, dining hall, dormitories and maybe even classrooms of St Joseph's.

However, instead I found that neither the report nor Bishop Brown's leak of it appeared at all in everyday discourse. The silence did not indicate disinterest towards the conflict that had gripped Solomon Islands from 1998 to 2003 (called "the Tension" locally), but instead represented a strong preference for not talking about it. Sharing details about the violent past was inappropriate, even potentially dangerous, unless a specific set of circumstances were met. This significantly constrained public discourse about the violent past and shaped elite, teacher and student perspectives on whether or not to use the TRC report as a textbook (Oakeshott 2013). Thus, to my surprise, the government's public justification for not releasing the report rang true for many Solomon Islanders even though it was also convenient for the politicians whom the report implicated. The teachers' and students' perspectives shook my confidence in the usefulness of the truth commission's detailed account of the Tension for history education. As I prepared to return to Australia I was entirely uncertain about what to do with the printouts of the TRC report I had brought with me. In the end I left them where I felt they could cause no harm, in my carry-on luggage.

My reluctance to leave the report at the school reflected my sense that Solomon Islanders had a relationship to their violent past that mainstream transitional justice theory could not recognise. Certainly, the Tension was a presence in everyday life at the school. St Joseph's had been a battlefield between the two main militia groups. There were bullet holes in walls, a large cooking pot in the kitchen that students still refused to use because of what militants had done with it, and the tree where a militant had been hanged still stood at the entrance to the school. Members of all "sides" to the conflict were even well represented in the student and teacher populations. There was a silence about the Tension and its markers at the school, but they were neither forgotten nor denied.

Moreover, from my month-long visit I could see that at St Joseph's in 2013 there was nothing like what Briony Jones (2012, 145) noted in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where a teacher described her classroom as "a bomb of hatred about to explode." Instead, at St Joseph's, individuals from all sides shared their classrooms and grounds peacefully. It was common to hear students describe their peers as "brothers" and "sisters." There were even events written into the school's program that gave students the chance to draw attention to their cultural differences and the teachers considered it part of their duty to facilitate those kinds of interactions (Oakeshott 2013, 60–61; Oakeshott and Allen 2015, 13). It struck me that the way young people at St Joseph's were relating to each other might be important for transitional justice scholarship because the field has had relatively few opportunities to learn from examples of integrated schooling in post-conflict contexts (Paulson 2015, 35). Consequently, taking their cues from education and conflict scholarship, transitional justice scholars have spent more time developing a sophisticated understanding of schooling's capacity to entrench divisions and hatred amongst different groups (King 2014; Lange 2012; Bellino and Williams 2017). My early research experience at St Joseph's sat uncomfortably amongst talk of entrenched divisions, irreconcilable differences, and bombs of hatred.

The experience left me curious about two issues for transitional justice scholarship in particular. Solomon Islanders had cast doubt over the method for overcoming the violent past Bishop Brown articulated above: truth-telling. More specifically, they had called into question how scholars and practitioners of transitional justice conceptualise and understand silences about past violence. This, in turn, had consequences for the field's entry point into education: the Solomon Islands TRC recommended its report be used as a textbook after all, and such recommendations have become increasingly common in truth commission reports (Paulson and Bellino 2017). The second issue I

puzzled over, therefore, concerned the potential possibilities for education as a vehicle for transitional justice if the field's starting point took into account how silences about the violent past were understood locally and the effects those silences had on relationships between "intimate enemies" (Theidon 2013) in the present.

Those two issues, how transitional justice understands silences and their implications for schooling as a vehicle of transitional justice, became the focus of my PhD research. To investigate them I extended my research into a multi-sited project (Marcus 1999) within and beyond Solomon Islands. Although St Joseph's remained the principle case study school in my research in Solomon Islands, I also conducted semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observation at two other secondary boarding schools. Additionally, my research extended into two boarding schools in Bougainville, an autonomous region of Papua New Guinea (PNG), which borders Solomon Islands and was ravaged by a civil conflict (known as "the Crisis") from 1988 to 1999. As I detail below there were several important similarities between the two conflicts, particularly the local level character of the violence.

The overarching argument that I present in this thesis is that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders try to make sense of the violent past through the prism of their relationships to others, which is a view on the past that shapes the nature of schooling's contribution to sustainable peace in each place. I found teachers, students, and Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders more generally, typically maintained silences similar to those I observed at St Joseph's in 2013. The data have led me to the view that the silences in everyday life and discourse were the products of deliberate refusals to speak about violence because those refusals, which revolved around reconciliation processes (chapter 4), acknowledged and respected the relationships to which individuals belonged. I will show that the secondary boarding schools where I worked were places where teachers and students produced conceptualisations of knowledge and models of an "educated person" (Levinson and Holland 1996) that reaffirmed the importance of honouring relationships by refusing to talk about the violent past. However, the data also show that amidst the harmonious elements of everyday life at school was an "ideology of landownership" (Filer 1997) that could frame the relationships colleagues and peers built with each other in ways that had the potential to undermine the harmony between them. Consequently, my argument also illustrates how the schools could simultaneously recreate some of the conditions that saw the Tension and Crisis break out. That is, my argument traces how teachers and students became, in the words of a former militant from Guadalcanal, "enemy friends" (Tanis and Gray 2002). The findings clash with several assumptions underpinning

transitional justice and its mechanisms, and thus offer grounds from which to redirect the field's research into education.

In the remainder of this chapter I outline the prevailing view of silence in transitional justice discourse, the effect it has had on how education is conceptualised within the field, and the research questions that follow and which I have investigated. Then I introduce Bougainville and Solomon Islands. I show that relationality and connectedness were themes that even ran through the divisions of the Crisis and Tension. I then outline why enemy friends is a useful organisational device around which to structure my answers to my research questions. The term captures the “place-based” (Shaw and Waldorf 2010) version of transitional justice in “the everyday” (de Certeau 1984) of Bougainville and Solomon Islands. I also introduce the concept I have used to analyse the formation of enemy friends in everyday life at school, “cultural production” (Levinson and Holland 1996). Finally, I explain how the argument develops over the course of the coming chapters.

Silence and schooling in transitional justice

In my view, scholarship in transitional justice has typically underappreciated what silences can signal about a post-conflict context's relationship to its violent past (feminist transitional justice scholars such as Ross (2010), Kent (2014, 2016), and Clark (2020) being noteworthy exceptions; see chapter 2). In this section I sketch prevailing views about silence within transitional justice, their implications for how education is conceptualised as one of its mechanisms, and the research questions that follow from this scholarship.

Silence has often been positioned within transitional justice scholarship and practice as a symptom of something undesirable: an absence of acknowledgement and failure to reckon with the past. This has been the case because transitional justice developed an educational logic that became explicit at the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Wilson (2003, 370) explained the relationship which truth commissions try to construct between the past and present:

the new national self is one which is forged in the suffering and violence of the past, but no element of that political past has entered into the present. The present political order is presented as purified, decontaminated and disconnected from the old authoritarian order.

Truth commissions were originally designed to report on the “forensic truth” of human rights abuses during a specified period of conflict (Hayner 2011, 11–12; Rushton 2006, 126). Thus the emphasis on national healing was an expansion of its aims, which found full expression at the South African TRC

process (Millar 2010, 480–81; Wilson 2001, 97). It was clear during that process exactly how a truth commission would seek to sever the connection between the violent past and the present and future. In his Forward to the TRC report, Archbishop Desmond Tutu drew vivid allusions to the suffering (national) body:

however painful the experience, the wounds of the past must not be allowed to fester. They must be opened. They must be cleansed. And balm must be poured on them so they can heal. This is not to be obsessed with the past. It is to take care that the past is properly dealt with for the sake of the future. (quoted in Shaw 2007, 190)

These references to the suffering body originate in Christian ideas around confession and the modern disciplines of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, all of which encourage individuals to find catharsis in articulations of traumatic experiences (ibid., 192). Thus, national reconciliation would be achieved through the “painful verbalisation of memories of violence” (ibid., 191). The South African TRC became a model for all transitional justice mechanisms regardless of the contexts in which they were applied (Shaw 2007, 193; Posel 2008, 130–31). And by the early 2000s the link between transitional justice’s versions of truth-telling and reconciliation had been made so frequently that they had become taken for granted parts of transitional justice (Borer 2004, 21). In this context, silence meant a failure at the individual through to national levels to acknowledge past violence.

This break with the past narrative carried through to transitional justice research into education. While an obvious way that education could support a TRC’s work to break with the past was through the inclusion of the TRC’s findings in school textbooks (E. Cole and Barsalou 2006; E. Cole 2007, 121; Paulson 2009; 2010, 333–34), doing so echoed how curricular materials had been used to contribute to several conflicts (Bekerman and Zembylas 2012, 84). In many contexts, transmitting a national narrative in history education has required an undemocratic and teacher-centred pedagogical style based on lecturing and rote learning (Weinstein et al. 2007, 65). Through this pedagogy students effectively learn that independence, creativity and even the critical assessment of authority are not valued by society (McCully 2012, 154). Using history education to disseminate a TRC’s version of the violent past would likewise require teaching it in a way that could not be challenged or debated (E. Cole and Murphy 2011, 343). In any case a single narrative of the past would be unacceptable to many in post-civil conflict settings, where perspectives on the past can vary widely and sub-national allegiances typically prevail over national ones (van Ommering 2015, 202). So the sole reliance on a TRC report in history education would risk silencing a variety of alternative perspectives on the past.

Consequently, scholars have also paid attention to the teaching of history itself, and there has been a strong preference for teaching history as an academic discipline. Keynes (2019, 122) summarised the claim:

the prevailing view is that educating young people in a conflict-torn society into a model of disciplinary thinking skills and liberal democratic values which encourage them to weigh up contested accounts, understand historical complexity and acknowledge contrasting perspectives, is useful for fostering democratic citizens and achieving lasting peace and reconciliation.

As young historians and democratic citizens, students in their classrooms learn a measure of comfort with accounts that are contrary to their own and come to understand the constructed nature of their own historical knowledge (Paulson 2015, 13; Foster 2014, 70–71). Moreover, the use of democratic, learner-centred teaching methods that encourage open debate can model the values of inclusivity and fairness needed for these debates in wider society (E. Cole and Murphy 2011).

Like much accepted wisdom in transitional justice, the international community has played an important role in establishing the preference for teaching disciplinary history. The UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights recommended in a 2013 report specifically concerning the writing and teaching of history that:

the right of children to develop their own historical perspective throughout education is to be considered an integral part of the right to education...history teaching should be based on the understanding of history as an academic discipline. (Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights 2013, 22)

So the treatment of the violent past as an academic discipline in which it is assumed that everyone has unfettered access to knowledge about the past and the capacity to weigh it against alternative sources dispassionately is considered an approach universally applicable in post-conflict settings. Ramirez-Barat and Duthie (2015), reporting on a joint International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) project about linkages between education and transitional justice, likewise affirmed the undesirability of silence about the violent past. They said that it was “problematic to believe that simply suppressing an uncomfortable part of a country's recent history will automatically lead to social harmony and peace” (ibid., 15), particularly in the longer term. The authors even identified other subject areas, like human rights, citizenship, and peace education, where the past could be addressed. However, they argued that, no matter the subject, “pedagogical methods should aim to strengthen the culture of democracy among students—reinforcing the idea that disagreement and deliberation are part of the rules of society...” (ibid., 16).

In this way education was brought into line with the objectives of the other mechanisms of the transitional justice “package” that has developed as the field has expanded (Subotic 2012). Since its emergence in the former authoritarian regimes of Latin America during the 1980s, the field of transitional justice has expanded in several directions. It began at the “legal-institutional level of politics” (Arthur 2009, 338) in which the investigation of abuses of the past would be framed around the criminal trial. But this “narrow” conceptualisation of transitional justice (Nagy 2008) was eventually replaced with a “holistic” one as the field expanded geographically, reaching the Asia-Pacific by the mid-2000s (Jeffery and Kim 2014, 22). In the process several scholars argued that “transitions” should not only refer to transitions from authoritarianism to democracy but from conflict to sustainable peace more generally (Jeffery and Kim 2014, 5; Sharp 2013, 2015). Even “justice” took on a more holistic definition (Friedman and Jillons 2015; Mutua 2015). The justice sought in transitional justice began to reach beyond the criminal trial to include the redress of economic and social inequalities embedded in society, the mending of broken relationships, and the correction of prejudicial historical narratives (Arbour 2007; Stauffer 2013; Brahm 2007, 19). Consequently, reports from the UN and ICTJ began to argue for the integration of the field itself with parallel fields like development and peace-building (Friedman and Jillons 2015, 141–42; Jeffery and Kim 2014, 20; Waldorf 2012, 172). Their advocacy also included arguments for the integration of and complementarity between individual transitional justice mechanisms, such as the ICTJ/UNICEF project to link education to transitional justice mentioned above. The search for integration and complementarity has left the impression that the transitional justice “package” can be transplanted onto any new context with relative ease (Subotic 2012, 120–21).

On the ground analyses of the primary mechanisms of the transitional justice package (trials and truth commissions) has been a boon for both scholarly and practical transitional justice knowledge. In particular, such analyses have led to a growing awareness of the limitations of the field’s mechanisms and the supposedly universal assumptions upon which they are based (Shaw and Waldorf 2010; Jeffery 2017, 13–16). However, such benefits have not been seen as yet in respect of education as a mechanism of transitional justice. As mentioned, the prevailing view regarding education is “that for history education to contribute to peacebuilding and reconciliation it must engage seriously with the root causes of conflict, and, crucially, with the ways they persist and are reconfigured in the present, and in the students’ lived experiences” (Pauslon 2015, 37). This might be desirable in contexts where education has been used to promote exclusive forms of ethno-nationalism with the use of national narratives that silence discussion, debate, and contradictory

historical facts (ibid.). Nevertheless it is premised upon a preference for confronting the past and closed to the realities of everyday life that might make such confrontation inadvisable or dangerous.

Against this backdrop I formulated two research questions to interrogate the education package of transitional justice. The first sought clarification about the contextual background for education as a mechanism of transitional justice in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. It was: what sort of presence did the violent past have in everyday life in Bougainville and Solomon Islands and what were its effects on relationships between individuals? It was intended to help me investigate how the past was being dealt with in the present in a way that did not take for granted the preference in transitional justice discourse for confronting it. Second, I asked: what are the implications for schooling if the starting point is the form of transitional justice that most makes sense to Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders? With this question I tried to uncover and analyse alternative possibilities for schooling as a vehicle for transitional justice outside the possibilities offered by the transitional justice package. As both questions are concerned with the meanings Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders assign to the past, and to schooling, I have approached these questions from an interpretivist standpoint (Hatch 2002; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012), which I discuss in chapter 3.

As mentioned, I structure my answers to these questions around Gray's notion of enemy friends (Tanis and Gray 2002). I find enemy friends compelling as an organisational device because it captures something of the historical and contemporary forms of sociality and connectedness among Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders. It found expression during their respective civil conflicts and I will show it needs to be taken into account in their progress towards sustainable peace.

The violent pasts

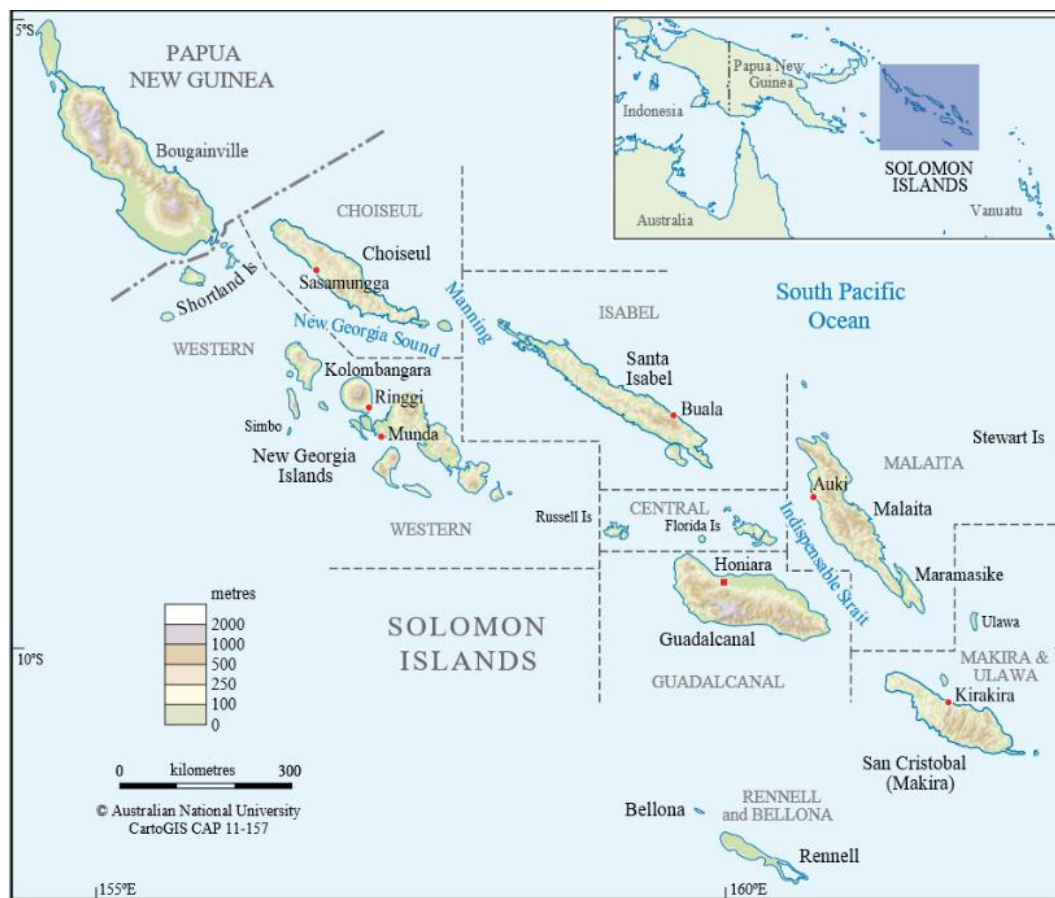
Bougainville and Solomon Islands sit side by side in an archipelago in the south west Pacific—known to geographers as the Solomons Group (Brookfield and Hart 1971, xxxii; see Figure 1.1). They have been the locations of the two largest conflicts in the Pacific since the Second World War. Typical of the culture area that early European visitors demarcated as Melanesia,¹ Solomon Islands and Bougainville are marked by significant cultural and linguistic diversity. Although estimates of the

¹ Melanesia was a name given to the region by Europeans and derived from the Greek for “black islands.” Historically it has been a racial designation used by outsiders to compare, pejoratively, Melanesians to Europeans and peoples from elsewhere in Oceania. It thus fails to fully capture the cultural and linguistic differences and continuities that characterise the Pacific region. More recently, Melanesians have been adopting the term and filling it with positive and empowering meanings that enable them to re-present themselves to the wider region of Oceania (Kabutaulaka 2015).

number of people and languages in each place vary, more than twenty indigenous languages (Tryon 2005) are spoken among Bougainville's population of under 400,000 and at least sixty-four languages (Jourdan 2013, 271) are spoken among roughly 650,000 to 700,000 Solomon Islanders. Linguistic and cultural diversity should not imply boundedness or fragmentation, however, and any depiction of either civil conflict as an expression of ancient hatreds between different groups would be mistaken (Kabutaulaka 2001).

Figure 1.1: Map of Solomon Islands and Bougainville

Source: CartoGIS Services, College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University



Instead, Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have long been adept at handling relations with a multitude of strangers (Bleiker and Brigg 2011; McDougall 2016; Hviding 1996, 95). Historically, kinship and other connections, while profoundly embedded in sovereignty over land, have extended both across islands and within them through a mix of peaceful and conflict-ridden routes, such as trade, marriage, and warfare. Prior to colonisation, for example, extensive trade and marriage networks extended across language groups as far north as the Bismarck Archipelago from Buka and North Bougainville (Spriggs 2005; Ogan 2005, 50), while Central and Southern Bougainville appear to have had greater contact with the western Solomons (Scales 2003). Connell (1977, 81–82) even

recorded that shell valuables manufactured in Langalanga, Malaita, passed through several intermediaries before reaching Buin in South Bougainville, while Moore (2017, 75) has suggested Malaitan shell valuables were traded as far as the Bismarck Archipelago in the west and the Santa Cruz islands in the east. Warfare was another form of interaction, and indeed anthropologists have noted that warfare and exchange “comprise integral aspects of a single exchange system” (Rumsay 2003, 76) in many parts of Melanesia (see also Harrison 1993). This means that warfare has occurred between people entwined in complex webs of connection. In turn this has meant that many in Melanesia have taken for granted that they were already engaged in relationships to others (Robbins 2009; Strathern 1988) and consequently that enemies could be friends, or even kin (McDougall 2016, 66).

The recent ancestors of the teachers and students in this study had experienced decades of profound change to religious, social, political, economic and day-to-day life as a result of contact with Europeans. The nature of the contact with European traders and labour recruiters, which accelerated from the 1820s, varied across the archipelago (Bennett 1987, 24). The reception indigenous peoples gave the new arrivals varied as well, and consequently the resulting changes to everyday life varied dramatically in intensity and expression (*ibid.*, 29–33). It nevertheless created new opportunities for indigenous peoples to expand their horizons and form connections to a wide array of other people (Banivanua Mar 2016, 22–47). Then the concerted effort to appropriate land and carve out territory that marked formal colonisation created, through a series of agreements between Britain and Germany from 1899 to 1904, an international boundary between Bougainville and Solomon Islands. It had no basis in reality for the indigenous peoples of the islands (Griffin 2005). Indigenous sources of authority, power, spirituality, gender relations, and conflict resolution went through further profound shifts as a consequence of pacification, new diseases, Christianity, and introduced colonial law and economics (Akin 2013, 14–49). Moreover, formal colonisation entrenched still more avenues, schooling among them, through which Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders could be mobile and in contact with a diverse array of people and ideas. It was the changes stemming from colonisation that ultimately produced the Bougainville Crisis and Solomon Islands Tension, although the changes did not alter the sociality and relatedness of Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders enough to prevent them from developing shared terms for trading, fighting, and making peace. Indeed, old and new networks and connections served as the avenues through which conflict and peace would spread.

In Bougainville, economic changes occurred rapidly and precipitated several social changes that contributed to the Crisis. Some anti-PNG sentiment had emerged on plantations prior to World War Two (Nash and Ogan 1990, 7), but more fundamentally, the establishment of cash-cropping from 1950 caused considerable duress for “the inter-generational cycle of distribution of land” (Regan 1998, 275). It individualised land ownership in people whose access was not enduring and as a consequence strained kinship relations with those possessing alternative claims. At the same time, an ideology of customary landownership that asserted that “the territorially bounded ‘customary group,’ or clan, is the basic unit of political organisation within the nation-state” (Allen 2018, 20) was in formation in PNG more broadly (Filer 1997). The ideology creates a boundedness that obscures the connectedness of individuals within landowning groups, who most likely have close kinship ties to individuals in other groups. In Bougainville, the individualisation of ownership also subordinated the power of women in matters of land inheritance (Wesley-Smith and Ogan 1992, 254–55).

Aggravation and social dislocation were most pronounced at Panguna in the mountains of Central Bougainville once a large deposit of low-grade copper was discovered there in 1960. Although local opposition to the prospecting was obvious from the outset, it swayed nobody in authority (McKenna 2015, 48). Several factors exacerbated the situation around Panguna. One was population growth which, combined with cash cropping, put considerable pressure on the limited land areas suitable for subsistence agriculture (Regan 2017, 366). A result was inequalities based around access to land that made the employment opportunities offered by the mine increasingly important. Yet during the mine’s construction phase, which included the building of towns in Arawa, Panguna and Kieta plus the mine itself and the Kieta harbour, around 10,000 workers came into these areas and most were Papua New Guinean. At around this time the indigenous inhabitants of these areas did not exceed 25,000 (Nash and Ogan 1990, 8). Generational and gender inequalities continued as older and better educated men dominated the employment opportunities the mine offered Bougainvilleans (Wesley-Smith and Ogan 1992, 259; Connell 1985, 134). The situation “produced a large pool of under-educated, under-employed youth not susceptible to social control” (Regan 1998, 276). The enormous mine opened in 1972. When the Crisis forced it to close in 1989 it was generating “45 percent of PNG’s export income, 17 percent of internally generated government revenue and 12 percent of gross domestic product” (Braithwaite et al. 2010a, 20).

The Crisis was sparked in 1988 by tensions among Panguna landowners around the distribution of compensation and rents from Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL) (Laslett 2014, 59; Regan 2017, 371). Landowner revenues were a tiny fraction of the total (Regan 2017, 358) and “the formulae for

distributing such payments could not possibly take into account the traditional hierarchy of land rights...” (Wesley-Smith and Ogan 1992, 256). Consequently, inter-generational fissures emerged among the landowners, which were themselves aggravated by a constellation of grievances held by several other actors in Bougainville (Regan 2017, 371). The interests among these actors were wide-ranging but, significantly, across these groups was a raft of connections (ibid., 386–88). Some connections were personal, others were through a Catholic educated elite, and more were in the variety of kinship links that spanned across Bougainville. By late 1988, when younger landowners began a campaign to sabotage mining infrastructure, the linkages enabled the groups to form a loose coalition that had the support of a significant proportion of Bougainville’s population.

The Crisis began with industrial sabotage, in which secession from Papua New Guinea was not the main objective (Regan 2017; Allen 2018, 37). However, BCL had a vested interest in suppressing any resistance to their operations, and the PNG government eventually acceded to that view (Lasslett 2014, 73; Allen 2018, 38–39). The attempted suppression was brutal and through the networks just described Bougainvilleans mobilised against the PNG Defence Force, which meant the Crisis quickly developed a secessionist dimension. However, the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) had no rigid command structure and in many areas was essentially uncontrollable, so a complex array of other conflicts proliferated beneath the fight with PNG. Some took place at the most local level—within extended families and villages—and regularly revolved around land. There were regional ones too; criminal elements of the BRA from the relatively disadvantaged south of Bougainville targeted the more educated and affluent north. Several others emerged during the Crisis itself, particularly once a new combatant group, the Bougainville Resistance Forces (BRF), formed in opposition to the excesses of the BRA. It is difficult to estimate the number of casualties from the Crisis (see Braithwaite et al. 2010a, 87–88) but it has become accepted as fact in Bougainville that by 1999 when the Crisis ended 20,000 had been killed. Further divisions between factions of ex-combatants, particularly within the BRA, emerged during the peace process, and localised fighting persisted in south Bougainville until 2011 (Allen 2018, 40–41).

In Solomon Islands, after World War Two the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (BSIP) administration moved the capital to Honiara, on the north of Guadalcanal, and prioritised large-scale agricultural development on the adjacent plains (Allen 2013, 86). The concentration of economic opportunities on Guadalcanal, which included access to formal education (Oakeshott and Allen 2015, 3–4), intensified perceptions of unequal development across Solomon Islands, also forced people

from other islands to move if they wanted to participate. The necessity of movement had long been the pattern for Malaitans and people on the southern, “Weather Coast” of Guadalcanal in any case. The post-war migration to Honiara from across the BSIP, but especially Malaita, gathered pace after Britain granted independence in 1978. The ensuing identity politics saw people from Guadalcanal coalesce around landownership and indigeneity. On the other hand, based on all the Malaitan labour across the BSIP in the 20th Century, and the formation of an identity that unified the language groups of Malaita (Akin 2013), a discourse had emerged amongst Malaitans that framed them as the builders of the nation (Allen 2013; Kwa’ioloa and Burt 2007).

Solomon Islanders generally agree that people from Guadalcanal had a solid basis for their grievances (Allen 2018, 92–95). The original migrants to Guadalcanal usually understood the terms through which they could acquire land and acted as gracious guests by respecting the authority of landowners to make decisions about their land. However, there was a growing number of second-generation settlers on Guadalcanal (Frazer 1985). Over time the swelling population led to the emergence of squatter settlements on Honiara’s outskirts that encroached on customarily owned land (Allen 2013, 90). Although the early migrants generally respected their hosts’ customs (*ibid.*, 91–93), as migration increased and guests and their kin became more permanent residents, a lack of cultural respect became a major grievance for many from Guadalcanal (*ibid.*, 104).

In circumstances that paralleled the ideology of landownership being formed in PNG and Bougainville, fragmentation into landowning groups among the indigenous peoples of Guadalcanal also contributed to generational and gendered dimensions to the Tension. The legal process of registering land, which places ownership in up to five trustees, caused considerable social fragmentation as the trustees were typically local big men.² Several in the peri-urban area of Honiara called Kakabona abused their authority, causing fragmentation among men and women, old and young (Monson 2015). Likewise, Kabutaulaka (2001) elaborated on the generational disputes on the Guadalcanal plains produced by the sale of customary land to visitors, particularly when that land was sold without prior consultation. And Nanau (2009; cited in Allen 2018, 94) has pointed out that there has been a proliferation of tribal groupings around the Gold Ridge mine and significant tensions between them as a result of tension between state and customary law.

² “Big man” refers to a style of leadership typically contrasted against hierarchical chieftainship. A big man’s leadership status is achieved through mastery of managing people, relationships, resources and setting a good example. Of course, however, the diversity of leadership styles in Melanesia cannot easily be grouped into categories nor have they remained static (Bablis 2020, 294).

The Tension began in late 1998 when young men from Guadalcanal began a campaign to evict settlers from parts of rural Guadalcanal (Kabutaulaka 2001; Dinnen 2002, 287). The militant group eventually became known as the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM); “Isatabu,” they claimed, was the name for Guadalcanal prior to European contact (Kabutaulaka 2001). The IFM’s eviction campaign was highly successful, and in fact the truth commission labelled evictions as the “showcase” human rights abuse of the Tension (SITRC 2012, 518). Victims on Guadalcanal fled first to Honiara, then to their provincial homes. However, while the IFM were certainly prone to excessive force when carrying out these evictions, the vast majority of settlers left willingly (ibid., 519). According to Stritecky (2001, 105), who was completing ethnographic research at one of Honiara’s predominantly Malaitan settlements at the time, their “exodus was an act of conflict avoidance, carried out *en masse* yet un-orchestrated at a time when tension was so pervasive as to make violence seem inevitable.” It defused much tension before hysteria could take hold, she argued (ibid., 106).

It took over a year for a counter militia, the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF), to appear publicly (Moore 2004, 124–25). By this time the police force was fracturing along ethnic lines and Honiara had become a Malaitan enclave. Intense fighting with the IFM took place at the city’s outskirts. The government completely lost control in June 2000 when the MEF and members of the police raided the national armoury in Honiara and deposed the Prime Minister. Australia and New Zealand then tried harder to broker peace and the Townsville Peace Agreement was signed in October 2000, although Harold Keke, a militant leader from the Weather Coast, refused to participate. Guadalcanal and north Malaita (from where most MEF militants came) had been the major sites of violence, but anti-Malaitan and anti-national government sentiment in Western Province was intensified by the arrival of BRA combatants in the provincial capital, Gizo, ostensibly to protect Western Province from Malaitan insurgency (Scales 2007, 203; SITRC 2012, 186–216).

Ethnic dimensions then gave way to internal tensions within the militant groups, though they had been present earlier. Honiara was lawless as groups of MEF militants extorted money through a state compensation scheme. Intra-Guadalcanal fighting occurred between militant factions, both of which committed atrocities against civilians. Harold Keke had commenced a reign of terror on the Weather Coast and the state made concerted efforts to capture him, which it did by re-arming former IFM militia and joining them with their former adversaries in the police (Allen 2018, 89). There was also considerable localised violence on Malaita due to the arrival of many returnees and undisciplined

militants with powerful weapons (SITRC 2012, 143–66). The Tension ended in 2003 with the arrival of the Australian led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI).

Enemy friends

In this thesis I build on a term that George Gray (in Tanis and Gray 2002) used to describe his adversaries during the Tension, because the term—enemy friends—contrasts with elements of transitional justice theory in education in important ways. As mentioned, transitional justice theory posits that the violent past is a wound in the present moment that will fester unless it is cleansed with a truth-telling process, which in education translates to the teaching of disciplinary history. With disciplinary history, and perhaps human rights or citizenship education as well (Davies 2017, 338–39), a student (or teacher) will learn not to base their identity on their own group’s historical narrative of a conflict. Instead, they will come to understand the constructed nature of historical knowledge and be comfortable with disagreement and open debate in the classroom. Moreover, the teacher or student will work out how to use their newly acquired skills to form meaningful connections to, or at least learn to co-exist with, peers and/or colleagues whom she or he might have formerly had very good reason to hate. Thus, the transitional justice version of an enemy friend is the student or teacher who has been transformed from an enemy into a friend.

The concept of enemy friends which I build in this thesis also differs in an important respect from the influential “two faces” metaphor used by researchers to highlight how education can have both conflict- and peace-promoting effects (Bush and Saltarelli 2000). The metaphor relates to many aspects of an education system, including policy reform, school administration, history textbook reform, teacher training and human rights and citizenship education (Paulson 2009; Smith 2005). My notion of enemy friends, which I think is consistent with how George Gray used the term, likewise captures the potential for schooling to contribute to both conflict and peace. Yet at the same time, enemy friends, as I deploy it, signals less of a focus on the top-down implementation of policy reforms and a more specific focus on relationships between people and the everyday sociality between them.

George Gray wrote that he abandoned his formal sector employment to join the Guadalcanal militancy in 1999 (Tanis and Gray 2002). He had spent most of his life attending school and university in Honiara with friends whom he eventually found himself fighting against. Gray recalled that one of these school friends once passed his best wishes and good luck to Gray from across the battlefield through members of the Melanesian Brotherhood (an Anglican order and one of several Christian

groups that were permitted to move between bunkers relatively freely). Unsurprisingly, Gray wrote that the lack of trust between him and his enemy friends meant he still felt unsafe to walk through Honiara once the fighting between Guadalcanal and Malaitan militia groups had largely ceased. But, remarkably, they were still his friends, he said, and with the IFM/MEF dimension of the Tension barely over some would even smile when they saw him. Schooling had done something to temper Gray's attitude towards the people on the other side, leading him in some way to his notion of enemy friends, and, in this way, Gray's term is a fruitful way to answer my second research question about the implications for schooling if an indigenously defined version of transitional justice is the starting point for analysis.

As I explain in chapter 4, the interview data on the reconciliation process shows that the reconciliation process is central to that indigenously defined version of transitional justice. In both Bougainville and Solomon Islands reconciliation efforts began almost as soon as the fighting did and local peace-builders could utilise the considerable common ground and connections between opposing sides. In fact, the shared understandings about what constitutes a proper relationship between a person of the place and a guest arguably mitigated some of the violence of the Tension (McDougall 2016; Stritecky 2001; Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo 2013, 237). The willingness of settlers to leave Guadalcanal, and the readiness of Solomon Islanders to sympathise with the cause of the Guadalcanal militants (though certainly not their brutal methods) showed acceptance of the authority of landowners over their land.

The ethnographic data from the boarding schools add further weight to both the interview data on the reconciliation process and the literature on the cross-cutting ties and common ground that helped to mitigate some of the violence of the Tension. It all suggests that at school Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders are involved in a more fluid process of identity negotiation than the transitional justice version of an enemy friend, which is premised on the idea that enemies are transformed into friends over time. The Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders at the boarding schools were at once both enemies and friends, and as a consequence they had an enviable capacity to resolve disputes with each other when they arose. It was in building their enemy friendships at school that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders made their journeys through schooling contribute to the form of transitional justice meaningful to them.

To explain the process through which young people and their teachers developed their enemy friendships, I draw on theoretical insights from critical transitional justice scholarship. These insights emerge from research into the on-the-ground operations of transitional justice mechanisms (Mac Ginty 2014; Martin 2016; Sharp 2015). The first insight is the notion of place-based transitional justice, a concept which captures the “emplaced standpoints and... the need to listen to the experience and priorities of those affected by armed conflict or political repression” (Shaw and Waldorf 2010, 24). Crucially, it recognises that understandings of justice vary from place to place and are informed by a variety of discourses, from global ones to those based on custom.

A further important insight from critical transitional justice scholarship is the utility of the “everyday” as a framework for analysis (Alcalá and Baines 2012, 385). The everyday goes a step beyond the notion of place-based transitional justice because it takes attention further away from the institutions assigned to achieve justice towards the mundane aspects of daily life around which people actually rebuild their lives (Kent 2016). Michel de Certeau (1984) used the everyday to interrogate how individuals resist the banal practices, objects and institutions imposed on them in their everyday lives and which serve as technologies that discipline their thoughts and actions (Foucault 1977). Indeed, de Certeau’s (1984, xiv) concept of the everyday, he wrote, was simultaneously analogous and opposed to Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* (1977). Whereas Foucault’s interest was in the technologies through which individuals were disciplined and which ultimately saw individuals discipline themselves, the everyday required de Certeau to ask what forms of resistance became possible to people trapped by those disciplinary technologies (de Certeau 1984, xiv–xv). For de Certeau, doing the everyday practices, and using the mundane objects and institutions of daily life allowed individuals to resist or reject the capacity of those practices and institutions to determine their thoughts and actions (ibid., xiii). Although de Certeau was interested in resistance in Western industrialised states, the everyday as a site of routines and habits nevertheless sat comfortably within critical transitional justice because individuals with misgivings about the objectives of transitional justice could deploy tactics in their everyday practices and routines, including silences, to resist their encompassment by its mechanisms (Ross 2010; Kent 2014; 2016). In this way, the everyday helped to direct my research into the nature of daily life at school where an indigenously defined version of transitional justice might assert itself against the disciplinary regime of formal schooling.

As such I also make use of insights from critical ethnographers of schooling because they have been as suspicious of schooling as critical transitional justice scholars have been of their field’s institutions

and mechanisms.³ With foundations in the critical theory tradition (Forsey 2000, 206; Levinson and Holland 1996) critical ethnographers of schooling have exposed ways that schooling is involved in the reproduction of existing inequalities in society (chapter 2). This literature has led me to analyse the social meanings assigned to the knowledge produced in the classroom (chapter 5), what it means to be an educated person in Bougainville and Solomon Islands (chapters 6 and 7), and the ideas students and teachers produce about their cultures while at school (chapters 8 and 9). I make use of Levinson and Holland's (1996) notion of "cultural production" because it is focused on schools as they are: "sites for the formation of subjectivities through the production and consumption of cultural forms" (ibid., 13–14). Cultural production, like de Certeau's notion of the everyday, gives agency to the students and teachers experiencing schooling. This makes the everyday and cultural production important tools for elucidating Gray's notion of enemy friendship because overwhelmingly the data show enemy friendships to be an achievement, the result of cultural production, rather than an inherent property of schooling or an essentialised trait of the teachers and students.

The chapters

This chapter has situated my thesis as a critical investigation of the on-going field of research into the role of education in transitional justice. It is a field in which the preference in transitional justice discourse for confronting the violent past finds expression in calls for teaching history as an academic discipline because disciplinary history can, so the argument goes, promote democratic citizenship in young people. However, it has not been subjected to the same measure of ethnographic analyses as more high-profile mechanisms of transitional justice such as criminal trials and truth commissions. I have introduced my argument that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders look back on the past through their relationships to others and that schools support this way of dealing with the past. I have also introduced the idea of "enemy friends." It alludes to the type of relationship Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders establish with each other at school and is based on their indigenous ways of dealing with conflict. As such it is a useful device around which to organise my critique of education and transitional justice. I have also introduced the concepts of place-based transitional justice (Shaw and Waldorf 2010), the everyday (de Certeau 1984), and cultural

³ "Ethnography" and "schooling" more accurately reflect the lessons I have taken from the scholarship I allude to here than, for instance, "anthropology" and "education." Several influential ethnographies of life at school, such as Willis (1977), came from the discipline of sociology (see Anderson-Levitt 2012, 5). Similarly, whereas "education" might imply an interest in formal systems and policies or the culturally specific practices and criteria through which people become knowledgeable, "schooling" captures my interest in the "state organised or regulated institution[s] of intentional instruction" (Levinson and Holland 1996, 2).

production (Levinson and Holland 1996) as the tools I use in the following chapters to elucidate the process through which enemy friends are formed.

The objective in chapter 2 is to bring place-based transitional justice and the everyday into a close and meaningful dialogue with literature on silences about the past in post-conflict settings and critical ethnographies of schooling. Specifically, I demonstrate the many meanings that silences can have in post-conflict everyday life. Some silences do indicate a denial or suppression of past violence, but other silences can be clues about the social relations that permit or prohibit disclosures about violence, which have been particularly important in research about women's experiences of civil conflict. I also highlight non-written sources of historical knowledge that can shape the opinions and attitudes of subsequent generations. I pay particular attention to examples from Melanesia and describe some of their effects in everyday social life. I then describe some important lessons from critical ethnographies of schooling because they show where to look for silences about the violent past in school settings.

In chapter 3 I explain how I have combined my interpretivist methodological approach with critical theory's interest in exposing social inequalities. I explain in detail how these foundations oriented me towards a research project based on semi-structured narrative interviewing and ethnographic observation. My research project was multi-sited because it allowed me to attend to some of the diversity of cultures, languages, and conflict experiences of Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders while also shedding light on the commonalities in their schooling journeys. I also explain the limitations of the narrative interviewing strategy I adopted and how analysing its flaws helped me read the silences about the past as deliberate refusals to speak about the Crisis and Tension.

I answer my first research question, concerning the presence of the past in everyday life, in chapter 4. Participants in both Bougainville and Solomon Islands explained that their attitudes to talking about the violent past revolved around reconciliation, which is itself organised around the relationships between disputing parties. Thus, I explain what reconciliation meant for my participants, what the implications were for how they look back on the past and relate to each other in the present, and in turn what this means for truth-telling and transitional justice in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. Critically, while Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders would not adopt the language of transitional justice, preferring instead metaphors like "disentangling" (White and Watson-Gegeo 1990), I argue they were describing transitional justice in its most literal form: reconciliations mark a transition from conflict to a sustainable peace. There are power imbalances in

this transition, particularly for women, and thus I also discuss how the authors of the women's submission to the Solomon Islands TRC got around the marginalisation of women by the reconciliation process (Fangalasuu et al. 2011). Nevertheless, as chapter 4 is based on the commonalities in perspectives of participants whose specific reconciliation practices vary, it further demonstrates that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have considerable common ground to work from when they encounter cultural difference—a significant starting point from which to make enemy friends.

My second research question, about the implications of Bougainvillean and Solomon Islander approaches to dealing with the past for schooling, takes several chapters to answer. But I begin by first considering issues of most interest to scholarship on education and transitional justice: history textbooks and classroom teaching. If transitional justice has its own vision for what an enemy friend looks like, in chapter 5 I demonstrate its poor fit in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. First, I argue that classroom knowledge has a specific meaning that radically constrains the utility of history taught as an academic discipline. Second, I discuss curriculum reform and the teaching of new materials in Solomon Islands. While they might at first look like teacher-centred, authoritarian pedagogy, they are in fact opportunities for teachers and students to relate to the past in socially appropriate ways—by refusing to speak about it.

In chapter 6 I critically discuss what it means to become an educated person in Bougainville and Solomon Islands because this model of an educated person crosses social divides. The close analysis of everyday life at school shows that when students and teachers exercised the flexibility required of them to get through the school year, they formed an image of an educated person who was Christian, relational, and aware of the circumstances that required them to refuse to talk about the violent past.

In chapter 7 I explain how educated personhood took on different meanings for women by analysing how female teachers understood their professional identities. The schools did several things to reinforce a discursive connection between a woman's professionalism and her domesticity. However, simultaneously women embraced the parts of their professional selves that emphasised formal procedures and rules because doing so allowed them to influence decision-making at school. I also demonstrate that a further important lesson for teachers and students from the negotiation of gender relations revolved around the discovery of similarities and differences across cultures.

“Area” groups were important institutions at the secondary boarding schools, particularly for the lessons they taught about culture. Area groups were made up of students from geographically adjacent cultural areas. In chapter 8 I analyse what students and teachers did in these groups. I demonstrate that when the groups organised cultural performances they produced a discourse that one student described as “real culture.” Through this discourse young people formed opinions about their place in their own cultures, effectively valorising their elders and their rural homes. It made students persons in waiting with respect to cultural knowledge, who were able to practice the cultural logics of their elders without yet being experts themselves. The “real culture” discourse did, however, make students vulnerable to the ideology of customary land ownership (Filer 1997; Allen 2018) that contributed to the outbreak of the Crisis and Tension. In this way students and teachers manufactured the terms through which they could view each other as enemies.

In chapter 9 I tell the story of a reconciled conflict at a school in Solomon Islands to illustrate how the “friend” and “enemy” exist simultaneously. With links to the Tension it looked as if the fight could see the “enemy” overrun the “friend.” However, the conflict was de-escalated quickly because the ways in which enemy friends had been constructed in everyday life, as I outlined in the preceding chapters, had produced persuasive alternative frames to island-based divisions between Guadalcanal and Malaita. In fact, several students understood the school conflict as an expression of Solomon Islands national identity. As in Bougainville and Solomon Islands more broadly, when the fight had been reconciled everyone refused to talk to each other about it for the good of their relationships.

Finally, in chapter 10 I reflect on the implications of how students and teachers became enemy friends for education and transitional justice. I elaborate on what I consider to be the potential of schooling in transitional justice if transitional justice practitioners and scholars start by acknowledging that there are limits on what they can know about the violent past. I consider the way that teachers and students saw little conceptual difficulty in scaling up the principles of reconciliation to relationships between provinces and nations a compelling contribution of schooling to building sustainable peace in Bougainville and Solomon Islands.

Chapter 2 A Framework for Understanding Silence and Schooling

In chapter 1 I suggested that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have their own ways of dealing with violent pasts that shape those pasts' presence in everyday life. Further, the presence of the past in everyday life is important to how young people and teachers become enemy friends at school. To build that case, however, I first need to move from the typical view of silences in transitional justice theory in education—that they represent a failure to acknowledge the past—to a more expansive conceptualisation of what silences can convey. I must then analyse how silences, more broadly conceived, might take shape in school settings.

Place-based transitional justice and the everyday go some of the way towards a more expansive view of silences because they are well equipped to reveal and analyse how silences become part of social relations in the present moment. Critical transitional justice scholars have shown how silences about the past at trials and truth commissions can protect people from further harm that would result from their giving testimony (Ross 2010; Waldorf 2010). For example, people testifying at Sierra Leone's TRC subverted the truth-telling function of district hearings; "apologies" from perpetrators were full of silences about actual violence but were performances of social values essential to community membership. Displaying those values was more important to a former combatant's re-integration into the community than publicly sharing what happened (Shaw 2007, 2010).

However, the everyday in particular is more concerned with the present moment than it is with the past. It helps the analyst look beyond violence and division to "other dimensions... along which people may recognise affinity and a common fate as a basis for mutual recognition" (Eastmond and Selimovic 2012, 522; see also Alcalá and Baines 2012, 386; Kent 2018, 158). In fact, the main virtue of the concept of the everyday, the argument goes, is in the attention it draws to the practices through which individuals recover their everyday lives and discover terms for "grudging coexistence" with former adversaries (Mac Ginty 2014, 549). Kent (2016) calls this the pragmatic aspect of silence because the everyday silences enable people to put the past aside to focus on their present and future.

My interest, by contrast, is in the possibility of everyday silences imparting knowledge about past violence and fostering deeper reconciliation. Thus, in this chapter I develop the idea that silences, like historical narratives, can be a method for the transmission of important knowledge about conflict within and between groups. This is not to dismiss a reading of silence as a denial of past

violence or suggest that silences inevitably lead to reconciliation. I am suggesting instead that denial is but one of several ways to read silence about the past and that silences work in tandem with spoken accounts of the past.

I bring a more expansive reading of silence into place-based transitional justice and the everyday in the following ways. In the first section of this chapter I illustrate the tension between silence and being silenced by showing how feminist scholars in transitional justice have interpreted the women's silences at truth commissions and in everyday life. Women's silences at truth commissions often impart knowledge about enduring forms of silencing, such as the structural violence women face. The analysis in the second section shows that links between silence and meaningful reconciliation must take into account how the violent past can be a "silent presence" (Kidron 2009, 2012) in everyday life within families and communities. The silent presence of the violent past ensures that silences also sit in tension with speech and narrative and that subsequent generations do indeed develop a sense for the past even in circumstances of widespread non-disclosure. The form silences take and their meanings vary across cultures, however, and therefore in the third section I look at how knowledge of the past is formed in Melanesian cultures and the effects it has on everyday life.

In the fourth section I discuss where critical ethnographies of schooling suggest I should look for silences about the past at the case study schools. Recall that education has been thought to contribute to transitional justice by giving truth-telling mechanisms a longer term impact and by creating space for students to learn a methodology for engaging with the historical narratives of others (E. Cole 2007; Keynes 2019). Those suggestions presuppose a confrontation with historical knowledge about the violent past at school. Indeed, there is even a vibrant debate around whether this should happen immediately or after a moratorium on history teaching (Paulson 2015). However, from critical ethnographies of schooling I take an understanding that teachers and students will develop their own meanings of classroom knowledge and what it means to be an "educated person" (Levinson and Holland 1996). Moreover, I take the understanding that indigenous cultures and ways of knowing will sit uncomfortably with the introduced institutions of formal education.

Silence and silencing

It is useful to read silences through a tension between silence as a strategy, and being silenced (see Clark 2020, 362–65). The former does not read an individual's failure to disclose as an unwillingness to confront the past and move on. Instead, it encourages the researcher to read into the gaps and pauses in conversation, to consider them signs as to what is actually being revealed about the social

relations that permit or prohibit public discussion of the violent past. The latter—being silenced—has long been the pre-occupation of transitional justice scholars because one of the fundamental concerns of the field has been overcoming denials of mass violence (amongst political elites in particular). An analytical interest in who is being silenced and how it happens does conceptualise the silence as a denial of acknowledgement. However, from this vantage point it is also possible to see how some groups and individuals will experience silences differently from others.

For example, the way that feminist scholars in transitional justice have analysed silences demonstrates the importance of keeping in mind the tension between silence and being silenced. The South African TRC was mandated to research a specific period of violence (1960–1994), but women who testified to it rarely mentioned sexual violations. The commission had encouraged victims to narrate their experiences, its rationale being that in doing so victims would restore dignity to themselves and thereby draw a line under apartheid, which would then allow themselves and the nation to move on (Ross 2010, 72–73). In this context it was assumed that individuals were able to act autonomously and freely elect to participate. Consequently, women’s silences were misread as “caused by reticence, propriety, or lack of education about rights” (ibid., 75). In this way, with its attention on violent experiences and individual subjectivities, the TRC failed to portray an accurate picture of the social positions women occupied in their everyday lives. It failed to acknowledge the relationships in which women were embedded, which were themselves the sites of violence both before and after the period that the commission was mandated to investigate (Ross 2010, 81; Kent 2014, 291). Testifying publicly about personal experiences of sexual violence exposed women to a variety of harms. It could put them at risk of further violence from within their intimate relationships, from social stigma in their wider social networks for violating cultural conventions, and from national or community judgement because speaking publicly meant judgement from strangers against ever shifting national debates and criteria (Ross 2010, 81–83). Ultimately, the TRC in South Africa silenced the experiences of women because it did not see that an individual’s silence could actually signify the TRC’s own failure to fully recognise and empathise with women’s suffering (ibid., 90).

Although subsequent truth commissions have made significant effort to reveal the forms of structural violence that periods of mass violence can exacerbate, the tension between the silencing of experience and silence as a strategy has remained. The truth commission in Timor Leste, for example, recorded some uncomfortable truths about the complicity of Timorese communities in the sexual violations committed against Timorese women during Indonesian occupation (Kent 2014,

293–94). Despite this, according to Kent, the TRC “nonetheless shaped women’s experiences into an overarching narrative of sexual violence and sexual slavery” (ibid.). This overarching narrative of women’s victimhood silenced the way women contributed to the struggle against Indonesian occupation.

The TRC’s narrative has made it difficult to challenge Timor Leste’s national discourse, which also silences the range of women’s experiences during Indonesian occupation. The national narrative promoted by the country’s political elite has emphasised resistance to Indonesian occupation. It has little space for the accounts of the women who survived sexual abuse, in which Timorese communities were complicit, because their victimisation is a threat to the image of heroic, defiant and sacrificial resistance. The narrative has elevated veterans over victims, in turn making it even harder for women to participate in public life. This “retraditionalisation of gender roles” has further relegated women to a domestic sphere (309–10).

However, women can experience both sides of the tension between silence as a strategy and being silenced. For their part, Kent’s interlocutors rejected the idea that their stories were not a part of the broader story of the nation (306) and asserted their own pride, sacrifice and place in the national story in private interviews. Yet outside those settings they adopted silence as a form of social regulation that could help them recover a normal life. In communities built on obligations to kinship networks and conservative religious (Catholic) expectations of chastity and purity, victims of prolonged abuse as military “wives” were routinely ostracised. The few who have married since the end of Indonesian occupation have been able to recover a measure of normal life, and protect their children from discrimination, by being silent about their pasts (304–305). Kent argues their silence demonstrates a degree of constrained agency. As I describe in chapter 4, this argument resonates with Solomon Islanders, where women insisted that their silences had several meanings, chief among which was their intimate knowledge of the relationships in which they live.

Silence and the next generation

Silences about the violent past also sit in relationship to speech and narrative when it comes to how the next generation form their understanding of the past. As Eastmond and Selimovic argue, silence is as dynamic as speech because it “conveys a broad range of social meanings that, like speech, is always situated and can only be understood in its proper social context” (2012, 506). In this section I discuss the non-narrative ways that the next generation can form a historical consciousness about

the violent past and how these sit in relation to speech. I show that the meaning of both silences and speech vary across families and cultures.

Of course silences can help shape historical narratives in ways that do not help foster meaningful reconciliation. Krondorfer (1995) found this in his study of third generation American Jews and non-Jewish Germans living in Germany (born in the 1960s and 1970s), who grew up with few opportunities to get to know each other personally. At first they understood Jewish/German relations and reconciliation through the ethos of their respective communities: forgetting for German youth, commemoration for Jewish youth. However, these were totally inadequate for subsequent interpersonal encounters, which were replete with hurt, guilt, anger and defensiveness as both sides confronted the alternatives to the discourses with which they grew up. One young German participant in an exchange program between the two groups reflected after his experience: "I realised that I have always treated the Shoah as an intellectual topic and that I did not resist the tabooisation of the Holocaust because I was subconsciously afraid of confronting my family" (cited in Krondorfer 1995, 113). The student's reflections show that the silences within his own family and community helped produce a form of knowledge about the violent past; the Holocaust was an intellectual topic to which he did not feel personally connected. This knowledge helped him relate to his family in everyday life, but it did not prepare him for personal relationships with his host family.

However, within families it is also possible that verbal silences will be unable to disguise the "silent presence" (Kidron 2009) of the past in everyday life that imparts emotional connections to it. For example, in Israel the families of descendants of Holocaust survivors possess an array of non-narrative ways through which the genocidal past can form a silent presence in their everyday lives (8). These include ordinary objects found around the home, such as pre-Holocaust family photographs or kitchen utensils from Auschwitz, as well as the scars on parents' bodies and the tattoos on their forearms. Non-narrative ways of relating to the violent past also include children's "re-enactment of practices of survival" like a refusal to waste food (14). As the family members interact with these everyday objects and behaviours they create an emotional connection to the violent past. Kidron offers a moving example of one (by then middle-aged) child's relationship to her father's concentration camp tattoo. Through tears the daughter recalled that as a girl she would stare at the tattoo until she could feel it on her own arm. Kidron explained that "she seeks not factual knowledge of why or when or by whom this was done to her father but rather to know

whether it hurt or scared him” (10). In this example memory was not about a factual, narrative account, but empathy. And the knowledge was constructed with the material things and banal habits of daily life.

Also mediating these familial interactions are elements of religious belief and socio-economic circumstances. Kidron compared her Jewish-Israeli participants with descendants of Cambodian genocide survivors in Canada (Kidron 2012). Silence took a different form in each setting. Whereas the Holocaust was a silent presence in the everyday lives of Jewish Israeli descendants, Kidron observed “the almost total absence of presence of the violent past” among the Cambodian diaspora in Canada (723). They drew instead on tenets of Buddhism that taught a detachment from the past (737). Additionally, some of Kidron’s informants among the Cambodian diaspora explained their silence as partly a product of their (marginalised) socioeconomic circumstances in Canada (734). They worried about the reception memorialisation might receive from the majority community (738). Unsurprisingly then, her Canadian participants had little interest in any public memorialisation of the genocide under Pol Pot’s regime (738).

Everyday silences also sit within broader cultural surroundings; indeed, as Clark (2020, 359) points out, silence is “a collaborative endeavour in which all are required to participate.” For example, in one community in eastern Madagascar, Jennifer Cole (2001) found that the colonial past formed a silent presence in the physical arrangement of the town, individual buildings, local governance institutions, crops, and consumer preferences in everyday life despite verbal silence about colonisation. Verbal silences about the period prevailed within this milieu of colonial legacies as people transformed the past’s silent presence to reflect their concerns with “densely tangled social relations” with each other and their ancestors (6). Ritual occasions, such as the cattle sacrifices that tied people to ancestors and those ancestors’ power enabled those still living to recast their relationship to the colonial past (194). The marking of tin-roofed houses during cattle sacrifices helped people to transform the dwellings that were once exclusively the domain of colonial authorities into sites of ancestral power.

However, both silence and speech help the next generation form their knowledge of the past. In Kidron’s example, the Israeli Holocaust descendants would surely have some factual knowledge of the Holocaust, and it had to come from somewhere. In fact, in response to Kidron, Michael Lambek (in Kidron 2009, 20) acknowledged that “knowing ‘that’ or knowing ‘how’ is more basic and more salient than knowing ‘why’ they suffer” but also suggested that knowing why would come from their

exposure to public narratives, such as those learnt at school. To this Nissin Mizrachi added that the second generation's factual knowledge of the Holocaust would likely permeate through to their empathic knowledge of their parents' suffering. Afterall, by the time Kidron interviewed them they were "mostly middle-aged individuals raised on Israel's canonic national narrative" (in Kidron 2009, 21). Thus, subsequent events and historical narratives can also shape the meanings of silence for the next generation (see also Eastmond and Selimovic 2012). Similarly, in Madagascar Cole found that a national election broke the community's tacit understanding to remain silent about the violence of the colonial period and caused unrelenting discussion of it that in turn caused widespread stress and anxiety. Not only was an emotional connection to the past established but it gave new meaning to current political events for the next generation, which Cole suggested perhaps made alternative interpretations of the past less likely in the future (J. Cole 2001, 227).

Subsequent generations do develop knowledges of past violence even when silences are maintained about them. The more expansive understanding of silences that I am advocating transitional justice theory in education adopt includes the ways historical knowledge is formed in familial and social interactions with, among other things, material objects, village layouts, tattoos, and rituals in the community. The significance of each and what happens when they become entangled with moments of overt speech about the past has much to do with the cultural, social and historical circumstances specific to a given context.

Melanesian views of the past

The anthropology of Melanesia and debates within the fields of Pacific Studies and Pacific History about their scope and limitations also help develop a more expansive understanding of silence for transitional justice theory in education. Although I discuss the field of Pacific Studies in more detail in chapter 3, these bodies of literature illustrate the need to view silences with an appreciation for "all of the different ways in which a consciousness of the past can be expressed" (Hanlon 2003, 29–30). They also illustrate some of the limitations of applying "history" conceived as a western scientific discipline to Bougainville and Solomon Islands.

The term "historicity" denotes the "culturally specific forms of consciousness of the past" (Ballard 2014, 100; see also Stewart 2016). The starting point for research into historicity is the idea that history, as a "factual representation (usually written) of the past, intentionally researched and composed according to rational principals" (Hirsch and Stewart 2005, 263), is a western

conceptualisation of history not necessarily transferrable across cultures. By contrast, the term historicity captures the fact that other cultures have ways of producing knowledge about the events of the past, which can include practices like dancing, dreaming, singing, theatre, rumour, gossip, oral history, myth, folklore and landscapes (Hirsch and Stewart 2005, 266; Ballard 2014, 96; citing Denning 1991).

Across the Pacific indigenous historicities are important parts to the formation of knowledge (Matsuda 2007). To use an example from Solomon Islands, objective knowledge does not exist for the Kwara'ae of Malaita (Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo 2001, 62). Instead, all knowledge is subjective and created by "communities of knowledge-makers." Anyone can participate in the construction of knowledge, and participating in the process is a critical component of how Kwara'ae live a "good" life. Moreover, logical reasoning among the Kwara'ae is done with sources not typically used in Western academic traditions, such as feelings in the body and other sensory experiences (Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo 2001, 63–64; see also Burt 2002, 191). Additionally, according to Nanau (2017), although genealogies told by particularly authoritative elders carry the most weight for the Tathimboko of Guadalcanal, all accounts must still be verified with histories from other groups and sacred sites in the landscape (see Guo 2003 for landscape as historicity on Malaita). Without such evidence the story "may not be accepted as knowledge" (Nanau 2017, 188).

Historicities are also entangled with cultural models of personhood and sociality. Personhood has been a long-debated topic for anthropologists working in the Pacific, Melanesia especially (Strathern 1988; Sykes 2007). Although significant economic change has seen a possessive individualism emerge and cause friction between new elites and their grassroots kin (Sykes 2007), there remains a general recognition that people regularly act with their relationships front of mind (Robbins 2009). Robbins (2009, 175) explains that, according to the "relational position," people see "the project of making, realising and maintaining relationships" as an unavoidable part of everyday life to such an extent that they see it as an innate, or natural component of their personhood. From birth individual persons are the "containers of the relationships that made them" and as such they have obligations to those relationships and will enter into new relationships, each with its own obligations, to meet their obligations to their original ones. Thus persons must constantly exchange with, and gift things to, others; people often deride eating food they produced themselves because it has not done any "relational work" (175–76).

The relational person was originally proposed as an ideal type model of personhood in Melanesia (Jolly 2016, 347–48). Indeed Pacific Islander scholars, such as the contributors to Vaai and Nabobo-Baba (2017), have also stressed that the contrast between the relational position and the stereotyped possessive individual of western discourse constructs a false dichotomy between individual and relational persons (Vaai and Nabobo-Baba 2017, 4; see also LiPuma 1998). Instead, according to Vaai and Nabobo-Baba (2017, 11), relationality captures the individual's place within a collective whole. Furthermore, Pacific notions of personhood often extend beyond relationships between people to incorporate ancestors and the environment. Among the Kwaio of Malaita, for example, ancestors have a significant influence over the course of everyday life (Keesing 1978, 33; Akin 2004), and the spiritual now also includes the Christian God across much of the Pacific.

Relational models of personhood and the forms of sociality that they engender can make elements of everyday life repositories of historical information. For example, Nanau (2017, 193–95) has described in detail the way that people's names in Tathimboko inscribe the nature of an individual's connections to land, ancestors, and other individuals. Some names even mark significant events in history; in the Lengo language *Ngelea* means “despised” and *Sikua*, “evicted” (194). Although Nanau argues that Tathimboko naming practices are at risk from the growth of English and Christian names, and that other elements of Tathimboko personhood are challenged by Christianity, the state, and formal schooling, he maintains that customary names nevertheless remain fundamental components of daily life.

Ballard (2014) happened upon a thought-provoking example of the connections between historicity and its impacts on social relations in the present. It occurred in the early 1990s on a walk through one of his Huli participant's gardens (in the Southern Highlands of PNG). Ballard's guide pointed to a specific spot in his garden, the size of a sweet potato mound, and informed the researcher that it was the exact place where a clan member “had shot and killed his elder brother.” The exact story of what happened, which Ballard heard from a clan elder much later, was told like it happened yesterday.

However,

for many Huli people, “yesterday” is capable of considerable temporal extension...The slaying had taken place in about 1860; and yet, for the next century or more, that innocuous spot in the garden had retained its salience for at least one small subclan. The historicity of this event resides in the lived, embodied memory of their relationship to that space... (106)

In chapter 4 I discuss the implications of indigenous historicities for how conflicts, such as the murder Ballard referenced, are resolved and remembered. Suffice to say here that Ballard found that in Huli

historicity there was an intimate connection between the material and social. Genealogies that extended backwards fifteen generations also reached outwards to incorporate the connections and relationships in which those ancestors were entwined. This network of connectedness overlaid a landscape of hundreds of thousands of garden plots still in use and whose original owners could be located genealogically, complete with the relationships that made them. It was the contextual knowledge contained in the physical spaces with all their “visual and sensory evidence” (Ballard 2014, 107, see also Ryle 2012) that gave Huli oral testimony its claim to be the truth of the past. Written historical texts could therefore be meaningless among the Huli “because they neither draw on nor feed back into the body of knowledge that renders them meaningful” (Ballard 2014, 106).

The entanglement of social relations, cultural models of personhood, and historicity can even produce silences in everyday life. Euphemisms for specific objects and practices can tell a story; Keesing and Fifi'i (1969) wrote of how names associated with powerful ancestors were tabooed in order to protect the ancestor's sacredness. Furthermore, Scott (2000) and McDougall (2005) have explained how silences can result from the interplay between landownership and the obligations to others that it entails. For the Arosi of Makira, Solomon Islands, for instance, to maintain unity and peace among villagers Arosi conspire with each other to remain largely ignorant about each other's claims to be descendants of the original owners of the land. As Scott (2000, 59) explains:

Arosi demure to reveal their lineage histories, and the prerogatives to land that they confer, because of a strong conviction that an overt presumption of *auhenua* [person of the land] status and land control is compromisingly inappropriate for those who are truly *auhenua*.

In other words, to make an explicit claim to land is to act in a way that no true landowner would behave and thus risks fatally undermining the claim. Central to the ethics of landownership that Scott and McDougall describe is the idea that true landowners are hospitable and welcome strangers to the land (see also Brigg 2009). It enables people to engage in the expansive form of sociality that sees them embrace relationships and intense exchange across landowning groups, but it often requires silences to diffuse or avoid conflict.

Indigenous historicities have serious implications for understanding and teaching history as an academic discipline. Solomon Islander academic Tarcisius Kabutaulaka (1998, 36), of the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal, had the following view of history conceived of and taught as a school subject:

in my reading of Pacific history, and in particular Solomon Islands history, I often wondered why stories supposedly about my society appeared alien and far removed from my memories and the memories I inherited from those before me. While I readily identified with, understood and was personally engaged by the stories told to me in

villages, playgrounds and other places, where Western scientific methodology is presumably limited, I found history at school boring. It was only years later that I realised that the history I learned at school was preoccupied with characters, facts, and events insignificant to me.

History as a school subject was a form of consciousness of the past—a type of historicity—but an exogenous one with little resonance, an issue I take up explicitly in chapter 5.

Importantly, giving a name to Pacific ways of relating to the past is not an excuse to render the knowledge of indigenous peoples intelligible for Western academic audiences (Ballard 2014, 110). Indigenous historical knowledge will remain unknown unless and until indigenous peoples articulate it, if they choose to do so. This means that outsiders will come across silences when their investigations lead them to knowledge they cannot access (see chapter 3), which in turn means that researchers are limited to observations of the effects historicities have on people's decisions, and their entanglement with introduced forms of historicity, such as western models of historical knowledge. From this it is possible to attempt to understand the ways people reconcile the "contradictions... of living in societies of multiple epistemological communities and traditions" (Burt 2002, 192; see also Ballard 2014, 110–11). Such contradictions reveal themselves in everyday life at school.

Schooling, social "reproduction," and "cultural production"

Having situated a society's relationship to the violent past in the culturally specific and often mundane practices of everyday life, which include both speech and silence, I have found that tools from critical ethnographies of schooling shed the most light on how schools might contribute to the formation of those relationships. Critical ethnographers of schooling, like transitional justice scholars, are concerned with justice issues in schooling (Levinson and Holland 1996, 4; Bellino and Williams 2017, 6). Moreover, a long standing debate in critical ethnographies of schooling mirrors an important tension for education in transitional justice. Debate surrounding the extent to which, and how, schools reproduce the social order in critical ethnographies of schooling is fundamental to a field like transitional justice attempting to use schools to transform a post-conflict society into a more just social order. In this section I discuss what critical ethnographies of schooling can offer transitional justice.

Critical ethnographies of schooling emerged in the 1960s to challenge analyses of schooling that made liberal assumptions about their meritocratic nature, namely that hard work and intelligence

would lead to social advancement (Collins 2009, 34; Levinson and Holland 1996, 4). Scholars were initially concerned with the structural conditions of schooling, effectively pointing to correlations between the structural organisation of schools and class relations (Collins 2009, 34). Early critical ethnographies of schooling developed what became known as reproductionist theories of education, which typically held that “schools were not exceptional institutions promoting equality of opportunity; instead they reinforced the inequalities of social structure and social order found in a given country” (ibid.). Bourdieu, for example, showed the various ways French schools allowed the French elite to maintain their powerful position in society (Levinson and Holland 1996, 5–6). French schools recognised only the cultural capital (the social credit one gets from possession of, or skill in, the cultural products valued in society) that elites possessed already. A student’s social standing in the future was determined by his or her knowledge of the things elites were already good at, which was an unfair advantage for the elite students and a form of “symbolic violence” on non-elite students that kept them in their inferior position.

The early reproductionist analyses of schooling were heavily critiqued for ignoring human agency. Indeed, in McNeil’s view, “one almost gets the picture of stodgy businessmen sitting in board rooms deciding how to manipulate schools so that they will continue to eliminate controversy or social criticism” (1982, 21). Reproductionist logics painted students as passive recipients of their social order (Skinner and Holland 1996, 275). Similarly, they depicted teachers as uncritical agents of the state (Forsey 2000, 206).

However, when ethnographic methods began to be used to incorporate the agency of students, scholars still found evidence for social reproduction. In *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*, which became a classic text in this vein of scholarship (Forsey 2000, 206), Paul Willis (1977) demonstrated that English boarding schools reproduced the working class subjectivities of male students but so too did the students actively adopt their working class identity. The defining feature of “the lads” in Willis’ ethnography was their opposition to the school’s authority. In this opposition was a rejection of the mental labour the school required of them if they wished to succeed and a valorisation of the manual labour of the working class. Analyses of this type, of students reproducing the circumstances of their inequality, continue to shed important light on schooling’s capacity to re-enforce structural inequalities and the subordination of social groups in a range of contexts, from the global north to global south (Bellino 2017; Collins 2009, 42).

Analysing schooling in terms of the “reproduction” of class relations is problematic in the independent states of Melanesia because those class relations have themselves been under construction through much of the latter half of the 20th Century. Briefly, much like in Solomon Islands (Palmer 1980), the colonial administration only began to give formal education any sustained attention as the territories of Papua and New Guinea moved towards political independence (PNG was granted independence in 1975). The administration’s policy began with a “gradualism” that concentrated on expanding access to primary education but which deliberately deferred an expansion of the secondary system. Secondary schooling was intended for an elite few (Avalos 1993, 278–79). Gradualism gave way to indigenous and UN pressure to expand secondary education in the 1960s, and during much of that decade there were enough formal sector jobs, in the teaching service and localising public service, for the select few students who graduated secondary school (Fife 1991, 171). It helped create an association, common across the Pacific (Boutillier 1992), between success in formal academic education and formal sector employment (Fife 1994, 139).

Nevertheless, ethnographies of schooling in PNG found evidence consistent with social reproduction. Fife (1991, 1992, 1994) found that primary school classrooms in West New Britain taught students what he called a “new moral order.” He defined this order as a “model regarding what life *should* be like under the best possible contemporary conditions” (1994, 141–42; original emphasis). Those contemporary conditions were not found in the village but in the urban cash economy, he argued. Thus students were taught to produce answers in the correct form rather than understand the content of those answers, and to be “good” students by not questioning a teacher’s authority (142–49), not sharing answers with others, and stressing individual responsibility in the classroom (Fife 1991, 247–49). National Grade Six examinations in which students competed for the few high school places available added more pressure on students to adopt a sense of competitive individualism. Consequently, students began to see that they could be “correct, good, and modern, or incorrect, bad and traditional. A winner or a loser” (ibid., 247). This arrangement, Fife argued, formed students into the persons needed in capitalist social relations “where rewards and punishments are handed out according to how well the hired worker fits the image of a ‘good worker’” (1994, 150).

However, scholars were collecting evidence for social reproduction in the early stages of much broader economic, social and political change. For instance, in the global north the upheavals of the 1960s were a challenge to the narrow emphasis on class conditions in critical ethnographies of schooling (Levinson and Holland 1996, 7). Consequently, scholarship was pushed into analyses of the

simultaneous production of not only class, but gendered, racial, ethnic and other identities in the process of schooling (Yon 2003, 421; Stambach 1999; Collins 2009, 42).

Weis' (1990) ethnography of white working class youth at Freeway High in the "rust-belt" of the United States is exemplary of the shifts taking place (Collins 2009, 38). Weis demonstrated the interconnectedness of the different identities that youth used when constructing their personhood at school and how those identities situated young people in relation to changing socio-political circumstances. The mid-1980s was a time of immense economic change for the manufacturing economies of the rust-belt. A de-industrialisation had begun that meant, contrary to the expectations of reproduction theories of education, students had little reason to believe they would inhabit the same positions in the industrial order as their parents (Weis 1990, 4). As if to distance youth even further from their parents, the social movements relating to race and gender, which had been gathering pace since the 1960s, maintained their momentum in the communities that sent their children to Freeway High. In this context female students were in what Weis described as a "*critical moment of critique of male dominance and patriarchy*" (54; original emphasis). They rejected attempts to relegate them to a domestic sphere and instead made wage labour their primary goal. Their male peers formed their identities in relation to both racial and gendered "others." According to Weis, "white girls are considered property by white boys... and they resent black intrusion onto *their property*" (48; original emphasis).

In similar vein, but back in PNG, Demerath (1999, 2000, 2003) analysed high schools in Manus Province after it was clear that the promises of education had failed to materialise. The good employment prospects for graduates did not last into the independence period and by 1993 places in the upper grades of schooling were so limited that less than a quarter of Grade Ten graduates could expect to continue their education (Demerath 2000, 201–202). In keeping with Willis' analysis, Demerath demonstrated the agency of students in their own marginalisation. Students coveted the egalitarian life in the village and even bullied their peers if they did anything that might reject village life, such as succeed academically. It forced many students to curb their effort with schoolwork and hide their desire for formal employment. Manus students had used their agency to reject the cultural capital that schooling constructed to maintain their sense of worthiness. But in doing this they had marginalised themselves from participation in the formal system. However, Demerath also situated his analysis within a "world system of incommensurate differences" (225). He argued:

in subordinated communities where school represents access to a classed system of employment, global processes of individuation and elite formation have given rise to a cross-cultural phenomenon: a perception of school success and associated behaviours

as the internalisation of a Western ideology of individualism accompanied by a concern that resultant status differences will imperil solidarity within the local community. (198)

That is, young people in Manus interpreted their economic situation in racial terms as they came to doubt they could achieve equality with white foreigners (225).

The central point, that schools were places of active “cultural production” (Levinson and Holland 1996; Foley 2010), was a challenge to reproductionist analyses. As Levinson and Holland (1996, 13–14) put it, “cultural production” denotes that far from having their identities made for them, “student identity formation within schools is a kind of social practice and cultural production which both responds to, and simultaneously constitutes, movements, structures, and discourses beyond the school” (12).

This was a theoretical development important for my research because it accords well with place-based transitional justice and the everyday. Cultural production creates scope for analysis to include the anthropological acknowledgement that all societies have criteria and practices for what makes a person “educated” and that they are significant in contexts where formal schooling, with its own models of educated personhood, has arrived relatively recently (1996, 2). Translated in language familiar to critical transitional justice, cultural production encourages researchers to consider a place-based understanding of schooling.

Moreover, cultural production is also grounded in the realities of everyday practice. A persistent theme in analyses using cultural production is the meanings which teachers and students ascribe to the knowledge they learn in the classroom and how that knowledge is situated within everyday life at school more broadly. For example, at a Catholic mission (predominantly boys) school in Zambia, Simpson (2003) observed the presence of different kinds of knowledge at the school. In classrooms students considered their teachers as authority figures “beyond error and beyond challenge” (88) when they thought the classroom knowledge, and textbook knowledge for that matter, was “of high status, the rightful property of the educated gentleman” (93). On these occasions students made themselves passive recipients of curricular knowledge because they judged “strategic and situational” (94) passivity the best way for them to get what they wanted; success in examinations and entry to the next level of schooling. The students did not have to believe the classroom knowledge to pass examinations. When it came to evolution or genetics “the students at St Antony’s might still not challenge the teacher openly, but might explain simply that they would pretend to accept this information ‘for examination purposes only’” (87).

Situational passivity in St Antony's classrooms gave way to active contests outside it, particularly in the field of religious knowledge. Many students of evangelical Christian denominations found themselves in conflict with the Catholic values of the school administration. And simultaneously the students maintained an acute awareness of both the "African science" of sorcery and the presence of spirits in their daily lives. Simpson thus found that through much of the 1970s to early 1990s students were able to assert their own image of "mission-educated, Christian gentlemen, of future leaders, of an elite in the making, even in uncertain times" (190).

Cultural production is also a useful framework for my research because it does not require me to impose on indigenous knowledges. Indigenous Pacific communities have their own understandings of knowledge and its transmission (Falgout 1992; Nabobo-Baba 2006; Sanga 2015; Smith 2012; Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo 1992). A common critique of education in the Pacific emphasises the way that formal schooling has alienated young people from these indigenous knowledges. To be clear, formal education in the Pacific has been a debilitating and alienating experience for many Pacific Islanders, Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders among them (Thaman 1995; Bugotu 1975). Against this background Pacific educators have, with some success, been actively theorising ways to re-claim formal education as a space for the transmission of indigenous knowledge and culture (see Burnett 2009; Nabobo-Baba 2012). In Solomon Islands, Watson-Gegeo et al. (2018, 415) have noted that Solomon Islanders now appear to view schools as sites for a deeper instruction in cultural knowledge: "[m]any of the returning PhD and MA graduates are seeking positions at SI National University's teacher-training college, and are pressuring for traditional cultural life practices, values, and ways of thinking and debating to figure prominently in the curriculum." Indigenous scholars and educators insist that re-claiming formal education must begin from the premise that indigenous knowledges are as legitimate and rigorous as the western academic knowledge of the colonisers (see Biermann 2011; Nabobo-Baba 2006; Smith 2012; Thaman 2003, 10).

With cultural production, much like historicity, I have left indigenous knowledges to Pacific Islanders themselves. Instead, I have enquired into the cultural forms produced by students and teachers in the course of everyday life at school and reflected critically on whether and how they might have reproduced the circumstances that have led to alienation from home, or silences about the violent past. As per the concerns of critical ethnographies of schooling I have looked into the meaning of classroom knowledge and ideas about what it means to be an educated person.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to move transitional justice theory in education beyond the view, which I outlined in chapter 1, that silences signify a failure to acknowledge the violence of the past. Place-based transitional justice and the everyday help expose power relations and forms of structural violence that shape the everyday lives of individuals before, during and after conflict, as feminist scholars of transitional justice have demonstrated. In this way the concepts help to illustrate the importance of not romanticising silences and remaining open to analyses of who is being silenced as well.

However, place-based transitional justice and the everyday could have an even greater appreciation of how silences can also impart historical information and work in conjunction with spoken narratives to form an individual's understanding of a violent past. I have used the idea that the past can be a "silent presence" (Kidron 2009) to demonstrate some of the non-narrative ways the past can feature in everyday life and contribute to a person's historical understanding. The influence of a past's silent presence in everyday life is mediated by culture, religious belief, and social, economic, and political circumstances. Similarly, the term "historicity" (Ballard 2014) describes the multiple avenues through which people develop a sense for the past, but those avenues are subject to the criteria that indigenous epistemologies establish for what counts as knowledge. I gave examples of ways landscapes, material objects, and names—among many other forms of historicity—impart a sense for the past and bring it into the realm of the everyday and the relationships that exist within it. For example, in Ballard's example the historicity of the space between sweet potato mounds made an event that occurred over a century ago an important part of the present for a small Huli sub-clan. But what of the relationships, and indeed reconciliation, between members of that sub-clan with the murderer's sub-clan? Although Ballard did not answer that question explicitly, the effects of Huli historicity on relationships in the present can be observed in the actions and decisions of people in the present—where I first observed Solomon Islanders maintaining silences about the past with each other. The combination of the everyday, the silent presence of the past, and historicity's acknowledgement of the social thus becomes a useful framework for understanding silence. Observing verbal silences about the past becomes a signal to look for alternative forms of consciousness of the past and their effects on contemporary actors.

This combination of conceptual tools is also a valuable framework for understanding schooling because it shows that schooling, and the form of consciousness of the past it promotes, is entangled

with other forms of historicity. The task of the researcher is to observe the entanglement of different historicities at school, and I have found critical ethnographies of schooling have offered useful guidance on where to look. They are insightful because of their important overlaps with critical transitional justice, namely their interest in the injustices to which schooling contributes and to which students and teachers respond. Research in this tradition, from the original reproductionist analyses to those focused on cultural production, has shown that schools do not teach what popular discourses expect them to. To offer these insights they have maintained an interest in the construction of classroom knowledge, the production of identities, and the implications of each for young people's place in society's changing social, economic and political circumstances. Next, I explain how I have used this framework to investigate place-based transitional justice in Bougainville and Solomon Islands and its operations in everyday life at school.

Chapter 3 Research at Secondary Boarding Schools

I am an interpretivist. Therefore the research methods I deployed were underscored by the view that in the social world “multiple realities exist that are inherently unique because they are constructed by individuals who experience the world from their own vantage points” (Hatch 2002, 15). In order to understand the behaviour of individuals researchers must understand the way they construct their reality and the perceptions other individuals have of them (Willis 2007, 4; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012, 1). Thus my research has been fundamentally concerned with the “culturally derived and historically situated” (Crotty 2009, 67) meaning that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders find in their post-conflict schooling experiences. As interpretivists do, I take it for granted that as a researcher my positionality in the field, scholarly background and theoretical orientation have played a role in the data gathering and construction of my argument (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012, 100–104). In this chapter I reflect on how these factors have influenced the research methods I deployed and the construction of my argument. These reflections are essential in interpretivist research, as Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012, 100–104) note, because by making the processes through which I have constructed my argument transparent, the reader can evaluate its trustworthiness.

In the first section of this chapter I discuss how I developed an awareness of schooling’s capacity to contribute to social inequality and thus align myself with critical theory’s research interests. Second, I describe how the present state of theory in transitional justice research in education led me to a case study analysis and how it was possible to include Bougainville and Solomon Islands within it. In the third section I explain why I designed a multi-sited research project and how it proved to be a particularly effective means to research everyday life at school. Fourth, I discuss my semi-structured interviewing and ethnographic observations at the secondary boarding schools and the effects the narrative interviewing strategy I adopted had on the data I generated. Then I describe my semi-structured interviewing with participants not associated with the case study schools. All told, I completed 358 interviews with 328 participants during ten months of fieldwork from mid-2015 to mid-2016. Finally, I describe how I have come to read the silences about the violent past I encountered during interviews and in everyday life as deliberate refusals to speak, and explain how and why I have put them at the centre of my analysis in the chapters that follow.

Experiencing educational inequality

I share critical theory’s interest in understanding social inequalities. As Hatch (2002, 16) described, social science research within critical theory considers that “the material world is made up of

historically situated structures that have a real impact on the life chances of individuals.” These structures, class being the quintessential example, are the products of historical processes. However, people generally consider the structures to be fixed and natural parts of their lives. Moreover, individuals will go on believing in the naturalness of the structures until they have been able to deconstruct how they have been made. Paulo Freire ([1970] 2017) is one of the best-known critical theorists of education, and he advocated for a critical pedagogy that would help people realise the circumstances of their oppression so that they might join the struggle against it (Bartlett 2005). In Freire’s view, critical consciousness in students can be developed with classroom practices founded on reasoned debate among rational subjects (Burbules 2000; Ellsworth 1989, 304). His prescription is entirely consistent with transitional justice theory in education, specifically, the advocacy for the teaching of disciplinary history in the wake of civil violence.

Freire and other critical scholars of education have been challenged for emphasising their theory over the ethnographic realities on the ground (Forsey 2000). In other words, the critique of critical education scholarship is that the analyses are consistent with reproductionist analyses of schooling and give short shrift to teacher and student capacity for cultural production (chapter 2). I have attempted to avoid letting conclusions about structures of oppression drive my analysis by following one of the basic tenets of interpretivist research; it is an iterative process in which researchers learn as they go back and forth between theoretical positions and the data. In any case, scholars since Freire wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* have collated substantial evidence pointing out that Freire’s prescription for rational dialogue gives people little scope to interrogate their circumstances on their own terms (Burbules 2000, 255; Cervantes-Soon 2017, 15–16). Indeed the emphasis Freire’s critical pedagogy places on rational dialogue leaves little space for other modes of historicity based on different methods for knowledge creation.

Nevertheless, Freire’s critical pedagogy has helped me understand my own positionality. In interpretivist research it is through their critical reflection that analysts think deeply about and present the assumptions underlying the making of their argument. Freire’s critical pedagogy has helped me think carefully about the making of my own argument. On several occasions my participants became critical pedagogues in ways that helped me develop a more critical consciousness of my own privilege within a global system of mass education, and which subsequently forced me to reshape the practice of my own research and data analysis.

For example, two of the five schools where I conducted research asked me to give presentations in front of the whole school about my own schooling in Australia. I recorded in my fieldnotes when asked at Bishop Wade Technical Secondary School, at Tarlena in North Bougainville, that “I’m told I should talk about my education, and how I can be a PhD student but still be so young,” while at Avu’avu Provincial Secondary School (on Guadalcanal’s Weather Coast) the deputy principal had been “keen for me to expand the horizons of the students so they know about more than just Solomon Islands.” Neither request nor the topics I was asked to talk about were a surprise because students regularly asked me about school in Australia. I accepted the invitations on both occasions because I believed such presentations to be the obligation of a respectful guest in the school community. However, in both cases I found the presentations extremely uncomfortable. In fact, during the Q and A at Avu’avu one teacher even said something like “go see David for help with your school fees,” while another made a joke about my age. He said, exaggerating, that when Solomon Islanders turn twenty-five they are still in Grade Eleven, but there I was, at that age, a PhD student. I reacted how I usually do when I feel shame; my heart rate rose, I fidgeted in my seat, and I felt the heat on my ears and cheeks as I blushed.

I now see the presentations and the shame I felt as a form of critical pedagogy because I have had to read widely to understand my emotional reaction to them. At the time I felt uneasy because there was an element of truth in the teacher’s joke about my age. I had none of the barriers to advancement in education that the students and teachers I spoke with faced, nor was I at risk of alienation from the indigenous knowledges of home in pursuing it. Additionally, I knew that Australian and British colonial governments were responsible for establishing formal education systems that still made it almost impossible for all but a tiny minority of students to advance beyond secondary school (see chapter 5). In short, I perceived a personal connection to the process of colonisation.

Subsequently, I have read and taken to heart *Decolonizing Methodologies* (Smith 2012), and important works in the Pacific Studies canon such as Hau’ofa (2008), Teaiwa (2005, 2017) and Wesley-Smith (2016). These scholars describe the place of formal schooling and scholarly disciplines like anthropology in the on-going colonisation of Pacific peoples, and I now have an appreciation for the potential of research to contribute further to those processes. Trying to avoid this has led me to use the same filter to my research (not to mention education and transitional justice) as a growing list of scholars have done in Pacific Studies (see Wesley-Smith 2016; Teaiwa 2010). The filter was

simply: how could my research “be *of* and *for* the region rather than simply *about* it”? (Wesley-Smith 2016, 156; original emphasis). The point here is that the presentations, specifically the moments that caused me to feel shame, have been important steps in my learning that have helped me retain the deep suspicion of schooling characteristic of critical scholars of education and develop a commitment to research that is “of and for” Bougainville and Solomon Islands. In the final section I show how the latter point has helped me to read the silences I encountered during interviews and during participant observation and frame the analysis in the coming chapters. Before that, however, I explain where those interviews and observations took place, why they took place there, who they were with, and the strategy I took when conducting those interviews.

A case study analysis

I chose to do a detailed case study analysis because in my view transitional justice scholarship should build its theory from them. At present, and as I demonstrated in chapter 1, transitional justice theory and practice are pre-occupied with the complementarity of education with the field’s other justice mechanisms. Complementarity across justice mechanisms does not lead to much critical assessment of the assumptions underpinning the mechanisms themselves, including, for example, the centrality that those mechanisms place on truth-telling for coming to terms with the violent past. It thus leaves transitional justice unable to read more fully into silences. Nor does analysis of education as a mechanism of transitional justice shed sufficient light on the agency which teachers and students have to construct their own ideas concerning their place in society and the place of schooling in it. Research utilising “cultural production” is well placed to bring teacher and student agency into the analysis (Adely 2012; Cervantes-Soon 2017). More research like Bellino’s (2017) in post-conflict Guatemala would shed light on the nature of the agency that students and teachers have within the structural constraints of schools in transitional settings. Detailed case study analyses allow transitional justice scholars to understand how schooling might influence local meanings of justice, reconciliation, or transitional justice itself.

I conducted a case study project that was comparative across Bougainville and Solomon Islands thanks to some commonalities across the two cases, and some important differences that both held in comparison to international cases. For example, post-conflict schooling in some well-studied cases elsewhere, such as Northern Ireland, South Africa, Israel and Palestine, Rwanda and the states of the former Yugoslavia, has remained overwhelmingly segregated (Paulson 2015, 35). However, the markedly local nature of the conflicts in Bougainville and Solomon Islands has made this arrangement of post-conflict schooling impossible. And they both differ from the comparative cases

in another important way: whereas the comparative cases are often described as deeply divided along religious, racial and ethnic lines, loyalties in Melanesia are strongest at the level of kin and clan. I reasoned that in this context Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders might relate to their violent pasts rather differently from the fiercely fought contests over national narratives characteristic of several of the comparative cases. Significantly also, the governments of both Bougainville and Solomon Islands have far less capacity to deliver services than most of the comparative cases and thus little scope to impose a canonical version of history.

Additionally, I reasoned that a comparative approach might be of use to Bougainville and Solomon Islands. For instance, given the similarities in their conflict experiences, histories of formal schooling and relatively poor state capacity, my project could contribute to useful dialogue between officials in the two education systems. Solomon Islands was well down the path of reforming its social studies curricular materials in 2015 (Oakeshott and Allen 2015) and Bougainvilleans were at that time beginning to grapple with issues around teaching their conflict that Solomon Islanders had already attempted to resolve.

A multi-sited research design

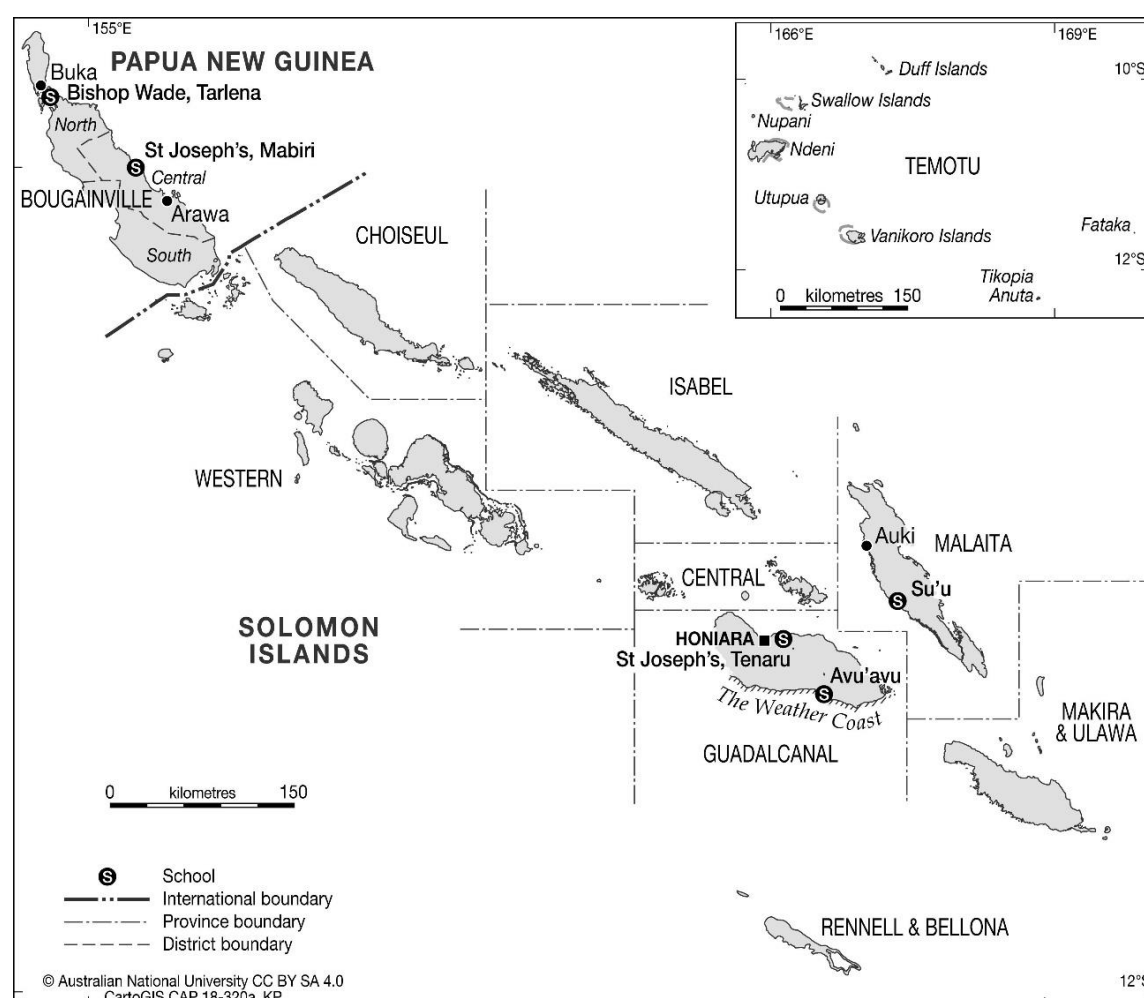
My research objectives were well-suited to the logic of multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1999). Research of this type is conducted across sites that might have very little contact with each other in material terms, such as individual schools, but which are nevertheless interconnected parts of broader systems or imaginaries, like education systems and post-conflict reconciliation and recovery.

In Solomon Islands, for example, I conducted research at schools in three locations that had very little contact with each other in material terms but which nevertheless all had direct experience of the Tension. This approach addressed my first research question on the presence of the past in everyday life and its influence on social relations in the areas most affected by the violence of the Tension: Malaita, Honiara, and the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal. During the five months I was in country I lived at three secondary boarding schools. I spent ten weeks at one school for detailed analysis of everyday life and six weeks at two others for comparative purposes (Table 3.1). For the sake of brevity, throughout the thesis I will refer to schools by their location, such that, for example, “St Joseph’s Catholic National Secondary School, Tenaru” will be “Tenaru.” It was common in everyday conversation to refer to schools with this shorthand anyway.

Table 3.1: Duration of time spent at, and number of visits to, each case study school

School	Location	Time on location (weeks)	Number of visits
St Joseph's Catholic National Secondary School	Tenaru, Guadalcanal	10	4
Su'u National Secondary School	Su'u, Malaita	2	1
Avu'avu Provincial Secondary School	Avu'avu, Guadalcanal	4	1
St Joseph's High School	Mabiri, Bougainville	5	2
Bishop Wade Tarlena Technical Secondary School	Tarlena, Bougainville	6	3

Figure 3.1: Map of the case study schools



My base in Solomon Islands was at Tenaru, which is run by the Catholic Marist Brothers Order. I had spent one month at the school during my Honours research on history education reform in 2013. Its students come from across the country. I returned to Tenaru several times after shorter visits to two other schools and a scoping trip to Bougainville (Figure 3.1). One of those was Su'u on Malaita, which is run by the South Seas Evangelical Church and whose students are overwhelmingly from Malaita. Su'u and Tenaru were both National Secondary Schools (NSSs), which are the top tier of schools in the country. NSSs are generally better resourced and their students, a small proportion of secondary school students nationally, are the most academically successful. I was at Su'u for two weeks. The other school was Avu'avu. It was a Provincial Secondary School (PSS) on the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal, which meant it was run by the Guadalcanal Provincial Government Education Authority. PSSs are generally considered better than the Community High Schools (CHSs), which most of the country's students attend because they are located in the communities themselves. As will become clear, PSSs like Avu'avu are not known for the academic performance of their students. Avu'avu's students were overwhelmingly from Guadalcanal, particularly the Weather Coast (Figure 3.1).

By the time I started research in Bougainville, my experiences in the three Solomon Islands schools had shown that people from across the archipelago typically considered it culturally inappropriate to talk openly about the violent past. This pattern in the data made me less concerned to achieve comprehensive geographical coverage within Bougainville despite the different experiences its three administrative regions (North, Central and South) had of the Crisis (fighting in South Bougainville lasted longest and was more severe). And as I explain below, my relative inexperience in Bougainville meant I spent more time conducting research in Bougainville's major urban centres in any case. Thus I conducted research at two schools, Tarlena in North Bougainville and Mabiri in Central, both of which were run by the Catholic Church (Mabiri was also run by the Marist Brothers Order). Both schools housed academic and vocational programs, though in the academic stream the grades offered by Mabiri were only Nine and Ten while those at Tarlena extended from Nine to Twelve.

My multi-sited research approach was also well suited to address my second research question, about the implications for schooling of the past's presence in everyday life. As I demonstrate in chapters 5 through 9, schools in Bougainville and Solomon Islands share "a particular pattern of organisational properties" (Dreeben 1968, 1) that render them discrete yet basically alike. This is to say that the daily routines and challenges at Tarlena and Mabiri were similar to daily life at the schools in Solomon Islands. That said, however, schools are not isolated from their surroundings

either (Pierides 2010). This multi-sited research allowed me to investigate both the specifics of individual schools and the “non-obvious” connections between them (Marcus 1999).

Moreover, teachers and students complemented my multi-sited approach with their own multi-sited perspectives. Teachers and students rarely spend their entire time within the education system at just one school; twenty-five of the twenty-nine students interviewed at Avu’avu had previously attended another secondary school. And, as one principal reminded me, that while it is possible to fool a government inspector, “the students,” by contrast, “are very good inspectors.” I found that this made them very good at comparing the schools they had attended. There were even teachers in Bougainville who had taught in Solomon Islands, and vice versa; one teacher had taught at Avu’avu and Tenaru, and in 2016 was completing his second teaching stint at Mabiri. Those teachers were also well equipped to make comparisons across multiple schools. Both teachers and students generally agreed on the themes around which to base those comparisons.

The varying times I spent at the different schools had a significant influence on how I gathered data and consequently the structure of the analyses in the chapters that follow. I relied heavily on semi-structured interviewing to gather data throughout, but was even more reliant at the schools at which I spent less time; in Bougainville I ultimately chose to spend more time at two schools rather than attempt to access and establish myself at a third in South Bougainville (Table 3.1). Nevertheless, I have still been able to base the chapters around themes emerging from the commonalities among schools (while noting as I go the specific circumstances at each school).

Writing chapters around themes rather than case study schools was also possible because the schools at which I worked were all comparatively elite. I am thus in a position to generalise about the perspectives of an emerging elite and middle class (chapter 9). On the other hand this limited my capacity to make broader generalisations about schooling experiences at Community High Schools in Solomon Islands, for example, which are more intricately entwined in the social life and politics of the communities in which they are situated. However, I found that even in the schools furthest removed from indigenous cultures and knowledges, students maintained culturally informed silences about the past and valorised life in their rural homes.

Researching everyday life at school

The major research methods I used at the boarding schools were semi-structured interviewing and participant observation, although semi-structured interviewing was particularly important given that

my multi-sited approach had compressed the time I could spend at each school. In any case, my aims when using both methods were aligned with my research questions. Thus, in keeping with my first research question on the presence of the violent past in everyday life, I sought to gather data about when, where and how the violent past might break through the silences people tried to maintain about it, how teachers and students responded if and when it did resurface, and why they responded in the way they did. Additionally, in seeking out ways schooling could contribute to transitional justice beyond history education in the classroom, as per my second research question, I tried to gather data on all facets of life at the boarding schools.

Participant observation regarding my first research question required patience. Given that it was culturally inappropriate to mention the violent past in public forums, and that my presence at the schools depended on the principals' approval, I felt disinclined to ask about the Tension or Crisis during informal conversations with teachers and students. Consequently I found it was only when individuals found themselves in conflict or disagreement with a colleague or peer, either about something trivial or something potentially more serious (chapter 9), that the violent past featured at all in social life at school. In the chapters that follow I show how teachers and students navigated through these events and how they understood what they were doing.

It was comparatively easier to observe the rhythm of everyday life at school, though a lot hinged on my relationship with the school principal. These relationships were critical because my presence at each school depended on the principal's consent. Moreover they decided my living situation, which effectively brought me closer to teachers than students. For instance, each school was over-enrolled and struggled to find dormitory and dining hall space for its students, let alone a foreign researcher. However, as all teachers lived on site I could more readily share accommodation with the unmarried male teachers at four of the five schools. At the fifth (Su'u) I lived at the school's visitors accommodation with another visitor, a male trainee teacher. Additionally, I needed the principals' permission to access spaces to work, which were typically found in staffrooms, libraries or communal spaces for the teachers. Consequently, I occasionally found myself drafted into assisting teachers with some aspects of their work, such as proof-reading examination papers, but I was never asked to assist them in their responsibilities to monitor or discipline students. When I was able to observe classroom lessons I sat or stood at the back of the class and was introduced to the students as a guest for the day's lesson. Ultimately, while I generated more observational data on the lives of teachers than students, I nevertheless had ample opportunity to talk with students during the gaps in

the daily routine and because teachers and students were generally informal with each other anyway.

I adopted a narrative approach to semi-structured interviewing, and it turned out to be a useful complement to my observational data. I was drawn to narrative interviewing because it is designed to help participants construct a story about events currently taking place, or from their prior experiences, and in so doing assist the participant in finding out what those examples mean. I had this advice from Brinkmann and Kvale (2015, 180) in mind:

after the initial request for a story, the main role of the narrative interviewer is to remain a listener, abstaining from interruptions, occasionally posing questions for clarification, and assisting the interviewee in continuing to tell his or her story. Through questions, nods, and silences, the interviewer is a coproducer of the narrative.

Narrative interviewing thus begins from the premise that people find meaning through stories (Lieblich et al. 1998, 7; Corbett 2012, 50). Importantly, and in keeping with my interpretivist position, these stories do not represent an objective account of what happened to an individual or group (Thomsen and Brinkmann 2009, 294) but are instead representations of events the meanings of which are open to continuous re-interpretation over time. This is because, while people might maintain the general sense for what happened in the story they tell, they construct their narratives with the tools they have available to them from their culture, which is subject to change. Sara Jones (2015, 164) describes it thus: “we are, in this view, only the ‘co-authors’ of the stories we tell: our freedom to talk about personal experience is shaped and constrained by the dominant narratives within a given culture.” These stories can range from detailed life history interviewing (such as Corbett 2012) to “small stories” (Georgakopoulou 2007). It was the small stories—narratives of specific instances from a participant’s everyday life or events that had unfolded around us at the school—that I sought when investigating everyday life at school. Analysis of them allowed me to interpret individuals’ understandings of their culture (Lieblich et al. 1998, 8).

Narrative interviewing centred the interviews on each participant’s interpretation of their personal experiences, including but not limited to those that had occurred while I was present at the school, and thus positioned them as knowledgeable on the topics we discussed. By helping students and teachers construct a narrative about the way they tried to resolve fights, find free time to study, break away from the school routine, overcome injustices or convince their peers to follow the rules, I was able to shed light on their “situated agency” (Hay 2011, 176). When this narrative approach worked I was able to help participants find the meaning behind their actions, and critically reflect on and clarify the reasons behind their behaviours. Once, an interview with a Head of Department at

one school led her to question whether her agency was as constrained as she thought and she began to participate more in the school administration's decision-making in the weeks that followed.

While I was able to approach teachers for interviews during their free time, the principals influenced my recruitment process regarding students. Each principal adopted a slightly different approach, but these ranged from making a general call for volunteers from the whole student body, to providing a list of students I could approach (though those students were still free to decline my request), and to allowing curious students to approach me themselves. Interviews took place in private during the slot in the daily timetable the principal had allowed me to conduct them, typically in the school's library after dinner.

I made a concerted effort to use Solomon Islands Pijin or PNG Tok Pisin, in interviews and in daily life, because students were typically more comfortable using their lingua franca than English. I was not fluent in either lingua franca by the end of fieldwork but because I was proficient enough and participants typically had a good comprehension of English we could have free flowing conversations. Nevertheless there were undoubtedly subtleties I missed as I gained language proficiency. Interviews also went better as I gained experience and confidence in my interviewing technique. My understanding of important issues and themes in life at school, language proficiency and observational skills, improved over the course of my fieldwork and I could begin interviews by letting students decide what we discussed either from a list of topics from my observations or a topic about life at school they chose themselves. To some extent the time it took to develop my skills and technique introduced a temporal bias in the data. Certainly, it took me longer to establish the basic facts of life at school at Tenaru and Mabiri, being the schools I visited first in Solomon Islands and Bougainville, respectively, than it did at the other schools. However, I made multiple trips to both Tenaru and Mabiri. Both schools were also the schools I visited last, which helped me account for my relative paucity of understanding when I first arrived. The repeated visits also gave me some insight into how and why the disciplinary regime waxes and wanes over the course of a school year (chapter 6).

Table 3.2 summarises the interview participants from the case study schools. I conducted 272 interviews with 251 participants. All interviewees were over the age of sixteen because I would not, under the terms of my university's ethics protocol, require parental consent to interview them. I needed a large number of interviews because I sought to gain as much understanding of everyday

life at each school as I could in the relatively short time that my comparative and multi-sited approach allowed. Fortunately it was possible to build a rhythm once I had established my place in the school timetable.

Table 3.2: Demographics of the 251 participants at case study schools

The first number in parentheses in each cell of the table indicates the numbers of participants interviewed more than once (MI), the second number indicates participants interviewed in pairs unless indicated otherwise (JI), and the third indicates how many participants elected not to have their interview recorded (NR).

Country	School	Teachers		Students		Other	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Solomon Islands (SI)	Tenaru	13 (6,0,0)	8 (4,0,1)	18 (0,0,2)	18 (0,0,6)	2	-
	Su'u	11 (3,0,0)	3 (0,0,0)	11 (0,3*,0)	12 (0,12,6)	-	-
	Avu'avu	9 (0,0,2)	4 (0,0,1)	16 (0,0,1)	13 (0,0,7)	2	-
	Other (Betivatu CHS, Bishop Epalle CHS, King George VI NSS)	6 (0,0,0)	-	-	-	-	-
Bougainville (B)	Mabiri	12 (5,0,0)	3 (2,0,0)	29 (0,6,2)	-	2	1
	Tarlana	15 (4,0,0)	17 (1,0,1)	6 (0,0,0)	16 (0,4,2)	1	-
	Other (Arawa High School)	2 (0,0,0)	-	-	-	-	-
Totals (SI)		39	15	45	43	4	1
Totals (B)		29	20	35	16	3	1
Totals (SI and B combined)		68	35	80	59	7 (1,0,2)	2 (0,0,2)
Totals (SI, B and genders combined)		103		139		9	

* One interview with three students

Table 3.2 also contains numbers in parentheses, which I have included to show instances where participant teachers were interviewed multiple times, where students were interviewed in pairs and where interviews were not recorded. For example, at Mabiri in Bougainville no student was

interviewed more than once, six students (three pairs) were interviewed together and two students elected not to have our interview recorded. The official positions of the individuals in the “Other” row of Table 3.2 included an ex-teacher, three members of religious orders, two school board members, a bursar, matron and secretary.

Thirty-four percent of teachers and 42 percent of students interviewed were women. Mabiri was an all-boys school and thus I prioritised interviewing female students at Tarlena. However, I interviewed fewer students there than I had hoped because during one of my visits the school was forced to close a week before the end of Term One due to widespread student panic surrounding a sorcery incident at the school. Moreover, when classes resumed in Term Two the administration scheduled make-up classes during times when I typically conducted interviews.

However, the teachers remained at the school during that shut-down period and thus I interviewed more teachers than I would have otherwise. In fact, Tarlena was the only school with a predominantly female teaching staff. The three female teachers interviewed at Mabiri, and the eight at Tenaru were the only female teachers at these two schools. In fact, in Solomon Islands, according to Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) data, the more elite the school the greater proportion of men on the teaching staff; while 44 percent of teachers at CHSS were female in 2013, women represented only 31 percent and 28 percent of teachers at PSSs and NSSs, respectively (MEHRD 2013a, 59).

I feared that my reliance on principals for access to schools and potential interviewees would combine with an inherent power imbalance between me and a potential interviewee (student or teacher) to create a situation in which potential participants might have believed they would get in trouble if they chose not to participate. They might have even thought there was a “correct” answer to my interview questions. Table 3.2 also suggests these factors might have had greater influence over interviews with female students; 6 percent of interviews with boys (five out of eighty) but 36 percent of interviews with girls (twenty-one out of fifty-nine) were not recorded and more female students were interviewed in pairs. At Su’u all twelve girls were interviewed in pairs because it would violate *kastom*⁴ for any man to be alone with a girl. Su’u was the only school to insist on this while

⁴ *Kastom* is a neo-Melanesian Pijin term to describe things done in accordance with indigenously derived values (McDougall 2016, 12). It translates to “custom” and while the term does indicate a connection to the past it should not be taken as a reference to ancient, unchanging ways of the past (Allen et al. 2013, 34). In fact, on Malaita in the aftermath of the Second World War *kastom* became a political ideology of resistance to

other schools were more relaxed. The joint interviews at other schools usually took place because the student that volunteered was more comfortable with a friend present and the friend was curious but too shy to talk to me themselves. Teachers confirmed that girls were typically shyer in approaching me than boys. Thus chapter 7 on gender relations at the boarding schools will inevitably be missing nuances to life at school for female students. Female teachers, by contrast, were confident and forthcoming and thus chapter 7 also includes important material on how female teachers formulated their identities as professionals.

Despite the potential hazards from power imbalances between interviewer and interviewee, many male and female students had their own motives for participating in interviews. For instance, I found that students would ask my permission to leave even though they had been entirely relaxed, patient with my language ability, forthcoming in their responses, and keen to ask me questions of their own. One female student at Tenaru even apologised for not answering all questions in the way that she thought I expected and a principal at another school did the same. It also helped that when the principal had provided a list of students I was permitted to approach for an interview, those students regularly held leadership positions within the school or were high achievers academically and more confident. Additionally, I encountered students who were simply curious because they had never spoken to a foreigner before, others who wanted practice for future interview situations, or were interested in life and schooling in Australia or searching for a conversation about their country's politics. One even said he valued the chance to critically reflect on his schooling.

I had several strategies to overcome the power imbalance between myself and my interviewees, teachers and students. Outside of the interview setting, I made a concerted effort to appear approachable in public spaces so shyer individuals, particularly female students, could approach me informally or in larger groups. Before interviews potential participants and I talked about what participation meant and what I would do with the information from it, as per the terms of my university's ethics protocol. I also assured them that there were no adverse consequences for refusal to participate, that their identity would remain confidential, and that there were no "wrong" answers because I was interested in their experiences at school. I also encouraged them to ask me questions or seek clarification.

colonialism (and later the independent state) built from both moral values in the past and distinctly new ideas and institutions (Akin 2013, 343), which subsequently spread to other parts of the archipelago (Allen 2013, 83).

My approach to data gathering has influenced how I have approached my analysis since fieldwork. I obtained a large volume of data around discrete episodes that occurred at the schools while I was there, or that I learnt about from teachers and students while I was there. The task post-fieldwork has been to search for the similarities and differences in how teachers and students have understood what these events mean. It has also helped me process the considerable number of fieldnotes and interviews I generated. Some transcriptions I completed in the field, many others I completed back in Australia, but there remain a few that I have simply not had time to do. That said, however, I took as detailed notes as I could during interviews themselves, which means that I generally have detailed notes for interviews that are not yet transcribed, and I have at least been able to listen to all of them again. While this means that there are episodes from everyday life at school which I have been unable to include in the dissertation, such as the sorcery event mentioned above, I have been able to undertake and include deeper analyses of the events that were particularly relevant to my research questions. To do this I tried to understand my fieldnotes and interview transcripts from specific episodes in the context of events that occurred at other schools, wider academic literature, and what I learnt through my investigation into the broader context in which schools operate.

Researching the broader context

As mentioned, while discrete sites in several ways, schools are by no means divorced from their broader surroundings and circumstances. The broader circumstances I was particularly interested in were the reconciliation processes in Bougainville and Solomon Islands and the administrative environments in which schools operated. In the main I used semi-structured narrative interviewing to investigate these issues.

I ultimately conducted eighty-six interviews with seventy-seven participants from government and non-government organisations involved in reconciliation and education (Table 3.3). Nearly two thirds of the participants were in Bougainville because I was less familiar with that context than I was with that of Solomon Islands. Indeed, as mentioned, I had already conducted a research project about history education reform in Solomon Islands in which I had canvassed the perspectives of education sector officials, donors and consultants (Oakeshott 2013).⁵ The Solomon Islands interviews for the current project were carried out in Honiara, either on brief morning or afternoon trips from Tenaru or in a two week dedicated block when I arrived in Honiara in June 2015. The Bougainville interviews

⁵ I completed that research with approval from the Australian National University's (ANU's) Human Research Ethics Committee.

were carried out during dedicated blocks in Bougainville’s two main urban centres, Buka and Arawa (Figure 3.1). In total I spent approximately one month in Buka and two weeks in Arawa. Importantly, to help overcome my relative lack of experience in Bougainville, and to attend to the requirements of a research visa for PNG, I conducted a ten day scoping trip to Bougainville in September 2015 to familiarise myself with the issues in Bougainville and attend to the requirements of a research visa for PNG.

Table 3.3 also shows that these seventy-seven interlocutors were predominantly men in both Bougainville and Solomon Islands and in both the government and non-government cohorts. The skew among government participants towards men reflects figures on the proportion of women and men in the civil service more generally. In Solomon Islands, data from the Ministry of Public Service provided to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in 2015 suggested that women were significantly under-represented in mid- and senior-level positions of the public service (22 percent and 5 percent, respectively), which were the levels at which I sought interviews (ADB 2015, 61).

Table 3.3: Demographics of the seventy-seven participants not affiliated with the case study schools

Country	Government		Non-Government		Total (genders combined)
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Solomon Islands	9	3	10	5	27
Bougainville	14	3	19	13	49
Total	24	6	29	18	77

Importantly also, although I have assigned participants in Table 3.3 to either “government” or “non-government” cohorts, this only reflects the position they held at the time of our interview and does not necessarily reflect the topics we discussed. In some cases I sought to establish official positions or learn about specific processes that the government or civil-society groups had followed (like curriculum reform and reconciliation), but these participants were often also important members of their communities and well-qualified informants about national peace and reconciliation and education issues more generally. Assigning participants in either cohort to sub-categories like “politician,” “ex-combatant,” “expert—education” and “expert—peace and reconciliation” would be problematic as many interviewees would fit into more than one category.

My reliance on interviews to research the broader reconciliation and education context becomes particularly relevant in chapter 4. My analysis there concerns the place-based form of transitional justice in Bougainville and Solomon Islands, which, I found, revolved around local level reconciliation

processes. My analysis focuses on the commonalities across participants' perspectives on reconciliation rather than a comprehensive account of an actual reconciliation process from ethnographic observation. While an account based on direct observation of a specific reconciliation process would reveal much about the local politics at play during the processes themselves, and the deeper symbolism of the ceremonies, it would reveal less about the shared meanings across the diversity of cultural groups in Bougainville and Solomon Islands around how reconciliation works and what its effects are. Moreover, the common understandings that constitute the reconciliation discourse I describe in chapter 4 are most relevant to how students and teachers from different cultures seek to resolve conflicts in everyday life at school.

Learning how to read silences

What use is narrative interviewing, premised on the idea that people find meaning through stories, to an investigation into silences and the non-narrative ways people come to know the past and ultimately build reconciliation from them? Considerable use, in my view, if your intention is to conduct research that is of and for the region and you pay particular attention to the boundaries your participants impose on their narratives.

Prior to fieldwork I reasoned, in line with Jelin (2003, 22), that a good place to search for a person's subjectivity was in the disturbances to "the functioning of habitual memory" because when events challenge the narrative that an individual has previously taken for granted they must do the mental labour required to find the meaning of that event. I thought a discussion about the civil conflict with a colleague or peer in the workplace or at school would likely be such an occasion. Thus, I sought narratives about occasions when participants had discussed the Tension or Crisis with others so we could find the meaning in that experience together. I assumed that silences would be broken sometimes, particularly once I understood that the past could be a silent presence in everyday life; remember that in my earlier research in 2013 I had learnt that at Tenaru there were bullet holes in walls and a cooking pot in the dining hall that students still refused to use.

Thus I had still assumed that my participants would be able to share with me an example of a time when they had discussed the violent past with somebody else. Sometimes they did, but more often there was no narrative to elicit. Even when I tried to talk in general terms about the Crisis or Tension the most talkative of interviewees would regularly refuse to engage my line of questioning. Occasionally the silences followed an interviewee stating plainly they could or would not answer.

More generally the silences were less abrupt as interviewees responded vaguely to my questions while they waited patiently for me to take the hint and move the conversation along.

I have the thought-provoking contributions from scholars at the 2018 Australian Association of Pacific Studies conference to thank for helping me read the silences between me and my interviewees. Specifically, the members of the Unbound Collective (Flinders University 2018) pointed me towards Tuck and Yang (2014a, 2014b), who take Simpson's (2007) usage of "ethnographic refusal" as their inspiration. Ethnographic refusal encourages the researcher not to view the lack of a narrative as an absence nor a wholesale rejection of the researcher's project. Rather, refusals take place within interviews and conversations themselves and are the moments when interviewees attempt to set the boundaries for what can and cannot be known. This would not make ethnographic refusal a sign that an all-encompassing silence about the violent past is appropriate because, as Tuck and Yang explain, "stories are meant to be passed along *appropriately*" (2014a, 234; my emphasis). Rather, ethnographic refusal points to ways that silences are different between different individuals and groups because people are often not expected to know anything more than what is appropriate for their place in society. Tuck and Yang argue that the same is true for academics in the social sciences and the social sciences themselves; neither has the right to know everything. Thus, "the most important insight to draw from Simpson's article is her emphasis that refusals are not subtractive, but are theoretically generative" (239).

Underscoring the importance of respecting the boundaries which participants establish with their refusals is the history of colonisation, in which the colonisers paid no respect to such boundaries. Smith (2012) and Tuck and Yang (2014a, 2014b) have explained in detail the processes through which colonisers imposed their belief in the superiority of their western academic knowledge on indigenous peoples. Smith even highlights the important role formal education played in this process. Although Tuck and Yang use ethnographic refusal in settler colonial contexts, as I mentioned in chapter 2 Pacific Islanders have described similar effects of colonisation and formal education (Bugotu 1975; Hau'ofa 2008, 15; Thaman 2003). Moreover, the idea that not all members of a community have equal access to knowledge resonates with available research on indigenous understandings of knowledge transmission in Solomon Islands (McDougall 2005; Sanga 2015; Sanga and Reynolds 2020; Scott 2000). And as Theidon (2013) points out, knowledge transmission about past violence in circumstances where victims, perpetrators and their kin live in close quarters is an especially morally and ethically fraught prospect for individuals and entire communities.

Thus, the refusals to discuss the Tension or Crisis with me laid bare my assumptions. I had assumed, first, that the interviewee had unfettered access to the information needed to tell a narrative, second, that it was socially acceptable for the teller of the narrative to share it with me, the researcher, and third, that I was allowed to hear the story. On all three counts I discovered this was rarely the case when it came to knowledge about the Crisis, Tension, and even some of the conflicts among teachers and students themselves.

There are two principal effects of ethnographic refusal on the chapters that follow. First, in my analysis I have drawn most heavily on the data generated when I was able to recompose myself after my initial request for a narrative was met with silence; we could talk about the refusal if not the subject matter the refusal was about. On those occasions my participants and I could also work out the nature of other refusals they must maintain, such as with their peers, community leaders, strangers and families. At schools, for example, the teacher or student and I could discuss the safe and unsafe spaces on campus to talk about the Tension, with whom it would be safe to talk about it, the social relations that shape discussion when it does happen, and how that might differ with close kin or clan members. In other words, interviewees and I could have fascinating discussions about the nature of the social relations that permit or prohibit sharing stories about the violent past without talking much about the violent past itself. Second, there were a few occasions when interviewees decided I was so far removed from the social relations pertinent to the story they told that they decided there was little risk in telling me. While I certainly was a long way removed from the social relationships we discussed, in the chapters that follow I still have refused to share those stories. The stories themselves are not required to make an argument about the social relations that permit or prohibit discussion of the violent past. And I am also aware of the social relations into which the thesis will sit once it returns to the schools in Bougainville and Solomon Islands, which has also meant there are occasions when I have completely anonymised identities even if the interviewee gave me permission to use their name. That said, where I have not anonymised identities I give the person's full name in the text, while I only give first names to those to whom I have assigned a pseudonym.

Conclusion

As interpretivist research is primarily concerned with meaning, the assumptions and methods from which an interpretivist researcher generates knowledge are important to explain. Although the knowledge people use to make meaning varies cross-culturally, colonisation introduced the idea of

the hegemony of western academic knowledge that has been pervasive in the Pacific Islands. It is a form of inequality that has led me to the conviction that research should be of and for the region. Consequently, I have tried to imagine a contribution to scholarship that is respectful of the facts that indigenous peoples own their indigenous knowledges and have the ultimate authority over how and to whom they disseminate them. In practical terms this has meant identifying the boundaries of what I am allowed to know, which the concept of ethnographic refusal has helped me do. Thus, in the coming chapters, as I develop an argument about how silences help Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders attend to their relationships, I am not claiming to have found that silence is a form of indigenous knowledge. Rather, silences are an observable part of social relations which signify a refusal to speak for the good of an individual's relationships. Refusals are strategies used in everyday life based on the understanding that what is said in any given conversation about the violent past is contingent upon the social relations present in the conversation. In my case, ethnographic refusals produced silences in conversations that demonstrated that I had assumed that knowledge about the past could be rendered as western academic knowledge. The rest of the thesis will analyse the social relations that produce silences among Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders and schooling's relationship to them. The reconciliation process is central to those social relations.

Chapter 4 Disentangling Reconciliation Discourse: Place-Based Transitional Justice in Bougainville and Solomon Islands

Probably, when you speak generally about the whole thing [the Crisis], everyone probably will talk about it. But once you start to go deeper into the actual things then *people stumble on their words* they use to describe this thing... *they start to talk and stop* and, because they know, probably it's because they are very cautious about those things... Like sometimes you may be talking, telling a story about someone who was killed or something and you probably do not know that that person is probably related to someone you are talking to, about, ah. And it may actually spark some kind of, ah, what? Anger or something on the other person. So sometimes it's a bit, you have to be very cautious with the way people talk about these things. (Alex, Mabiri Teacher)

While in chapter 3 I described the social relations that produced silences between me and my participants, I now turn to the silences produced in the social relations within and between social groups in Bougainville and Solomon Islands, respectively. Indeed, the teacher from Mabiri quoted above, Alex, described a refusal to talk to others about the Crisis beyond general accounts. Moreover, he attributed this refusal to an individual's embeddedness in their relationships to others when he identified the risk that, unbeknown to the speaker, their talk would reference an issue to which the other person was related. As several other participants outline below, such talk can have serious consequences for the relationships between individuals and their kin, and their villages with other communities. In this chapter I argue that the social relations that require refusals to speak, as Alex described, are shaped by a place-based form of transitional justice revolving around indigenous understandings of reconciliation. The common elements to reconciliation processes across Bougainville and Solomon Islands make this place-based form of transitional justice solid ground for the formation of enemy friendships.

In the first section of this chapter I discuss the culturally specific meanings of reconciliation in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. This is a fraught task because, as my participants warned me regularly and as other scholars have observed, *kastom* practices concerning reconciliation vary across Melanesia and are not static (Dinnen 2003; White and Watson-Gegeo 1990). Nevertheless, scholarship on reconciliation generally corroborates the common themes that elites, teachers and students identified as typical elements among their diverse *kastom* practices. Their analyses of the reconciliation processes they participated in as victims, perpetrators, mediators and witnesses, coupled with their understandings of how their social positions relative to others have shaped the way they discuss conflicts, show that their relationships to their respective violent pasts are transformed through reconciliation. Contrasting with mainstream transitional justice's pre-

occupation with truth-telling, I highlight how reconciliation processes and the ceremonies that conclude them are primarily oriented towards the transformation of relationships between disputing parties. Within this arena there are proper times and places for something like truth-telling, even if it is generally not the primary consideration. I also outline the reasons why it is socially inappropriate to talk about a conflict before a reconciliation process is complete.

In the second section I outline how, after a reconciliation ceremony, the parties to a dispute generally continue to maintain silences about the past, but, if they must speak of the conflict, they tell a story about a relationship between kin or larger social groups brought to a peaceful state. Thus, I make it clear that silence does not mean forgetting. To this end I expand upon an element of the reconciliation process most scholars of reconciliation in Melanesia observe only in passing, that when reconciliation is complete it is typically considered inappropriate to speak of the conflict again (see Reddy 2012, 139). Ignoring how reconciliations shape talk about the past leads us—outside observers and scholars—to focus on their effect on relationships in the present instead of their historicity; reconciliation also shapes the relationships all parties have to the violent past and how subsequent generations come to know that relationship. I describe the major ceremonial practices participants identified that ensure a past conflict is not forgotten in everyday life but remembered in the right way: as a story about a transfigured relationship rather than one of enmity towards others.

In the third section I critically discuss some elements of indigenous reconciliation processes that have been particularly salient and persuasive in post-conflict circumstances, which might appear to make mainstream transitional justice theory more appealing to Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders. These elements are Christian understandings of forgiveness and healing, and a discourse about trauma. Both connote a stronger presence of the needs of individuals in highly community- and relationships-oriented processes of reconciliation. However, I demonstrate that at the local level these discourses remain couched within a broader concern for the relationships between kin-based villages.

In the fourth section I illustrate how the concern for relationships even includes a considerable measure of flexibility with historical facts. Consequently, as I show in the chapter's final section, individuals, particularly women, are put in unenviable positions when choosing between speech and silence in post-conflict everyday life. Interestingly, I also show that the authors of the women's submission to the SITRC (Fangalasuu et al. 2011) were cognisant of those choices and consequently their report became a relatively successful form of truth-seeking in Solomon Islands.

In the chapter's conclusion I outline how the reconciliation processes my participants described constitute a place-based form of transitional justice. Without adopting the language of transitional justice, through their reconciliation processes Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders were nevertheless transitioning from conflict to sustainable peace and determining the publicly acceptable account of the past.

Truth-telling and silences in reconciliation processes and ceremonies

A persistent theme in accounts of Melanesian reconciliation practices is the impressive pragmatism and willingness of the parties involved to adapt to new circumstances (Jolly 2003, 270; Dinnen 2003, 28; McDougall and Kere 2011; Allen et al. 2013; McDougall 2015). It means that the three major sources of knowledge and practice for dispute resolution (*kastom*, churches and state) all have their time and place but are not mutually exclusive (McDougall and Kere 2011, 144). A preference for *kastom* or Christian methods in some instances does not mean Solomon Islanders do not also wish to use the state's retributive justice system or hope for radical improvements in its operations (Allen et al. 2013, xi). The pragmatism also means that a range of factors influence what people describe as *kastom* reconciliation; recall that *kastom* itself does not refer to unchanging customs or traditions of the past but instead denotes indigenously derived values, both historical and contemporary (Allen 2013, 16–17). Christian practices and understandings of forgiveness are now central parts of *kastom* reconciliation. Additionally, the brutality and scale of the violence during the Crisis and Tension exceeded anything *kastom* reconciliation practices had ever had to resolve and thus posed new challenges for it (Boege and Garasu 2011, 180–81). Nevertheless, *kastom* reconciliations, which are intended to achieve balance in the relationships between the broader kin/clan groups to which the individual victims and perpetrators belong, remain the most salient form of dispute resolution in post-conflict Bougainville and Solomon Islands. I will describe the reconciliation process in general terms before concentrating specifically on the place of truth-telling and silences in it.

Generally speaking, reconciliation involves long periods of negotiation and discussion between the representatives of the individuals involved in the dispute—usually community leaders or individuals who share social ties to both parties. The time it takes to reconcile depends on the harm caused (Reddy 2012, 138) and serious cases are deliberately slow because the parties involved need time to reflect and prepare themselves (Sirivi 2004, 176). The process culminates in a ceremony that formally marks the end of conflict and the achievement of balance in the relationships among the living and

spirits of ancestors (Akin 1999; Boege and Garasu 2011, 169). Entire villages witness the reconciliation ceremonies and it can take months to mobilise the network of relationships from which each group will draw resources (pigs, food crops and cash) to use in the symbolic gift exchanges at the reconciliation ceremony. In fact, the resources required for the gift exchanges far exceed the amount that any individual could be expected to contribute themselves, which forces people to mobilise, and therefore reaffirm and re-enact, their existing clan and exchange relationships (Regan 2000, 292).

Reconciliation ceremonies, on the victims' land or on neutral ground, are deeply symbolic. In Bougainville, chewing betelnut when the offending party arrives establishes *wan bel* (good feelings). The ceremonies (in Solomon Islands too) can also include admissions of guilt and explanations of the agreed version of what happened, exchanges of gifts and shell money compensation, and granting of forgiveness (Reddy 2012, 138). Christian practices and symbols are used regularly in the ceremonies. The payment of compensation is another critical feature of a reconciliation, though its significance varies; evangelical Christian denominations succeeded in varying degrees in stopping the practice, while mainline churches continue to permit it. Compensation remains the main feature of reconciliation among the Kwaio of Malaita, Solomon Islands, where Christianity has had little reach. Among the Kwaio the public presentation of shell money compensation is an opportunity for "individuals and groups alike to seek to earn prestige or at least to preserve face" (Akin 2013, 64) as well as placate ancestral spirits (Akin 1999, 45). In murder cases, the bones of the victim should be returned to their kin (Braithwaite et al. 2010a, 73). Sometimes participants will ceremoniously break weapons like spears, bows and arrows (Howley 2002; Regan 2010, 37). I also heard of two post-Crisis examples of a practice common in the past, in which people were included in the gift exchange. In one post-Crisis case the murderer's side agreed to exchange one of their young men (who was also agreeable) to marry into the victims' family where the offspring of that marriage would "*kamapim bek mipela*" (restore us). A final feature of the reconciliation ceremonies in Bougainville, but to my knowledge not in Solomon Islands, is that at "some ceremonies a rock will be buried to symbolise the departure of the weight of sorrow and bad experience that is now over. In other areas a tree might be planted to symbolise a new future" (Reddy 2012, 138). These symbolic elements of reconciliation ceremonies shape the silences Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders maintain with each other in profound ways.

Truth-telling has a particular place in the reconciliation processes just described, which can be seen in the metaphors used across the Pacific to refer to reconciliation practices and events.

“Disentangling,” as White and Watson-Gegeo (1990) describe, refers to the range of cultural activities people employ to “‘straighten out’ their ‘tangled’ relations.” They add in a footnote: “the image of a tangled net or a knotted line suggests a blockage of purposeful activity, reminding the members of a community that the problem at hand requires attention lest it impede ‘normal’ social life” (36). Disentangling has the relationships between the parties at its core and, consequently, the authors attest that disentangling in the Pacific transforms a conflict and recasts the social relations between the protagonists. Indeed, the fact a meeting or event took place, even if the parties agree to nothing, can be the most important outcome because it is a mutual recognition that all parties value their relationships to each other (32). Consequently, disentangling practices are speech events that allow individuals to speak in ways they would not ordinarily be allowed (9–10). Disentangling events can be convened to find a resolution (White and Watson-Gegeo 1990, 30–32, see also Podolefsky 1978) or they can be occasions when the questions, answers and stories—the truth of the matter, effectively—are already known to the key participants and simply shared to a wider audience. Translated into transitional justice discourse, disentangling practices are the arenas for truth-telling, but are separate from everyday talk.

Several scholars, Bougainvilleans, and Solomon Islanders have attested to how reconciliation processes are opportunities to talk in ways not typically permitted. For instance, during the mediation process it is possible for participants to throw out any accusations, facts and feelings they deem relevant to the issue (Reddy 2012, 126). In fact, descriptions of reconciliation ceremonies from my participants, plus the accounts given to Braithwaite et al. (2010a, 75), Reddy (2012) and Howley (2002), often tell of how ceremonies were public demonstrations of a resolution reached privately over a long period of time. Indeed Chris Baria, a member of the prominent restorative justice organisation, Peace Foundation Melanesia, explained that:

for the reconciliation with confession of wrongdoing, we use a smaller group but not the big reconciliation; that is a different thing altogether. Reconciliation where people actually confess that they have done wrong is more private. This step is very important; otherwise, there is no rock-hard, final reconciliation. (quoted in Howley 2002, 112)

The consequence of restricting confession of the crimes committed to a small audience is that when the wider community witnesses the bigger reconciliation, they do not hear it. A chief from North Bougainville explained that it is the mediator’s role to inform the wider community where and when the major ceremony will be held and it is only at the ceremony that the resolution of the issue and restoration of relationships becomes public knowledge. Similarly, in Solomon Islands, when the Kwara’ae of Malaita hold village meetings to resolve an issue they end them with *fa’amanata’anga*

(shaping the mind) sessions. These sessions are the activities that change group thinking and behaviour and in the context of disentangling they restore good relations, reassert important cultural values and “reinforce the lessons learned through the disputing process” (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo 2014, 175).

Given that mediation processes and reconciliation ceremonies are the specific occasions for something resembling truth-telling, it follows that outside of these events people tend not to talk about the violence. In fact, silences can indicate the need for disentangling. McDougall (2015, 460) observed a several week-long “period of heaviness when no one participated in communal work” after a community member had sworn at so many people there was no unaffected person on hand to mediate a disentangling event (a relative from another province was ultimately summoned to do it). Similarly, in situations in which a conflict has occurred between kin groups, social relations between members of each community are so constrained that people cannot even travel through the land of the other side.

In this way, silences during the reconciliation process and before the final ceremony are born out of refusals that denote the high regard for social relations that underpin disentangling events. For example, in both Bougainville and Solomon Islands the fear and threat of “payback” violence “defines behaviour and action and what people should say,” said one school principal. The fear is intense even for people who might at first seem several steps removed from the incident itself. Alex, the teacher whose words opened this chapter and who was also a leader in his home community, described how an old man confided in him a story that had the old man frightened for his life. The old man confessed that he helped initiate a series of events that ultimately, after several significant intervening steps, resulted in the murder of several people by the PNG Defence Force (PNGDF). Yet, according to Alex the old man:

fears for his life. And because I think because my uncle, who... [was also involved] he died, so he's probably lucky, he died. But this fellow is still alive and he's really scared too and he works in town and the people who died are actually part of the group of people who live around the township.

In this story the lucky person was the uncle who was already dead because he does not have the constant fear of payback for his involvement.

It is highly unlikely that Alex will share that story with other Bougainvilleans. The story was told to him in confidence and relationships between people and villages follow logics of reciprocity in which an individual's indiscretion is not only their responsibility but also the responsibility of the entire clan

lineage (Regan 2000, 292). And historically reconciliation was not the only means to resolve disputes between clans; any member of a perpetrator's community could be as legitimate a victim of payback violence as the perpetrator. Moreover, relationships are not fundamentally peaceful (Dinnen 2001; Trompf 1994; Lohmann 2014). Rumsay (2003, 76) demonstrated for the people of the Ku Waru area of the PNG Highlands, and the Highlands generally, that the "exchange of blows and exchange of wealth comprise integral aspects of a single exchange system." Violence was understood in similar terms in Bougainville (Boege and Garasu 2011, 165). It is true that pacification and missionisation during the colonial era did much to undermine payback violence as a form of relational exchange, one result being that village communities became more reliant on disentangling practices to pursue their grievances (McDougall 2016, 136). However, it remains the case that violence has been understood as another, albeit unwelcome, mode of relational behaviour and form of exchange and this logic remains persuasive for many in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. It made talking about that story a dangerous prospect for Alex.⁶

Payback as a contemporary phenomenon owes much to the conflicts themselves. The forms of authority that prevented payback violence before the Crisis and Tension, whether they be customary, church or state mechanisms, were put under considerable strain or collapsed entirely during the conflicts. In Bougainville it was often nearly impossible for customary authority figures to constrain BRA commanders enjoying the new status and power their guns gave them (Regan 1998, 278). With that power many commanders pursued local grievances, or their own greed, with means totally out of proportion to what might have been the case in less conflicted times. Their actions produced a climate of fear, which the on-going presence of guns in rural and urban communities, the normalisation of criminal behaviour and the loss of respect for chiefly authority has extended into the present day, according to Rose, a senior women's leader in Central Bougainville. In such circumstances, balance in relationships would appear far less a factor in payback than revenge, greed, and impunity.

A further reason that silences are required in the pre-reconciliation period is that continued talk can further damage relationships or even the reconciliation process itself. For example, a teacher in

⁶ As to why the old man shared the story with Alex in the first place, I can only speculate. Certainly, community members need to know where they can walk safely and who they can associate with freely. So telling Alex could have been for Alex's own safety. Equally, the old man confided in Alex in private, which could indicate that his involvement in the incident was not widely known and perhaps that as a leader in their community Alex would also need to know because he would be one of the individuals involved in mediation should it come to that.

Bougainville described what it was like living in the school community with a colleague who belonged to the clan responsible for killing one of her relatives. Although at school she could distinguish him from his clan, at least on the issue of the reconciliation of the murder it appears her colleague could not reciprocate. She described his refusal to discuss the reconciliation process:

but once I asked him “do you know any story about that person?” And he said “*no ken toktok*/ do not talk [about it].” ...And then I just stopped. Maybe he knows something. Yeah, so it’s his uncles who are negotiating with our people to bring back the remains.

The social relations between her and her colleague produced a palpable silence between them and she knew not to mention it again.

The risk that talk could further damage social relations made individuals reluctant to talk beyond their own personal experiences. For example, one participant went to great lengths to correct me when he felt I had misunderstood something he told me earlier in our interview. He asserted that he did not know because the matter did not concern his part of Guadalcanal. Moreover, he was emphatic it was not his place to speculate. This refusal had a relational logic: if I had attributed something to him that was incorrect he could be accused of gossip or lying, which was itself a form of damage to the relationship between his clan and the one he had mentioned in the conversation. A student from the Weather Coast and a teacher from Malaita corroborated that such an offence would require the payment of compensation. The student said:

in *kastom* it’s like this: what you know you can share, what you do not know you cannot share or what you do not know you cannot develop a story for sharing. That is *tambu* [taboo] because everyone will call you a liar. When you’re a liar they will then say “you have to give this and this and this.” If you know then you can share. That is true. You can talk. That’s according to *kastom*... at school it is the same. That’s how I look at it.

The equivalence the student drew between *kastom* and the situation at school is significant, and the substance of subsequent chapters. For now, note that the student said it would be necessary to restore tangled relations with compensation payments if individuals spoke in a way that endangered the relationships in which they live.

The material presented so far has established that disentangling events are the occasions for something resembling the detailed confession of wrong-doing that is considered by transitional justice discourse to be an essential component of healing at personal and national levels (although who hears it depends on the circumstances and harm caused). Disentangling events are customary practices and ceremonial procedures take a long time to organise and are fundamentally about the transformation of relationships into peaceful and productive forms of reciprocal exchange.

Consequently, outside of disentangling processes and events it is socially appropriate to refuse to talk about the conflict being reconciled.

After the ceremony: reconciliation and historicity

Although individuals certainly can, and do, restart conflicts, particularly in circumstances of longstanding enmity and antagonism (Rumsay 2003), in their discourse about reconciliation my participants emphasised the finality of a reconciliation ceremony, which referred to the belief that issues, once resolved, should not be brought up again (Reddy 2012, 139; McDougall and Kere 2011, 153; Podolefsky 1978, 57). This finality is consistently overlooked in scholarly analyses of reconciliation.

Effectively, the finality of reconciliation indicates that the ceremonies mark the moment in which disputing groups transition from conflict to peace. Indeed, these ceremonies radically alter possibilities in everyday life: whereas before the reconciliation people are not free to move through the land of the opposing side, they can do so after the reconciliation. Further evidence of the transition marked by reconciliations is that the ceremonies are witnessed by all group members. By doing so they affirm and acknowledge the renewed relationship and are witnesses to the agreed version of the past. Braithwaite et al. (2010a, 75) even recorded some rare instances in post-Crisis Bougainville in which over a thousand people witnessed a ceremony. One chief from North Bougainville said that once they have heard the story of the renewed relationship for themselves, “the thing about Bougainville is, especially my community is, once a thing is reconciled, people can talk in the afternoon [of the reconciliation]. After that, no, they just forget it. Don’t talk any more about it.” There is simply no need to bring up an issue that everyone has just agreed has stamped out any ill feeling, he said. To this end Clarence “Boira” Dency, a former BRA commander turned reconciliation worker who later became the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) Member for Eivo/Torau Constituency in Central Bougainville, explained that young people have a role to play. Boira said young people on the aggressor’s side assist in preparing the feast and are required to shake hands with the victims’ side. When they shake hands they even make apologies: “because they are our members [and] we are trying to renew our community. They can just come and say ‘I am very sad of what our brothers, our uncles, have done and we are now to start a new era.’”

However, when a new era is declared and the parties resolve to “forget,” public discussion of the conflict is not totally forbidden. Instead, individuals will typically refuse to discuss it

outside the context of the restored relationship. Although the exact details and sequence of events are flexible and worked out during the negotiation period before the reconciliation (Reddy 2006, 246), below I give a sense of the range of possible ritual practices that signal to participants—and future generations—the way in which conflict stories should be told from the moment after the ceremony.

Boira said that in many parts of Bougainville an important part of a reconciliation ceremony with direct relevance for subsequent generations involves the chewing of betelnut (parts of the same nut shared between all the individuals involved) over a hole in the ground. In this hole participants have placed either a stone or a tree (usually a coconut or Pao nut tree). Before they fill in the hole with soil the main parties to the reconciliation spit the red saliva from chewing the betelnut into the hole and then perpetrators shake hands with individuals immediately affected and perhaps hundreds more of the victim's kin (Reddy 2006, 246). Filling the hole symbolises that everything has been accomplished, said Boira (see also Tombot 2003, 256). The hole might be in a prominent place like a communal meeting place, and part of the stone might still be visible above the ground, said one teacher at Tarlena. Chris Baria explained the significance of burying stones to Pat Howley: "the significance of the stone is that it is heavy and it does not move and it gives a sign of strong and unchanging reconciliation..." (Howley 2002, 111). And according to one teacher from South Bougainville, as the tree grows so will the peace they declared when they shook hands.

Dennis Kuiai, who was the acting Secretary of the ABG's Department of Peace Agreement Implementation during Bougainville's referendum on independence, described burying stones as like making a promise to never allow the past dispute to influence what the parties do in the future:

it's a promise that we will never, when we have differences we will never allow the past to influence what we will be doing. So it's a way of saying when we are faced with conflict in the future we will go for peaceful and amicable solutions. That's the stone. Whereas for fruit trees [the Pao and coconut are]... evidence of, and a reminder that we have had this and we have already reconciled so we cannot make issue out of this again. So we cannot just go into telling people that it's a taboo let's not talk about this because in Bougainville what we do understand is no matter you, how hard you try to keep something in secret, it will still come out.

The buried stones and planted trees have a historicity, and it indicates that even when disputing parties disagree again they will not bring the reconciled episode into the equation because they have promised to resolve future issues peacefully. It is a cultural practice, Dennis explained, that accepts that it is impossible to prevent people from disagree and talking, but one that seeks to set the terms for how they do it. In fact, if anyone would dispute the reconciliation they would have to destroy the tree, so it is not a step taken lightly. Braithwaite et al. (2010a, 73) observed that the "weight of social

disapproval from renouncing a reconciliation was reported to be enormous” and then quoted then President of the ABG, Joseph Kabui, on the matter. Kabui explained that the “moment the hatchet is buried, it stays buried. Anyone seen to be digging up the buried hatchet will get the most severe punishment. This means death” (ibid.).

Another teacher from South Bougainville, Douglas, expanded on the social significance of the tree for the next generation:

it is a sign, it will become a reminder. It is a reminder to the ones who took part in it. And anything happens later too, the next, new generation comes later too they'll say “oh such and such a time, such and such an event took over during that time and this is the sign” Sometimes when we have a few arguments with the community or when they come and get things without permission, then when they start creating stories and then we'll say, I would say “oh, such and such a time we did this. Yes. You helped us did this.”

Note that the tree is intended to be a reminder to subsequent generations (of all sides) when they are tempted to do something that could potentially harm the good relations between the parties. It is a physical reminder people can use to explain why the relationship is in good order and to prevent deviation from that explanation.

Significantly, the trees and stones were not passive reminders of a conflict resolved and a relationship restored, but were instead intended to prompt community members to learn their history. Dennis Kuiai said coconut and Pao nut trees were particularly noteworthy features in the landscape in former times:

but also at the same time you know, it's more like, even the coconut tree now, and the Pao nut, in the olden days it was very unique, I mean there were not that many coconut trees. So that would stand out. So the question would be: “who owns this coconut?” Unlike now we have got all these plantations and nobody would be willing to ask what this coconut is about.

That is, the trees had been stark reminders about the history of the clan that would have encouraged people to ask questions about them. Furthermore, Dennis argued that in more recent times concrete monuments could serve the same function as coconut and Pao trees had done in the past: “when [the monument] stands out people would then start asking “what is this?” and then the story will be told.” Therefore, and critically, while people accepted that once a reconciliation is complete it is socially inappropriate to discuss the conflict again—which means that refusals about the conflict should be maintained in everyday life—the stories were not forgotten but remembered in the right way. Boira Dency and Rose (the women's leader mentioned above) added that it is the responsibility of chiefs and elders,

men and women, to remind younger generations of what the signs mean for their relationships with others.

In Solomon Islands there are some starkly similar cultural practices, although I did not hear of cases of burying stones and trees. On the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal the specifics of what follows successful disentangling were subtly different from what Dennis and Boira described for Bougainville, but the logics driving them were similar. For instance, many participants from the Weather Coast consistently implied that even trivial talk of the conflict was not just inappropriate but forbidden after reconciliation because speaking would tell the other side that forgiveness had not been heartfelt. Moreover, inappropriate talk would require a whole new disentangling event to straighten the relationships again. Tellingly perhaps, former militant commander Andrew Te'e, who had been in Rove prison serving seven life sentences before a conditional pardon from the Governor General in 2011 (ICTJ 2011), explained these dynamics with a hypothetical instead of a real-life example. He explained that if Tom had killed Peter and the murder had been reconciled, if Tom were to continue telling the story after the reconciliation he would have to pay significant compensation to solve a problem that had already been solved. A teacher at Avu'avu corroborated this perspective, saying that to *storim bek* (retell) would lead to new problems that must also be reconciled.

However, as in Bougainville, a teacher from the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal, Angelina, explained that the history of the Tension was located in an array of physical spaces, such as grave sites. In 2014 she had been walking through a part of the Weather Coast that had suffered acutely under Harold Keke's reign of terror. She had been accompanied by a man she was related to through the marriage of their respective siblings. When she noticed the large number of graves in the community in which they had stopped she asked her companion about them. They were from the Tension, he said, and his answer led them into an open and detailed conversation about it. Moreover, the graves seemed to have shaped the story told, as Angelina said that it was not until seeing them all that she fully empathised with the extreme fear people felt back then. Because of their family connection her companion shared with her the status of the (still incomplete) reconciliations in which he was involved, the causes of those specific conflicts and his role in them. Having grown accustomed to participants' refusals I was surprised when Angelina disclosed those details to me. When I asked her if the talk was appropriate given her companion's conflicts had not been reconciled, she said the reconciliation had nothing to do with me:

I told you [that story]. You don't have anything to do with them. That's how I see it. You are a different person. And you are from a different place too. Like, it's hard for you to go to them and say "this is the story." You will not know them. It's just for your

information. So that is why you saw me feel free to tell you that story. Even though the reconciliation is not done yet.

Angelina said she would not share the story with anyone involved in the conflict or mention the issue in her classroom because some of her students might also be connected to the conflict somehow. But she said she told me, just for my information, because I could not possibly investigate it further and was outside of the relationships involved.

In both Bougainville and Solomon Islands some reminders were not written into the landscape like trees, stones and graves, but were objects used in everyday life. Debra McDougall (2016, 136) describes the ceremonial use of shell money (*bakia* in the Kubokota language) on Ranongga, Western Province, in terms surely familiar to Bougainvilleans: “the exchange of money and especially of *bakia* creates a kind of closure that talk alone cannot; these payments are said to ‘cover’ the offense and prevent others from ‘opening’ it up again.” Critically also, McDougall explains that *bakia* should be passed from generation to generation as a memorial to the relationships through which they have been transacted. Moreover, they anchor people to the place because they are made from shells that come from the surrounding environment and which are found in the ancestral shrines all around Ranongga. Additionally, according to Ruth Soavanna-Spriggs (2003, 200), who quoted her uncle, in Tinputz (Bougainville) “once the payment in traditional currency is made, the conflicts cannot be challenged. Once you pay compensation with it, it seals the deal and the deal cannot be contested.” Boira explained his relationship to the shell money exchanged during one of his already completed reconciliations:

I’m just going to take you back to my reconciliation and I’ve got two shell monies in my house, and, you know, sometimes I get very angry. Sometimes I disagree with my brother-in-law, but again I remember that, this stops me. You know, I have reconciled with him already and I will not do it a second time again. I’ve got two shell monies, I keep them in front of my table, and they were used for this reconciliation.... anyone who wants to, you know, retaliate on some of these issues I have to tell them the shell money is there. ‘If you want to, you know, go back again and [start] firing, then take this shell money and give it to him.’ Because when you give it to him he knows that there is something again going on.

Boira has explained that he keeps the shell money and it is a constant reminder for him about the reconciliation and the appropriate way to get along with his brother-in-law (the other party to the reconciled dispute). It performs the same social function as a coconut tree or buried stone: it tells another clan member, either of the generation involved in the conflict or born after it had been reconciled, that to return the shell money to the other party would be akin to renouncing the reconciliation.

A more prominent place for truth-telling?

Mainstream transitional justice discourse since the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been based on the logic that traumatised individuals (and nations) will experience catharsis when they reveal their trauma and work through it. This reasoning has roots in Christian ideas about alleviating spiritual illness through the pain individuals feel in baring their soul in the confessional (Shaw 2007, 190). Desmond Tutu used his analogy of the suffering body cleansing itself through truth-telling at the launch of the SITRC and Father Sam Ata, the chairman of the Solomon Islands commission, did the same throughout the SITRC process (Vella 2015, 171). So it might look to mainstream transitional justice discourse as if the Christian elements of the reconciliation process, which emphasise an individual's trauma and truth-telling as the path to overcome it, have given a more expansive role to truth-telling in the reconciliation process in Bougainville and Solomon Islands.

Indeed, nobody can doubt the presence of Christian ideas about confession and forgiveness in contemporary reconciliation processes. Christian churches brought notions of individuals in possession of a soul capable of direct communion with God into the predominantly collectivist settings of Melanesia, where persons have been constituted through their participation in, and contribution to, kinship and other exchange relationships. And, we saw above that, while violence was once understood as a normal part of exchange relationships, with Christianisation it became morally unacceptable (Boege and Garasu 2011, 166). Moreover, the practice of returning the bones of the deceased person also became about allowing the living to put the soul of the victim to rest. Unsurprisingly, therefore, perhaps the most persistent theme in participants' discourse about reconciliation was the idea that reconciliation was only real and successful if it came "from the heart" of victims and perpetrators.

However, while "from the heart" certainly highlights the importance of an individual's confession and forgiveness to the reconciliation process, it also fits neatly into the broader relational scheme of reconciliation discourse. Indeed, Christianity has not replaced alternative forms of personhood in Melanesia but rather has fused with them (Bialecki and Daswani 2015, 276–77). Thus, descriptions of reconciliation like this one from a former BRA combatant from Panguna, were common:

We forged ahead and conducted our reconciliations without even one cent from the government. But it has proven to be the best reconciliation and today we are living together with our brothers in Rorovana. We can go down and fish there. We can go there and sleep there. So, much of the reconciliations that are taking place today, I really question the lasting of it, ah.

David: ...what makes yours stick and theirs not?

Because we did it from the heart.

The problem with today's reconciliations, the combatant said, is that they use money from the government, which in Bougainville and Solomon Islands was often understood as a form of profit seeking instead of a sign of genuine forgiveness from the heart. The presence of money in reconciliations has caused some to wonder if reconciliations are possible beyond the level of kin and clan (Boege 2019a, 2019b), an important issue to which I return in the concluding chapter. The combatant's "from the heart" reconciliation, by contrast, allowed all protagonists to return to normal everyday life.

In Solomon Islands, when I spoke to Reverend Constance Selu, a Uniting Church pastor and member of the Sycamore Tree Restorative Justice Program (see Brigg et al. 2015b), she argued peace from the heart was a Christian idea that fits comfortably with how restitution was understood in the cultures of Solomon Islands, where it means far more than recompense for material loss (see Akin 2013, 88; Kwa'ioloa and Burt 1997, 144–46). Sycamore Tree refuses to allow monetary compensation in the reconciliations it mediates between convicted militants and their victims' families and villages. Instead it emphasises that exchanges of gifts be calculated according to *kastom*, which is intended to ensure that restitution is the restoration of relationships (Brigg et al. 2015b, 7–8). Notably, justice as the restoration of right relationships is entrenched in Christian scripture (Philpott 2013) and it was certainly the case that the combatant quoted above knew his reconciliations from the heart had been successful because of the change it brought to his everyday social life: he can now interact freely with, and safely move through the land of, his former rivals from Rorovana.

Consequently, silences about the violent past in the service of disentangling relations and restoring good ties can take on Christian dimensions. In Bougainville, a senior member of the Catholic Education system and Mabiri's first principal, Benedict Tooming, explained:

we call ourselves Christians, when will we start to forgive? Because one of them [ways] to solve the problem is to forgive. But when they say forgive and forget, that is a lie statement. Because a normal human being cannot forget. He can forgive but he cannot forget.... forgiveness is a healing power. For example, for myself I, if you forgive someone you free yourself from the torment that always come[s] back to you. For example, for myself I lost a house, I lost a car. That's only history I'm talking about. I don't think of that anymore, I forgive who did that. It's a Crisis thing so bye. Forgive.

According to Benedict, it was not possible to strike what happened from a person's memory. But the means through which a person could remember without torment, and thus leave the past behind, was heartfelt forgiveness rather than accounting for what happened. Similarly, a high school teacher

at Avu'avu, also a senior member of his community, described a successful reconciliation he helped mediate: "we forgive each other... after all, those people at Sukiki are our relatives." Like Benedict, forgiveness and forgetting were expressions of his Christian faith, he said, and because everybody accepts each other again it is now *tambu* to talk about the conflict and doing so would require a further payment of compensation.

The "from the heart" discourse also results in the need to maintain silences before a reconciliation ceremony, although for the benefit of the traumatised individual rather than relationships between clans. In short, because individuals need time to heal from personal trauma before they can reconcile from the heart, the reconciliation process might take longer than it once did. Participants intimately involved in reconciliation processes highlighted caring for the needs of individuals suffering trauma before coming to mediation and reconciliation. In Solomon Islands a senior religious leader explained:

The story-telling process is, we are dealing with trauma healing, and so it is a community-based approach. An individual, they come up and tell their stories about the, their experiences of the ethnic conflict and what happened to them: what they heard, what they saw, all these things. It's one way of allowing them to talk out and release their inner feelings, yeah, what they have inside. So that is the story-telling process.

David: And once they've done that what happens?

Then, well it is a long process because a trauma healing process, they have to go through some processes but after that, and then, if those need to reconcile with other people that's where reconciliation takes place. Actually the trauma healing process, which include the story-telling, is setting the way forward for the reconciliation.

According to this religious leader, within the reconciliation process there was an acknowledgement of an individual's emotional well-being and there was scope for an individual to bear their soul—i.e. do truth-telling—in their own time. He situated it prior to forgiveness and reconciliation and, crucially, acknowledged that the whole process is a slow one. Significantly also, it all constituted a part of a relational, "community-based approach." The sequence he described centred the individual within the community and consequently it seems plausible that the need for group members to refuse to talk about the violent past while a reconciliation ceremony is organised will extend even longer so that individuals have time to confront their personal trauma.

Indeed, several participants described making exactly these sorts of refusals. For instance, one teacher at Su'u described the way the personal trauma of one family member had seen the rest of them refuse to discuss the Tension in private. She had been one of the extended family members forced to take over raising four children whose parents had separated during the Tension. The

children's mother was from Guadalcanal and the divorce came due to circumstances surrounding her unwillingness to flee with the family from Guadalcanal to her husband's home on Malaita. The episode clearly caused some trauma; one child had tried to write about the episode for a school assignment on "an experience you will never forget" but had to abandon the attempt because it made him too upset. Therefore, the teacher said: "with my nephews and niece, we are so sensitive that we don't talk about it anymore. They know everything and we know everything and we just want [to] forget... because even their father he was nearly killed at that time too." Furthermore, during my research at Tenaru in 2013, when eight of twenty-four students interviewed reported being personally affected by the violence, their teachers and peers reported approaching the topic of the Tension extremely cautiously in case they had yet to reconcile within themselves (Oakeshott 2013, 54–59).

Flexibility with facts

It is certainly the case that participants considered disentangling events to be the appropriate places for the public sharing of a detailed account of the violent past. However, sometimes it could be the case that the account was only as detailed as what the participants had agreed to in the negotiation process. Thus the widely observed pragmatism in conflict resolution in Melanesia also applied to the story passed on in the ceremonies themselves.

Consider, for example, the *bel kol* (cooling the stomach) ceremony Jeremy participated in shortly after I met him (for an example from Solomon Islands see Ata 2009, 241–42). The *bel kol* was not the final reconciliation ceremony but a ceremony on the way to reconciliation. Jeremy was explicit: "later we will have this big reconciliation... It's sort of, you know, breaking ice with what they [the victims] want." The *bel kol* would cover the murder of two young "homeguards" (they were protecting their village but not otherwise participating in fighting either with or against the BRA) and the rape of more than one woman during an ambush operation that Jeremy's BRA Company carried out. As was often the case, the victims and perpetrators were closely related and Jeremy said the "family of these two victims agreed that we will have a clan reconciliation and they have laid charge on our clan and they said we are going to pay 4000 kina per person for *bel kol*." The payment would also include two live pigs, two shell monies, two slaughtered pigs to be cooked and eaten at the ceremony, garden and store-bought food for the feasting, as well as betelnut for the ritual part of the ceremony.

The *bel kol* required mediators to put some issues of fact aside so they could focus on others. Several complications from the Crisis had prevented the parties from reaching this point sooner; an elder had refused to allow the *bel kol* but his death had cleared the way to proceed, the communities affected were not in close geographical proximity to each other making it less urgent to repair these social ties than other more immediate ones, and it had taken until 2016 for one of the victims' families to be prepared to reconcile. Even Bougainville's factional politics had got in the way, as some parties to the dispute were members of one of the Me'ekamui⁷ factions and could not reach agreement with Jeremy. Critically also, Crisis-related complications made it necessary to limit the scope of the *bel kol* to the clan level, which meant the *bel kol* would focus on specific relationships instead of every single relationship involved in the incident. Jeremy estimated that if every ex-combatant involved were present, along with all the victims' relatives, the victim's family would be forced to charge about 20,000 kina for each slaughtered boy. This was because one of the victims' mothers was from Buka, and according to Jeremy their different practices around compensation would result in a dramatic increase in the compensation payment. So too would the introduction of more responsible parties into the process; commanders from Panguna were "right in this operation," Jeremy said. It did not mean they were physically present at the ambush—they were absent like Jeremy was—but their knowledge of it and any role in its planning made them as culpable as Jeremy and therefore partly responsible for organising and contributing to the reconciliation process. However, it appears that particular part of the story was not necessary to proceed with the *bel kol*.

After the Crisis kin groups in some parts of Bougainville have attempted to use reconciliation ceremonies tactically by being flexible with the account permitted during disentangling. At Tarlena one teacher described how his community had conducted a "general" reconciliation in which the minute details of what happened to individuals were excluded in favour of broader descriptions of the types of violence committed. The teacher said he and everyone involved knew "it is not the proper way" but they were worried about the risks that followed if detailed accounts of unreconciled conflicts were passed on to the next generation. They feared a young person would seek payback if they grew up suffering the trauma of the knowledge that a close relative had died and justice (in the form of reconciliation) had not been achieved. Thus the community had sought to reconcile without

⁷ Me'ekamui means "sacred land" in the Nasioi language (spoken in central Bougainville where the Panguna mine is located). As a force in Bougainville politics the Me'ekamui Defence Force (MDF) was born during an internal split in the Bougainville Revolutionary Army before the signing of the peace agreement in 1998. The MDF morphed into the Me'ekamui Government of Unity (MGU) and has been a "hardline" faction opposed to the peace process (Regan 2010, 50–51). MGU itself has splintered since the peace agreement (ibid., 114–15), the main issues revolving around disagreements over the original intentions of the BRA's founder, Francis Ona, and the prospect of re-opening of the Panguna mine (Allen 2018, 72).

a full account to help people suffering trauma. For him the reconciliation was just as meaningful because people at the time were of the view that “*justis nau, em i prevail*” (justice has prevailed). The teacher’s perspective on the general reconciliations was not universally accepted, as one of his colleagues from the same region insisted reconciliations were not acceptable until the bones of the victims had been returned. However, on the other hand, Braithwaite (2011, 137) observed that some perpetrators finally came forward to confess to victims’ relatives long after reconciliations had been conducted because they felt safe to confess having seen the reconciliations hold.

Silence and being silenced

If the two examples above demonstrate a measure of pragmatism towards historical facts in the interests of disentangling relationships, Jeremy’s *bel kol*, along with the following two examples from Robert and Rachel, also highlight the tensions between refusals as a productive strategy to navigate and enact everyday social relations and silences as an indication of marginalisation (see chapter 2). The contrast between the possibilities and decisions available to Robert and Rachel after the Crisis—Robert chose payback while Rachel chose silence—demonstrates that the refusal to speak, which might mean living with trauma and never sharing it, is not only an assertion of agency for the good of the community in the present, but a decision made for the good of future generations. The factors that contribute to the silences women choose to make, however, are different to those of men.

In Jeremy’s example the silences were socially productive because they restored an inter-community relationship, but in the process the rape of the women seems to have been struck from the publicly acceptable version of the past. According to Jeremy, the rapes would be a lesser part of the *bel kol* at the request of the victims’ families because public acknowledgement would create a stigma that would threaten their present day marriages. He continued, explaining that the historical fact of the rapes would be present, silently, but was secondary to the victim’s present circumstances and the interests of her husband:

if we put that to public and the husband of the wife happens to hear that, then there will be a marriage problem. But the rape will be, will just be within the reconciliation.... because maybe it’s the past. We have come a long way. And also, the ladies have started, I mean, the lady herself is working with an organisation, I think she’s happy, she’s married, she’s got a good family.

Here Jeremy indicated that the rapes would contribute to the payments offered to the victims’ side (although it was unclear to me how) and thus did contribute to the restoration of relationships. However, mention of the rape itself had been silenced because it was apparently subservient to the

victims' present professional and domestic circumstances (particularly the interests of her husband), the inter-community relationship to which the victim belonged, and what others have apparently decided a good life for her looks like.

Robert told me the story of what happened to his father during the Crisis and how he and his siblings exacted payback: "not justice, it's vengeance," he said. During the Crisis his father was humiliated then beaten within an inch of his life by a group of *raskols* (rascals, meaning criminals) and, as Robert explained, "we know them." Their father had long been reluctant to discuss the incident, but they would not let it go: "who did this? We want the name" they demanded. Robert, his siblings, and their father's assailants are reconciled now, but:

before that, like, we were small, but, like, when we grow up my dad, we sat down and my dad said "that's the guy, that's the guy and that's the guy." And we said "oh, you beat up my Dad when we were small, so now we are big enough, we are going to belt you up." So you know what David, we belt those guys up. It's a fact.

Even without knowing who assaulted their father, the fact it occurred had a profound impact on Robert's and his siblings' childhoods. Their father's pain had been passed on to them: "we grew up with this, like, the pain [of] what the people did to our father." So they discussed their vengeance amongst themselves and then when they were big enough, drunk enough, and after witnesses had confirmed the perpetrators' identities, they forgot their fathers' wishes and nearly killed his former aggressors. Silences had been broken and the talk had been dangerous. Reconciliation became a distant priority while the young men enacted a form of payback that was relational inasmuch as it involved vengeance for their father, but was nothing like the way retribution has been understood historically, as a part of a broader system of relationality and exchange between groups (Rumsay 2003; Harrison 1993).

Additionally, that they were drunk is a significant point also because, while data on the mental health and psychosocial impact of the Crisis is scant, what does exist speaks to the prevalence of mental health issues manifest in substance abuse, gender violence and the impacts of these on younger generations (Tierney et al. 2016; Jewkes et al. 2017). Robert's account resonates with Kent and Barnett's (2012) portrait of Bougainville's post-Crisis young men: frustrated with a paucity of education and employment opportunities, embedded in a culture of violence, and less responsive to village leaders.

In contrast to Robert, Rachel understood the need to refuse to talk about the Crisis with the next generation. She steadfastly refused to share detailed accounts of what happened to her close relatives with young people in her village:

like for me I don't want my children to know who killed our grandfather or who killed my brother-in-law. Because he was dragged, for me I know who, but that side of the story we hide it from our kids, particularly those that have been born at this time, because we don't want them not to play with the children from that person who did that, who tied the rope to the neck of our brother-in-law and dragged him through, and we don't want his children who were really little boys and girls to know who because the perpetrator lives in the same village as us.

It was a deliberate strategy to prevent payback violence, she said. Moreover, it was not only her personal strategy but more widespread, with members of her father's family also refusing to tell the story (of a different murder) to the next generation. On their behalf, she said "we don't want our kids to know that this has been carried out by that person's clan, a member of that clan, so we do not want our kids to continue to hate." Thus, recognising that talk could be dangerous, Rachel and her relatives maintained silences for the good of the relationships of the younger generation.

Interestingly, even Robert, having exacted his payback, had learned from his experience and was maintaining silence about his father's assault. He said when he tells his father's story now, he will not tell the names of the perpetrators because he knows from personal experience that people forget the wishes of others under the influence of alcohol.

Robert, Rachel and the many others who constrain their talk when discussing the civil conflicts are critically aware that talk can be dangerous if it does not hold relationships in high regard. These are not just the relationships among the generation that experienced the conflict, but those among the next generation. And those who refuse to talk also demonstrate their concern for the knowledge subsequent generations form about their parents' violent past. For example, the week before I met Rachel she had been to Arawa with her daughter. While there she and her daughter took a taxi to visit the primary school where Rachel completed her first teaching contract as the Crisis began. The impulse to return was strong, although she could not identify where it came from. When they reached the rain trees at the entrance to the school sadness overcame her. Tears welled up at the sight of the wreckage of a once vibrant school. When they made it from the school's entrance to the beach and then turned to look back at where the school had been, Rachel said "my heart just broke because it was a beautiful spot and for the past twenty years I have not been to that area and it just reminded me how wonderful the place was before and it just struck me to see that it was destroyed, that my children will not know how it was." I can understand, if only intellectually, the fact of

Rachel's intense sadness at the loss of the "beautiful" and "wonderful" place she had spent the latter years of her youth. However, in my view the particularly striking thing about Rachel's sadness was that her daughter's poor understanding of the significance of the place and context had compounded it. Indeed Rachel's description of the exchange between her and her daughter illustrates that Rachel reacted to her daughter's relative lack of understanding:

she said "please mummy don't cry" and I said "you don't know how it was for me as a young girl teaching here. I was nineteen years old when I first came to do my first year teaching in this school here. And there were teacher's houses there and I used to live over there." I point it out and I just broke down and cried.... We stayed for three full hours just there.

As I will show, it was actually Rachel's daughter's lack of understanding that was more typical of the young Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders I knew than Robert's anger. Similarly, Bonshek (2008, 92–93) has observed that older generations in Oro Province, PNG, have likewise refused to share conflict knowledge to end cycles of violence between clans for subsequent generations. Rachel's experience speaks of the toll such refusals can take on the elders; although Rachel's sadness was compounded by her daughter's lack of understanding, Rachel was herself responsible for it because she had refused to discuss the cause of her sadness with her daughter.

Solomon Islander women wrote about the particularly strong pressures on them to maintain silences about their experiences of conflict in their submission to the SITRC (Fangalasuu et al. 2011, 13–14). Their perspective indicates that the female victims marginalised from the account of the past in Jeremy's *bel kol* may not have chosen to speak even if they were given the opportunity. The authors of the women's submission insisted on the agency of women in refusing to speak about violence. Their silence could signify many things including, as Jeremy's example showed, their understanding that reconciliation ceremonies often exclude women. Silence could also signify personal resistance to the risk that a woman's kin might force her to marry her perpetrator if both remained single, recognition of the paucity of support services for victims of sexual violence, and a woman's deep knowledge of her social relations because sharing her story had the potential to spark payback violence. Reading the women's submission gives a sense of the considerable courage required of women to refuse to speak and bear on-going trauma.

The women's submission to the SITRC is significant in the context of refusals to speak about the violent past. The process for preparing the women's submission was radically different from the SITRC's courtroom-like public hearing process; the women who participated in the latter reported that it made them feel "naked" and exposed while testifying (Cronin 2019, 129). By contrast, the

International Centre for Transitional Justice collaborated with women's rights activists independently from the SITRC to bring together more than sixty women from across Solomon Islands. Once gathered, they assembled in "*stori* circles" that were private and small enough to enable women to speak freely about their experiences. Away from the men who often claim to speak for them, the women who participated achieved a significant measure of interpersonal reconciliation. Moreover, they produced a far more nuanced account of women's experiences of the Tension that was ultimately used heavily in the final SITRC report (Cronin 2019, 129–31).

One important nuance was that Jeremy's example above should be understood in the context of broader structural violence and the patriarchal social order in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. For instance, the authors of the women's submission identified the fear of violent repercussions from husbands (or male relatives if they remained single) for things that happened to women during the Tension when they were single. Their point resonates with Wardlow's account of dominant cultural understandings of female sexuality among contemporary Huli in PNG, in which a woman's reproductive capacity is not simply hers to use autonomously but a part of her male kin's capacity to acquire bridewealth (2006, 119–21). In this contemporary formulation of social order, violence from kin for reporting sexual abuse is the result of the woman's use of her sexuality, consensual or not, for a purpose that threatened her clan's capacity to use it (Wardlow 2006, 20). Equally, the authors' descriptions of fears of violent repercussions are consistent with the observation that male violence towards women in PNG and elsewhere in Melanesia has been increasing as a result of social changes associated with "modernity" (Macintyre 2012, 247–48; Jolly 2012). For instance, contemporary threats to male power and dominance, a dominance which is itself a product of changes in gender relations during the colonial era (Cronin 2019, 113; Monson 2017, 390–95), like education or human rights consciousness, beget still more violence from men as they attempt to impose dominance over women (Macintyre 2012, 248; Jolly 2012; Spark 2018). Additionally, the civil conflicts radically reduced women's sense of safety while increasing the popular legitimacy of male violence. Thus, when Fangalasuu et al. (2011) identified the threat of violence from men for violating cultural taboos that prohibit talk about sexual assault, the existence of those taboos did not necessarily signify fundamentally repressive cultures but a phenomenon with many contemporary drivers.

Thus the examples above showed that the locally meaningful form of transitional justice realised through reconciliation processes also required women and men to refuse to talk about the violent past, which can take a heavy toll on the first and second generations. Robert and Rachel showed that

men's and women's experiences could differ considerably. The silences of the reconciliation processes accounted for some of the differences, but they were also shaped by gender relations in wider society. However, with attention on those silences and cognisant that people can form their place-based versions of transitional justice with ideas from inside and outside their culture (Shaw and Waldorf 2010), it was possible to see that the women's submission to the SITRC was relatively successful because it overcame those silences.

Conclusion

I have shown that truth-telling in a form consistent with mainstream transitional justice discourse and practice is a poor fit with the way Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders come to terms with their respective violent pasts. Instead, post-conflict everyday life for Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders is punctuated with refusals to talk and the silences between and even within disputing parties that those refusals produce. When individuals choose silence while the reconciliation process is on-going they acknowledge and respect the fragile nature of the relationships involved, the emotional needs of others, and protect themselves and kin from payback. Although reconciliation ceremonies, as disentangling events, are widely regarded as moments when ordinary refusals can be put aside and thus do have the potential for some measure of truth-telling, the exact moment for confession of wrongdoing varied across cultures; the ceremonies themselves were oftentimes simply occasions when the negotiated account of the conflict was shared publicly. Because the reconciliation process is fundamentally respectful of the relationships between the parties involved, sharing the facts of the matter is not necessarily a primary consideration. Then, after the reconciliation ceremony, if the story must be told everyone involved knows the story to tell; a history of a restored relationship located in the landscape and the objects of exchange. Thus it turns out that truth-telling in the form truth commissions pursue is a poor theoretical frame to apply to Melanesia.

However, if analysis begins from a critical approach to transitional justice, as I outlined in chapter 1, then transitional justice itself might yet have some applicability in the region. Recall that research within critical transitional justice begins from local understandings of justice, referred to as place-based justice (Shaw and Waldorf 2010, 5). I have shown here that reconciliation ceremonies achieve a measure of justice when they mark a radical change in how people relate to each other and to their violent past. And there are a wide variety of ritual practices that enact those changes and call the attention of subsequent generations to them. Refusals to talk in everyday life then keep those relationships in order. In other words, in their reconciliation processes Bougainvilleans and Solomon

Islanders have been doing transitional justice in its most literal form, marking a transition from conflict to sustainable peace and establishing the story for future generations.

Moreover, the reconciliation processes described here even established a place-based version of the original transitional justice dilemma. That dilemma concerned the raft of moral compromises victims would have to make for the greater good of achieving peace. Originally, the dilemma involved asking victims to abandon hopes for uncovering human rights abuses and prosecuting perpetrators, typically national elites, in order to prevent those elites from undermining the fragile nature of peace (van der Merwe and Brinton Lykes 2016; Leebaw 2008). In Bougainville and Solomon Islands, reconciliation processes often create an uncomfortable association between silence as a socially useful mode of relating to the past, on the one hand, and on the other the reality that the process itself leaves some victims marginalised. The authors of the women's submission to the SITRC were cognisant of the position of women in Solomon Islands, and thus their methodology and report proved a meaningful way to engage the experiences of women during the Tension.

Chapter 5 “Just Like History”: History Education and the Changing Nature of Classroom Knowledge

Teacher: It's just difficult to really say [to each other] Harold Keke did this, and Jimmy Lusibaea you organised this and Andrew Nori you did this just like we learned about in history, ah. Hitler did this and this and that.... It's just hard for us to talk openly, I don't know but, unless it is written in a book I think. But, like, my generation, [the Tension] it's still something we experienced. But when maybe our generation wrote that down, [or] write it down, then the new generation they can teach; in a book. That can, I think, can happen that way.

David: What's different about it being in a book?

Teacher: I don't know, I cannot give you any reason why, that's just how it feels. (Senior social studies teacher, Solomon Islands)

This teacher, from Malaita, was saying that despite close friendships over several years with many members of the teaching staff it was not enough to allow him to talk comfortably about the Tension with colleagues and friends from Guadalcanal, or talk openly about the Tension with students. However, if the current generation wrote about the Tension in a book it would even be possible for the next generation to teach it: there was something quite different about a written account of the past. It was a perspective common among social studies teachers. In fact, it was even common among students. The refusals adults maintained with young people, as I showed in chapter 4, meant that most Bougainvillean and Solomon Islander students did indeed have a limited knowledge of their respective civil conflicts. Moreover, students typically understood the need to refuse to talk about the Tension or Crisis with each other. Yet, they would also report that they were comfortable with the conflicts being in their textbooks.

When my participants and I wondered what difference a book could make we were asking a similar question to one that has dominated scholarship on education and transitional justice: how can the violent past be dealt with in history textbooks and the classroom? The field has answered with disciplinary history, which I argued in chapter 1 is thought to make young people into a transitional justice version of enemy friends. At first glance the difference my participants saw between a textual account of the violent past and conversations with each other, which was by far the dominant theme in student and teacher responses to my enquiries about learning and teaching the Crisis or Tension, might seem to enable the teaching of disciplinary history in post-conflict history education in Bougainville and Solomon Islands.

However, in this chapter I do not make an argument in favour of the teaching of disciplinary history about the violent past. Instead, I show that the difference that presentation of the conflict in a textbook makes owes much to the way Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders understand the knowledge learnt in the classroom.

The chapter begins with an analysis of the historical development of formal education in Solomon Islands and PNG, during which a constrained view of the social worth of classroom knowledge developed. Historically, classroom knowledge has been an esoteric form of knowledge represented in official syllabi and textbooks and useful only for progression through the education system. In the second section I show the ways that indigenous communities have also contributed to that narrow view of classroom knowledge by cordoning off classroom knowledge from their indigenous historicities. Consequently, as I demonstrate in the third section, when teachers and students suggested to me that the Crisis or Tension was, in the words of one teacher, “just like history,” they were explaining that it was divorced from the social contexts that required them to refuse to discuss it with each other.

From this foundation I describe and analyse post-Tension curriculum and pedagogical reform in Solomon Islands from the perspectives of curriculum developers, and teachers and students at Tenaru.⁸ In the fourth section I establish that the curriculum reform process in Solomon Islands, which began after the Tension, saw concerted effort from curriculum developers to introduce refusals and silences about the violent past into social studies textbooks. In the fifth section I analyse how this worked in practice at Tenaru. Admittedly, in the context of classroom teaching and learning, this was not a typical school; its teachers were experienced with the new curriculum and pedagogy, it was well resourced, close to Honiara and its students were high achievers academically. Nevertheless, the data show that teachers and students were critically aware of the settings they were in and the implications of that for how they discussed the Crisis and Tension with each other.

The data is sufficient to suggest that there is potential for classroom knowledge to become more socially relevant in Solomon Islands. And it also provides solid ground from which to expand, in later

⁸ Bougainville has not completed any comparable curriculum reform process and it uses PNG syllabi. Additionally, it was impossible to observe the teaching of the social studies units relating to the Tension at more than one school because it had a specific place in the social studies syllabus. When the Tension was taught I was at Tenaru.

chapters, on how transitional justice can understand the role of curriculum material and classroom teaching in post-conflict contexts.

The making of classroom knowledge

In this section I demonstrate that the development of formal education in Bougainville and Solomon Islands established a narrow understanding of classroom knowledge. As Rival (1996, 164) puts it, “formal schooling is the historical product of specific social relations and cultural norms. It is therefore possible to find, embedded in the apparently neutral infrastructure, a cultural model of what knowledge is, and how it should be acquired.” Obviously, for colonised peoples the cultural understanding of knowledge embedded in formal schooling was not their own. It belonged to colonial powers who used formal education to try to impose their understanding of knowledge on their subjects (Smith 2012, 67). Formal education certainly alienated young people from indigenous ways of knowing, and several features of the historical development of education systems in Bougainville and Solomon Islands also pushed classroom knowledge into a confined realm of examinations and the formal economy.

The first point to note is that while schools alienated students from indigenous knowledges, and sought to devalue those indigenous knowledges, it was a long time before schools made a concerted effort to teach the coloniser’s approach to history in the classroom. In fact, in the first half of the twentieth century the development of formal education became a contest for control between the Christian missions and colonial administrations. This contest occurred because the colonial administrations were slow to show any interest in education. The education system of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (BSIP) was among the least financially supported of all the education systems in the British Empire (Hilliard 1978, 222). The Australian administration responsible for Bougainville was equally disinterested (Laracy 1976, 145; Fife 1991, 157). On the other hand, the Christian missions were avid “educators” from the outset because schooling was one of their principal mechanisms of evangelising. Consequently, the BSIP and Australian administrations fundamentally disagreed with the missions on the purpose of education; when the governments began to take an interest they wanted to train civil servants and teachers while the missions sought to proselytise (Palmer 1980, 192; Fife 1991, 137). Thus, in both Bougainville and Solomon Islands the missions spent much of the colonial era attempting to stymie government efforts to establish state education.

Over time, however, the governments were able to wrest control of the education systems from the missions, principally because the missions became financially dependent on government grants. With those grants came new regulations that forced the missions to fall into line with administration policies on education (Laracy 1976, 150). The missions agreed to new official teacher qualifications and structured, official syllabi, for example. In the BSIP the takeover began in the 1930s but intensified after the Second World War. By 1967 the missions were so dependent on government funding and the administration had achieved enough regulatory control that education was for all intents and purposes state-controlled (Palmer 1980, 5). Education in Papua and New Guinea followed a similar trajectory where the 1970 Education Ordinance imposed several uniform standards across mission and government schools that made, on paper at least, a unified education system for the first time (Fife 1991, 180–81).

The administrations' initial lack of interest, the missions' reluctance to change, and colonial racism meant it was a long time before schools taught any secular forms of knowledge. On-going racism meant the state put little thought into the content and goals of the curriculum and the missions had little incentive to expand classroom learning beyond rote learning of religious doctrine (Bennett 1987, 258; Hilliard 1978, 223). In the early period of colonial schooling the missions used it primarily to produce new Christians and literacy was only useful inasmuch as it would bring new Christians closer to God through reading the bible (Fife 1991, 125). Anything more seemed like a waste of time because Melanesians were believed to be of such low intellectual capacity (Hilliard 1978, 222). At one South Seas Evangelical Mission (SSEM) school on Malaita in 1909–1910 the curriculum was merely singing, basic arithmetic, reading and writing, and literacy was taught through the repetition of passages from scripture (Palmer 1980, 158). Catholic schools were largely without trained teachers and organised syllabus, and students spent little time in the classroom in any case (Laracy 1976, 155). The gradual secularisation of mission schools in Papua and New Guinea began with the 1952 Education Ordinance (Fife 1991, 166). In the BSIP, in 1958 the Methodist mission officially disconnected the roles of pastor, teacher, catechist and “class leader” within its schools, which would appear to be an institutional admission of the separation of teaching from preaching, and the knowledge required for each (Palmer 1980, 257–58).

Another significant factor in the formation of classroom knowledge derived from the structure of the education systems themselves, which developed in a way that dictated to students how to use the knowledge learnt in the classroom. Although each of the missions in the BSIP had constructed an

education system that made education a means for young people to leave home and establish new connections and relationships, there was no space for the vast majority of students in the higher grade levels. The Anglican mission, for example, divided its diocese into districts and each one had its own school. The tier above the district schools were the “Junior Schools,” of which there were only three (one each on Guadalcanal, Makira and Santa Isabel). The next, and highest, tier was “All Hallows,” on Makira, which only a small minority of the Mission’s students would attend. In 1958 each of these distinct yet organisationally similar education systems were standardised within the government’s system of “Standards” and “Forms”—the year-on-year progression of students through grades in which “Standards” referred to primary, and “Forms” to secondary schooling (Palmer 1980, 235).

Therefore, places in the upper levels of the system were for the tiny minority that passed their examinations. In the BSIP there was one secondary school in 1958 (*ibid.*, 162). Furthermore, the BSIP government never intended to achieve a 100 percent retention rate through to the end of secondary education. It desired only an elite capable of filling roles in commerce and the public service (272). Therefore it was government policy in 1969 that only half of the Standard IV graduates would progress to Standard V (that is, transition from junior to senior primary school) and that only a quarter of the students that reached Standard VII would progress to Form I (316). The BSIP could not even achieve that latter target in 1973, when only 500 students of the 2,205 students enrolled in the final year of primary school progressed to secondary school, a transition rate of under 23 percent (175).

In PNG, in 1962 the Australian administration received heavy criticism from a visiting United Nations delegation for neglecting secondary and higher education (Avalos 1993, 284). Although this rebuke sparked more effort (Fife 1991, 175–76), statistics for the 1970s show that while approximately 70 percent of students who began Grade One would complete Grade Six, only 8 percent would go on to complete Grade Twelve (*ibid.*, 193). As in the BSIP, performance on an entrance examination determined a student’s progression into the next tier of the education system. In both cases teachers must have felt enormous pressure to prepare students for entrance examinations; as Palmer (1980, 162) noted, by the early 1970s a school’s success in the BSIP education system was measured by the number of its students who transitioned to an academic (as opposed to vocational) secondary school.

Adding further pressure to view classroom knowledge as relevant to a narrow sphere of social life centred around formal sector employment was the nature of classroom learning and its place within everyday life at school more broadly. One former student at the Marist Brothers' first school in Bougainville remembered that:

back in the '50s the Brothers stayed in the school. In the early years they did not move out much. They didn't interfere much about culture, they didn't go out to the villages. They concentrated on their teaching. Teaching the boys about European ways, they didn't bother about the culture. I can say they didn't even know Pidgin. (quoted in McCane 2004, 96)

And an Australian Brother teaching there at that time confessed:

you simply went in, you did what you did in Australia, in the same way. There was no thought of culture or things related to culture. That sensitivity didn't come until the '70s....Certainly, a few of our early Brothers had a very colonial attitude. (quoted in McCane 2004, 97)

The nascent sensitivity to culture the Australian Brother described of the 1970s emerged at roughly the same time that PNG content was included in PNG social studies curriculum material. Until then the Marist-run secondary school in Bougainville used Australian social studies material (McCane 2004, 214–15).

This situation in Bougainville was consistent with how the BSIP's Education White Paper of 1962 described a typical Protectorate school:

two to four classes housed in a church or leaf building, with few books, little equipment, and inadequate or non-existent seating and desk accommodation. The teachers are untrained and often barely literate, they are frequently unable to speak English adequately much less to teach it. Many such schools are almost wholly unsupervised. The curriculum comprises English, Arithmetic, Religious Instruction and very little else, and classes are usually held for four hours in the morning on five days a week. (quoted in Palmer 1980, 270).

And the situation remained much the same for some time. "Systematic syllabuses" were not written and produced until 1966 and they did not reach all grade levels (Palmer 1980, 167 and 309). Tenaru followed British syllabi until Solomon Islands achieved Independence in 1978 (McCane 2004, 260). The irrelevance of academic schooling to Solomon Islanders, curriculum included, was one major finding of a sweeping review into the education sector by the BSIP Educational Policy Review Committee published in 1973 (Bugotu et al. 1973).

In addition, because formal instruction was in practice subservient to the day-to-day operations needed to keep schools running, teachers must have had little scope to do anything other than teach to exams. At "All Hallows" on Makira (BSIP), the premier school for the Anglican Melanesian Mission

in the early 1960s, the realities of life at school regularly cut academic instruction well short of teachers' best intentions (Standley 1981). The demands of maintaining the school's food gardens and livestock were so intense the school had time for only one "educational session" each morning, with the bulk of the afternoon and evening activities being devoted to various extra-curricular activities (ibid., 21). And if they fell behind in their farm work, or they needed to start a new copra plantation, classes were abandoned entirely while they undertook "long work" to complete the task.

Unsurprisingly therefore, detailed accounts of schooling in the independence period have emphasised the prevalence of rote learning pedagogies. As mentioned in chapter 2, Fife's (1991, 1992, 1994) analyses of primary school classrooms in West New Britain, PNG, in the late 1980s emphasised the "new moral order" that students learnt from the way their lessons were taught. The new moral order was characterised by capitalist social relations in which "rewards and punishments are handed out according to how well the hired worker fits the image of a 'good worker'" (Fife 1994, 150). Rote learning taught the passivity required of "good workers." On Malaita in Solomon Islands, formal classroom lessons in community primary schools in the Kwara'ae area in the 1980s and 1990s were also marred by a "colonial pedagogy" involving "whole-group oral recitation of decontextualized phrases and sentences" (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo 1994, 30). Moreover, classroom activities were culturally inappropriate; for example, in one reading lesson students learned the phrase "he's only a little boy and he can't help his father," which contradicted the adult-like work behaviour required of children in the village (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo 1992, 18). Thus the content of their lessons and the mode of delivery were foreign to students; "schooling for rural children too often becomes limited access to esoteric knowledge, knowledge entirely separate from their experience yet held out as superior to what they know" (ibid., 20).

Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo's example is particularly insightful because the authors drew a direct link between rote learning pedagogy and child socialisation in Kwara'ae. The authors wrote that the key to achieving high status in Kwara'ae society was a person's capacity to model important cultural values, including "a good command of the formal register of the language, knowledge of cultural values and premises, and skills in reasoning and argumentation" (11). These skills facilitate greater participation in the deliberative and consultative settings in which community decision-making occurs. Learning these cultural values, particularly for children, is done in a variety of everyday settings, but the closest equivalent of formal schooling is structured *fa'amanata'anga* (shaping the mind) sessions. These sessions, which are on-going throughout an individual's life, "show respect for the child's ability to reason and infer. 'Shaping the mind' assumes that children are already

knowledgeable and intelligent, and that their minds need to be guided and persuaded rather than forced into the right thinking” (14). An important aim of the sessions is the teaching of reasoning skills—even if the cultural logics used as evidence might differ from academic/western forms of knowledge.

Thus, although they were slow to develop, education systems had emerged in PNG and Solomon Islands by the time of their independence that put children in classes with other children of the same age and taught a curriculum the colonial administrations deemed appropriate for them. The curriculum taught secular knowledge separated into distinct fields such as English, mathematics, health and social studies. These fields were premised upon an understanding of knowledge with origins in Enlightenment Europe that the colonisers persistently held up as superior to indigenous forms of knowledge, to which the colonisers were largely blind anyway (Smith 2012, 61). Mastery of this form of knowledge was measured with examinations, which determined a student’s progression to the next tier of an education system that was not designed to accommodate everyone; the colonial administrations believed their labour needs did not require universal secondary education. This placed enormous pressure on poorly trained teachers to devote limited class time to preparing students for exams, and classroom teaching was thus devoted to little more than the rote memorisation of curriculum content. In this context classroom knowledge had an extremely limited purpose; it was relevant to passing examinations and ultimately to the attainment of formal employment but not to the everyday lives of Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders.

Indigenous compartmentalisation of classroom knowledge

Pacific Islanders who progressed a long way, or all the way, through colonial education systems have explained the demoralising effect that the alienation from their indigenous cultures and ways of knowing has had on them (Bugotu 1975; Thaman 1993, 255). Some of them were explaining this even before independence (Bugotu 1975). Consequently, at the same time as formal education systems were developing through the independence period, some Pacific educators were actively trying to indigenise schooling, in particular prioritising the use of vernacular languages over English in formal instruction (Thaman 2003, 2009; Burnett 2009). In this section I show that their considerable scepticism towards formal schooling has been matched at the village level in PNG and Solomon Islands. At that level they have incorporated formal education into social and political life by compartmentalising the knowledge learnt in the classroom into the discrete field of knowledge

needed for exams and the formal economy; the compartmentalisation of knowledges is in fact a more general response to foreign knowledges and ideas in Solomon Islands (Keesing 1992).

Solomon Islanders showed interest in formal education even before the BSIP was established in 1893 and the local interest reflected a significant measure of critical evaluation of schooling. Hilliard (1978, 165–69) argued that in the Methodist mission's experience, Christianity, which was hardly distinguishable from school given that schools were so central to mission attempts at conversion, was judged on its tangible results and thus material wealth was expected to flow to a village once it had accepted a mission school. Schools quickly became integrated into village level politics as local leaders could gain status from the presence of a school in their village, particularly as the colonial administration and other missions established themselves and it became impossible to deny their on-going presence. Moreover, interest in education grew further as Solomon Islanders became more involved in the cash economy (Bennett 1987, 258), such that from early in the twentieth century young Solomon Islanders saw formal "western education as a means to social and economic equality," particularly through the acquisition of English (Hilliard 1978, 204). Thus there was considerable disaffection towards education from those in the Protectorate's east whose missions put less effort into education than the Methodist and Adventist missions in the west (Bennett 1987, 258).

However, the knowledge of the classroom was only useful insofar as it was socially relevant, which I showed above came to mean entry into formal employment. The limited utility of classroom knowledge was the case for both individuals and for their clans. For example, having observed that people on Manus only valued education for its capacity to lead to paid employment, Carrier (1984, 75–76) noted an extreme case of one man who had long since decided to forget how to read and write because he did not need a job or the knowledge required for one. Classroom knowledge was also significant for kinship groups as a whole. In New Ireland during the early 1990s, evaluations of education revolved around the interests of the family, specifically the work required of fathers to enact "a father's duty" (Sykes 1995, 259–63), which by this time included *kastom* work as well as work in business, religious, and government spheres. Thus, within a family there were children who went to school for the knowledge located there and the material wealth opportunities it offered, although I describe in chapter 7 the more general exclusion of girls from formal schooling. According to Sykes there were also children within families (boys) who were kept from school and would instead be granted privileged access to the father's *kastom* knowledge, and others (girl's in Sykes's example) whose marriages contributed to the family's social obligations and relationships (276–80).

Sykes described several other instances in which the conceptualisation of western knowledge from school within indigenous understandings of what knowledge is and how it can be used enabled New Irelanders to keep it distinct from their indigenous knowledges (323–30).

In school settings compartmentalisation could even apply to apparent clashes between classroom knowledge and religious truth. For example, Lowe (1995) found that secondary science students in Honiara engaged with science for the purposes of examination but otherwise thought it subordinate to religious interpretations of natural phenomena. Similarly, at Avu'avu, the Provincial Secondary School on the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal, one religious education teacher said he relied on the textbook to resolve collisions between the curriculum content and the teachings of different denominations. For instance, when a Seventh Day Adventist student asked a question that brought out differences between Christian denominations, he replied that the class should all keep to the answer in the textbook even though it might not reflect what they believe. In effect it was an attempt to cordon off classroom knowledge from social and religious life.

The compartmentalisation of classroom knowledge should not imply that Melanesians have not also found uses for some of the skills learnt in classrooms, literacy in particular (Gewertz and Errington 1991; Kulick and Stroud 1990; McKeown 2006). Gewertz and Errington (1991) offer a fascinating account of the way Chambri (in East Sepik, PNG) incorporate written knowledge into political contests between big men. Kulick and Stroud (1990, 295–99) offer a similarly engaging account of how people in a small village in the lower Sepik have incorporated literacy within their concerns for avoiding conflict in their everyday relations with others. In similar vein, but in Solomon Islands, Burt (2002) points out that Malaitans have long since accepted the written record as a useful tool to write their own history. In fact, Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2001, 67) described how Kwara'ae desires for “an indigenous account of indigenous culture” culminated in the Kwara'ae Genealogy Project in 1994. The project members wanted this to be a part of the “Kwara'ae historical record” (ibid.). The project's founders could “see the advantage of writing down cultural knowledge and their epistemological process as a hedge against uncontrollable social change” (68). Neighbouring Kwaio have envisaged similar uses for literacy as part of their resistance to the colonial and national state (Keesing 1992). The important point, I think, is that many Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have engaged with schooling on their own terms throughout formal education's slow and geographically and socially uneven development. While many communities have found a use for

literacy, they have typically considered the content of classroom knowledge useful only insofar as it will help in passing examinations and lead to progression through the education system.

“Just like history”: the Crisis and Tension as classroom knowledge

In this section I suggest that the history teacher with whose words I opened this chapter was more comfortable with the presentation of the Tension in a textbook because in a textbook the Tension would take the form of the narrowly defined classroom knowledge outlined above. He and the many others who would not discuss conflict with each other but were happy enough for it to appear in the syllabus would distinguish between classroom knowledge and socially relevant knowledge about the Crisis and Tension. I make this inference from the way several teachers and students described their conflict as “just like history.” Nevertheless, teachers in particular said that reconciliation also played a significant intervening role in whether or not the civil conflicts could become history; unreconciled conflicts were still part of the present moment because the reconciliation process had not yet transformed how people relate to them (chapter 4). This was most likely for participants from areas where the conflicts were most acute.

Being “just like history” meant that the conflicts were outside the social relationships present in the classroom. For example, two female students in Grade Twelve at Su’u explained how they understood the learning process that would help them reach formal sector employment. That learning was limited to the classroom and examination success. Adopting the narrow definition of classroom knowledge outlined above left them unphased by the prospect of learning about the Tension in class. Moreover, they were within the safety of the school and part of the generation that had no direct experience of the violence. One of their teachers corroborated the essence of the girls’ account with a story of what happened when the Tension came up in one of his Grade Eleven classes. The mood of his classroom was normal as the students discussed the Tension “jokingly.” He said that the students realised that the Tension had little to do with them and there was little to be gained from dwelling on it. So, he said, “when they heard [the story and jokes] it was just like history to them.” Additionally, underlining the separation of classroom knowledge from the social life outside it, the two female students were among those who would not discuss the Tension with their peers. They said they did not do it because such conversations, particularly if they occurred regularly, would risk making their friends angry and causing hatred.

While many students already had a considerable degree of separation from the Crisis and Tension, owing to their parents’ refusals and their own lack of personal experience, teachers relied on the

nature of classroom knowledge to give it to them. Bernard, who was from Malaita but teaching on Guadalcanal, explained that if the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD):

put it in the syllabus then it would be ok. I mean that would guide me on what to say, how to teach it: if it were in the syllabus. But if, just to talk generally I'm very cautious. If I was on Malaita I would feel confident to talk. But not in [this school].... The syllabuses should tell me what to talk about. I believe those people writing [the textbooks] should be cautious about what sensitive issues exist in communities and they should write out properly how we should talk about the Ethnic Tension... So I would feel "ok what I have discussed is in the syllabus, not something from [me].

Therefore, Bernard imagined that adhering closely to the story in the curricular material would mitigate any sensitivity he would feel about discussing the Tension in the classroom. He trusted that curriculum writers would have already worked out how to present the material in a format removed from issues important for the communities involved. When a Malaitan colleague of his elaborated on the same reluctance to teach the Tension, she made it clear it was because the students came from different backgrounds and she had to be careful to respect them. She argued that Malaitan teachers would be free to teach about the Tension anywhere except Guadalcanal, but on Guadalcanal it would not be safe given the historical relations between the two provinces. In this way, the knowledge of the textbooks might be removed from ordinary social life, but the teachers themselves certainly were not.

Both students and teachers understood, therefore, that the civil conflict could not simply be rendered as "history" for every student and teacher, and therefore refusals and the state of reconciliation were important considerations when it came to the "history" of the Crisis and Tension. However, Wilson's account demonstrates the circumstances that prevail after reconciliation has been completed. From North Bougainville, he argued that the conflict had become history because it had been dealt with through reconciliation. He said:

what has happened is, it can be seen again... it has happened and studies can be carried out from there looking back to what has happened earlier [and] students can see that when you want to study all about crises and such, you have [had one] in your own land... if they reconcile they will be at peace and they will see it as history for them.

In keeping with the argument in chapter 4, as reconciliation marks the moment relationships are restored and allows conflicting parties to move on from conflict, Wilson has indicated that historical investigation is possible only once indigenous modes of dealing with conflict are complete.

It is interesting to contrast Wilson's perspective with the perspectives of teachers from South Bougainville, Guadalcanal and Malaita because they were, in the main, far more inclined to emphasise post-reconciliation silences. Indeed, while Douglas was another to argue that the Crisis would largely be "just history" for the students currently at the school, he was from South Bougainville where the Crisis raged far longer and he also had reservations because stories about conflict and broken relationships tend to reappear. He explained this with a metaphor common in his home; while fallen logs will usually rot away, stories about conflicts were like fallen logs that would never decay. He said this was why the practices of placing signs in the landscape after reconciliation were so important to maintain, because subsequent generations would be reminded that forgiveness had been achieved (I presented Douglas' perspective on this issue in chapter 4). Unsurprisingly then, when I interviewed one of Douglas' students, she told me that Douglas was extremely careful when he discussed the Crisis in class. In fact, she described his refusal to talk about it:

Student: He was telling us his stories but he didn't go, like, go through all of it and he told us he didn't want us to hear what happened during that time.

David: He said that, did he?

Student: Yeah, he told us those things are not good things for you to hear...

In other words, Douglas considered the Crisis to be "just history" for the younger generation, but his classroom practices, based on his own understanding of how stories spread and the observations of one of his students, were designed to ensure the Crisis remained "just history" for young people.

Similarly, Mary, a teacher in Solomon Islands, argued that to live peacefully in a community its members should maintain silence about sensitive topics. This extended to the classroom. She argued it would be culturally inappropriate to talk about the Tension with her students both inside and outside class. Additionally, she said students could return home with ideas about the Tension that might offend their parents and as those ideas came from her lessons it was a risk to her own safety. Importantly, she said that teaching about the Tension was safe in any province but Guadalcanal, which calls attention to the varied effects of the conflicts and thus the multitude of relationships to the violent past. Not every province in Solomon Islands, or even every part of Malaita, experienced widespread violence during the Tension.⁹ Malaitan

⁹ The Tension did strain social relations in kinship groups across the country as people who fled Honiara to rural homes were often not embraced when they arrived (Makini 2015, 221; Gegeo 2001, 497–98).

participants at Su'u would often insist that individuals from North Malaita would know more about the Tension than they did because of the more active participation of North Malaitans in the Tension.

In sum, many students and teachers were able to imagine the inclusion of the Crisis or Tension in the classroom. But when they imagined the conflicts this way they were suggesting that the conflicts would become classroom knowledge, a form of knowledge cordoned off from indigenous historicities. Thus, teachers said the conflicts were “just like history” to their students when they thought it had no relevance to them or only after reconciliations and forgiveness had been achieved. In this way it was unsurprising that teachers from regions that suffered conflict for longer, or were teaching at a school located in the communities of an opposing group, were comparatively less likely to treat the conflicts as “history” and instead refuse to talk about it.

Refusals and silences in new curricular materials

In post-conflict Solomon Islands an understanding of classroom knowledge that it is more respectful of the historicities of Solomon Islanders has been emerging. Despite intense review of the curriculum following independence (Thomas 1985, 6), in Solomon Islands the national curriculum changed little until sweeping reforms began after the Tension in 2004. The reforms were in keeping with international preoccupations aimed at equalising access to, improving quality in, and ensuring good management of the education system (Oakeshott and Allen 2015, 8). Textbooks were re-written for several subjects, including social studies, and it meant that MEHRD officials and curriculum writers had to consider how to portray the Tension. The result was an account of the violence that respected the social positions of the students and teachers likely to be in the social studies classroom.

The curricular and pedagogical reforms extended through all subject areas and grades, although it began at the primary and junior secondary levels (up to and including Grade Nine). According to the then director of the Solomon Islands Curriculum Development Division (SICDD), Patrick Daudau, by 2013 new materials had been finalised up to Grade Eight in several subjects, including social studies, and had already been distributed to some schools. One recipient school was St Joseph's, Tenaru, whose students came from all groups involved in the Tension as well as the rest of the country.

The Tension is covered carefully and selectively in the new social studies textbook for Grade Eight. The reformed social studies syllabus is divided into “strands” and “sub-strands.” Each sub-strand

corresponds to a chapter in the new textbook. The Tension is covered in a sub-strand called “social unrests and resolutions” within the “social issues and resolution in Solomon Islands” strand (MEHRD 2013b, 63). The coverage of the Tension is in keeping with the refusals that people maintain with each other about the Tension, which was precisely the intention of curriculum developers and the wishes of senior Solomon Islander education sector consultants (Oakeshott 2013, 43–47). For example, in 2015 I met the author of the chapter of the Grade Seven social studies textbook I describe below, Edwin Ha’ahoroa. He said balance was of critical concern during the drafting process because the Tension was such a sensitive topic. The sensitivity, Edwin said, came down to the relationships in which the students and teachers using the textbooks would be embedded:

the impact of it, maybe there are relatives whose people, you know, were affected or killed and when they hear about this one, you know, it brings back the memory and the feelings and all this. So that’s why we say it’s sensitive. And maybe some anger still remaining in their, you know, minds.

Therefore the Ministry consulted heavily, including with former militants from both sides, RAMSI, Sir Peter Kenilorea (the first Prime Minister), the Ministry of National Unity Reconciliation and Peace (MNURP) and members of the SITRC.

Consequently, the Tension is discussed in the context of “civil unrest” as a global phenomenon. The socioeconomic causes and solutions of the Tension are discussed in general terms but only a few major events are covered and the only militant named in the text is in prison on a life sentence. The text is silent on the intra-community violence that characterised much of the Tension as well. Perhaps the starkest illustration of the refusals in the textbook are the images that accompany the text. Figure 5.1 is the image students are presented of militants in the Malaita Eagle Force. The heads of the militants have been cropped out of the image.

The new social studies textbooks also encourage students to value and respect the indigenous cultures and languages of Solomon Islands. I was allowed to observe Grade Seven social studies classes as they worked through the “family and community disputes and how to solve them” sub-strand, which is the precursor to the sub-strand on the Tension they learn in Grade Eight. “Family and community disputes” consists of ten lessons, each lasting forty minutes, and teachers are encouraged to allow students to use Pijin instead of English in class to express their opinions (SICDD 2013, 102). The corresponding chapter of the textbook tells students a story about the appropriate ways to solve disputes between individuals and at the village level. “Traditional” dispute resolution practices are valorised throughout the chapter. Activity Five is particularly instructive in this context, and is reproduced in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.1: The photograph of the MEF militants in the new social studies textbook for Grade Eight (SICDD 2015, 342)



Figure 14.13 MEF militants

Figure 5.2: Activity Five in the “family and community disputes” chapter for Grade Seven (SICDD 2012, 218)

Activity 5

1 We all have different ways of respecting different types of people according to our culture. What is the word for respect in your home language? What does it suggest you should do or feel towards others?

Life is changing nowadays. We are all moving around, being educated, watching videos, listening to popular music like rap or reggae from overseas, earning money and learning different ideas. All this may lead us to lose respect we traditionally show for people.

The activity explicitly represents social changes following engagement with foreign music and movies, life in the formal economy, and even formal schooling itself, as potentially eroding respect

for culture. Moreover, the teacher's guide suggests one possible answer to the question in Activity Five: in Ghari, a language of Guadalcanal, the word for respect is *kukuni*, which "suggests visitors should receive a good welcome, not to mix around elders, not to swear at or in front of elders or leaders" (SICDD 2012, 104). Through the association it draws between culture and "home language" the activity positions indigeneity as the source of the respect that students must have to resolve disputes peacefully.

Teaching enemy friendship

The education reforms beginning in 2004 also included an attempt to change pedagogical practices in the country's schools. It came in the form of Outcomes Based Education (OBE), which then SICDD Director Patrick Daudau said the MEHRD had adapted to reflect a "Melanesian way of doing things, [which] means learning by doing and assessment by demonstration" (cited in Oakeshott and Allen 2015, 13). It was an attempt to abandon rote learning pedagogies in favour of approaches that develop critical thinking, but has been met with considerable scepticism from the teachers charged with implementing it. They doubt the government's capacity to train them in its use and provide the necessary resources to teach with it (ibid., 13).

Nevertheless, OBE was an invitation for teachers to allow lived experiences into the classroom. It would effectively force the teachers using OBE to accommodate the knowledge of the Tension that their students brought with them and plan in advance how they would do that. During my Honours research in 2013 one teacher, Anthony, described the general attitude and approach of teachers towards teaching about the Tension: "I tried my best so that nobody asked me questions about the Ethnic Tension." Thus, despite the invitation to lead classroom dialogue about the violent past, they refused.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, refusals and the silences they produced were a major theme in my observations of the "family and community disputes" sub-strand, which Joyce taught to her Grade Seven class. Joyce and I had already discussed how her teaching had changed with OBE before I observed her classes. She was an experienced teacher who had taught the Grade Seven and Eight "social issues and resolution" sub-strands several times before. She said some students became uncomfortable but in the main the atmosphere in the classroom had been pleasant enough. She said she had made major changes to her lesson planning under OBE because it encouraged students to draw on their own experiences. So, more than ever before, she had to anticipate students' prior knowledge of the topic being studied. Joyce was critically aware that this had the potential to upset

and offend some students, particularly if some of their peers spoke in a way they should not have, because her classroom included students from opposing sides of the conflict. Joyce said she expected students would have learned outside school that the Tension was mainly between Malaitans and people from Guadalcanal and she therefore worried that Guadalcanal students would likely blame Malaitans for taking their land from them. She had heard as much from Guadalcanal students before. Similarly, she expected Malaitan students would be aware of the violent eviction of Malaitans from Guadalcanal and widespread destruction of their property.

To prevent any discomfort in the classroom, Joyce would acknowledge the land dispute between Guadalcanal people and Malaitan settlers but emphasise that land disputes happen across the country. She would do the same when she taught about the effects of the Tension; Malaitans were not the only people to lose property. Moreover, she would not ask direct questions of students that might steer conversation away from a general level. For instance, she recalled retaking control of the class swiftly in 2014 after she had asked the room at large about the effects of the Tension on the life of the people and a boy replied “all the Malaitans came and fired guns at us.” To prevent any discomfort she replied that many places are like that all over the world, everyone was affected by the Tension, Solomon Islands has done reconciliation, and they had peace now. In this instance she abandoned OBE in favour of an authoritarian pedagogy to produce the silence appropriate during public discussions of sensitive topics like the Tension.

Anthony, a colleague of Joyce’s, has filled his teaching of “social issues and resolution” with the same sorts of refusals. He explained he had no wish to teach the causes of the Tension in detail and has framed them as a misunderstanding between the two parties. Indeed, he said that detailed information about the Tension would cause “wrong feeling” among the students, particularly those whose clan members were directly affected by the violence. Therefore, when he taught the Tension he made it a lesson about the importance of resolving problems quickly and the methods students can use to do it. In fact, Anthony did admit he worried about the relationship between Malaitans and people from Guadalcanal and it had motivated his reluctance to attempt detailed discussions of the Tension in class and his preference to frame it as a misunderstanding that could happen anywhere in Solomon Islands. In this way, Anthony, like Joyce, would appear to have brought culturally informed silences into his classroom lessons about the Tension.

I observed Joyce's lessons in the Grade Seven sub-strand, which she adapted because she knew of my interest in the Tension. It meant the students were engaging in classroom learning about the Tension a year before it appeared in their syllabus. She formed the students into groups who then completed the first lesson in the textbook as per the syllabus. They were given time in class to discuss in their groups the way disputes are resolved in their home communities and several groups became noticeably excited and engaged during these conversations. For homework the groups were then asked to write out their answers and present them to the class in the next lesson, along with several questions about the Tension apparently added for my benefit.

Joyce was most impressed by the understanding her students showed of the need to maintain silence about the Tension with peers from other island and kin groups. She gave no direct instruction about the Tension itself, which she told me later was because she wanted to know what her students already knew: as mentioned, the knowledge students bring with them to the classroom is what Joyce feared could upset other students. When the students discussed the major cause of the Tension, which they said was Malaitan takeover of Guadalcanal land, the students from Malaita were noticeably uncomfortable. Critically, those Malaitan students remained silent when this happened, which demonstrated to Joyce that they did not want any conflict to re-emerge. The students' refusal, in her view, showed that the students had demonstrated knowledge of the cultural sensitivities in their relationships to others in the class. Thus the classroom knowledge in Joyce's classroom was shaped quite profoundly around the refusals that denote an understanding of, and respect for, the relationships among individuals in the class who will have different perspectives and access to knowledge about the Tension. In the coming chapters I will elaborate on how this attention to, and care for, relationships was a central part in the making of enemy friends.

Conclusion

I have explained why I think the teacher whose words opened this chapter thought presentation of knowledge about the Tension in a book was different from a conversation with his colleagues. While he understood that textual knowledge of the past was somehow removed from the relationships he was embedded in, I have suggested this was the case because textual knowledge, particularly in the context of formal schooling, has been at odds with indigenous ways of knowing the past. I made this case by outlining some features of the development of formal education in PNG and Solomon Islands which have encouraged students to conceptualise classroom knowledge as relevant to passing examinations for formal sector employment but relatively little else. Thus, during the colonial period and after independence the presence of multiple epistemologies (indigenous orientations to

knowledge on the one hand, textbook knowledge of the coloniser on the other) made Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders critically aware of the limitations of the knowledge that textbooks contained.

The data from the case study schools then suggested, at least as far as knowledge about the violent past is concerned, an entanglement of silences about the violent past with curricular material and classroom instruction. Some participants indicated that the Crisis or Tension could become “just like history,” but on closer inspection this meant that reconciliation had to be completed first and that refusals to speak had to be maintained. Additionally, new textbooks in Solomon Islands valorised indigenous approaches to reconciliation, and refusals punctuated classroom teaching at Tenaru. Thus the entanglement of classroom knowledge and silences became consistent with the high regard for relationships characteristic of indigenous historicities.

Therefore, in my view the idea that post-conflict history education about the violent past should follow the tenets of disciplinary history is a poor fit in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. The model of disciplinary history assumes that individuals have equal and unfettered access to knowledge about the past, which is not the case. Nor would I endorse a unified narrative of the conflict based on a TRC report. What would be the point of such a narrative if it did not fit into the orientation to knowledge of conflict through which people derive lasting and meaningful peace? The national narrative would hardly resonate with citizens.

By contrast, the evidence from the curriculum reform process in Solomon Islands and its implementation at Tenaru suggested considerable potential for classroom learning to contribute to transitional justice when the content and teaching accord with indigenous ways of relating to past violence. As refusals and silences are so central to this relationship, when Joyce and Anthony enacted the sort of rote learning pedagogies derided in transitional justice, and their students responded with silence, they in fact made classroom knowledge more socially relevant than it had been before.

However, the classroom was only one part of life at school and in the rest of everyday life at school students came to understand that the message from Joyce’s teaching of the Tension—that caring for relationships meant refusing to talk about the past—was an element of enemy friendship. The pedagogy of everyday life at school affirmed for students why they were not supposed to discuss the

past in class and showed them that they could apply that to relationships with people from much further afield than their home villages.

Chapter 6 Assessing the Disciplinary Regime: The Pedagogy of Everyday Life at School

In this chapter I interrogate the extent to which the secondary boarding schools acted as disciplinary technologies capable of transforming the subjectivities of students and teachers. While schools are prime candidates for a Foucault-inspired analysis because they are Western institutions transplanted onto Melanesia during colonisation, it has been useful in my analysis to think both with and against Foucault (see Simpson 2003, 4; Hirsch 2014; Fife 1995). Indeed, de Certeau (1984, xiv) originally conceptualised “the everyday” in relation to Foucault’s (1977) analysis of the disciplinary technologies states use to make individuals discipline themselves. Moreover, analyses of other state institutions in Papua New Guinea, such as prisons (Reed 2006) and hospitals (Street 2012), have demonstrated the complexity of a straightforward application of Foucault’s analytical concepts outside the specific (European) circumstances for which they were developed (see also Hirsch 2014).

Nevertheless, given the account of the historical development of formal education in Bougainville and Solomon Islands in the previous chapter, it is possible to understand a school’s disciplinary regime in terms of both the internalisation of a desire for formal sector employment and the comportment of a person in that sphere. In this sense a school’s disciplinary regime is tied closely to the emergence of class distinctions between an “educated elite” and their “grassroots” kin in the village (see chapter 9; Fife 1995; Gooberman-Hill 1999; Cox 2018, 151–53). As I outlined in chapter 5, once formal schooling became a state-controlled system it was used primarily to fulfil the labour needs of each respective territory. Fife (1991, 1992, 1995) observed teachers in East New Britain value a model of competitive individualism in their classrooms and concluded that schools emphasised the new capitalist forms of social relations. Demerath likewise argued that school success in Manus Province, PNG, was perceived as the internalisation of an individualism that threatened “solidarity within the local community” (2000, 198). Families and villages embraced the association that the colonial state drew between schooling and formal employment, and this view of the purpose of schooling has remained persuasive (Maebuta 2008).

However, as Simpson (2003) found at a Catholic boarding school in Zambia, I have found significant cracks in the disciplinary regime at the boarding schools I visited (see also Adely 2012; Coe 2005). In this chapter I suggest that the teachers and students I came to know would find a version of school success centred on exam results and progression to formal employment far too narrow. Such a narrow view remains a part of what it means to be successful at school, but it would also seem to

exclude a considerable part of the cultural production teachers and students undertake. That cultural production encourages teachers and students to attend to the relationships in which they are embedded and which they form while on campus.

To make my case I first sketch the disciplinary regime. The structures and routines it relied on sought to form punctual, rule-following professional persons. Then in the second section I compare this sketch to the sort of person that teachers and students said they strove to produce at school. The juxtaposition demonstrates a more expansive vision of educated personhood than the subjectivity proffered by the disciplinary regime. This expansive idea of what it meant to be educated was framed around a mode of relating to others that applied to both kin and strangers.

In addition, in the third section I show that in practice it was impossible for schools to impose the disciplinary regime anyway. Everyday life had its own pedagogy that enabled teachers and students to enact their more expansive vision of educated personhood. In the process, teachers and students changed what it meant to be a “professional.” They also discovered considerable commensurability across their cultures; overcoming the challenges posed by everyday life outside the classroom forced teachers and students to lean on their relationships to others and in so doing they began to form new connections, which they honoured in much the same way as they would at home. Next, I illustrate these points with an example from Avu’avu. Although the disciplinary regime crumbled in 2015, the school’s Disciplinary Committee had legitimacy when it came to asserting a Christian and relational form of sociality.

In the final section I demonstrate that the same form of sociality was front of mind for students when they evaluated resolutions to disputes amongst themselves. That is, much like Joyce’s social studies lessons (chapter 5), the pedagogy of everyday life at school encouraged students to see the violent past through the prism of their relationships to others. This is to say that for education as a mechanism of transitional justice this chapter shows how everyday life at school outside the classroom could be as important as classroom learning for the ideas students form about justice and how to relate to each other in the context of past violence.

The disciplinary regime

Many of the practices and institutional processes of formal schooling that, historically, have contributed to the alienation of Pacific Islanders from their rural homes were still in place at the

boarding schools when I visited them, and they constructed a vision of educated personhood centred on the demeanour of a formally employed person.

Chief among these institutions and practices was the pressure to succeed academically. This pressure had changed little from the model imposed by colonisation because the structure of the education systems in which success in national examinations determined a student's progression through the school system and into formal employment remained in place.

Education department officials certainly emphasised exam performance when they visited the schools; at Avu'avu PSS's graduation ceremony, which was held just prior to the national exams, one official asked the students if, many years after graduation, they would reflect on their schooling and cry tears of joy or regret. He answered his question for them: only their exam results would decide. Students had more regular reminders from their teachers too, and such messages were often delivered in places of worship as part of a school's religious programming. My fieldnotes are replete with observations of sermons and exhortations to study hard receiving divine support through the priest or pastor standing behind the pulpit. These circumstances encouraged students to consider their personal performance above any other commitments or experiences they might have. Moreover, students at the case study schools were particularly likely to feel the pressure to succeed in exams because they were already attending some of the best performing schools in Bougainville and Solomon Islands.

Teachers also felt pressure to prioritise their personal performance as professionals above all else. For example, in Solomon Islands, the MEHRD is explicit that teaching is a profession and that, as professionals, teachers have an array of duties and responsibilities (MEHRD 2011, 34). The National Professional Standards and National Code of Conduct for Teachers (*ibid.*, 34–37) sets the terms on which teachers' performance is assessed. While the first "professional attribute" the Professional Standards presents for teachers is about establishing good relationships with students, it is the individual teacher's responsibility to establish those relationships. Moreover, the Professional Standards make it clear that a professional "acts on," "models," "takes initiative," and "exhibits" a range of behaviours and responsibilities predominantly concerning classroom learning and student academic success. Not only are teachers expected to make students into educated persons, but they are expected to model the comportment of such professionals as well.

Therefore, students were expected to learn to adopt the characteristics of professionals. This included a new sanitary regime. Many students might have left their home village for the first time to attend secondary or high school, and school was thus the site of a variety of new experiences: some, for example, had never used an ablutions block or western toilet before. It also included a new relationship to time. A student's day was highly regimented and the same daily activities were completed everywhere, although the precise time allocated to each activity varied from school to school. Figure 6.1 shows the full daily and weekly timetable at Tenaru. Every waking moment of the day is programmed and prefects are charged with enforcing it when teachers cannot be physically present. Prefects came to see themselves as personally responsible for ensuring they and their peers adhered to the timetable.

Nevertheless, it was not only prefects who internalised the new practices because a student's place in the school depended on their adoption of them. For example, at Tarlena, teachers made male and female students sit next to each other in classes and the dining hall, which many new male students found an affronting violation of the separation of boys and girls in their village homes. According to one Tarlena teacher, in their villages "boys, they don't associate with the girls too much and we try to tell them that this is an institution where you must learn how to relate with [the] opposite sex." Some boys had even withdrawn from the school having found it too difficult.

The sense that students were personally responsible for how they used their time was re-enforced with a regime of punishment. Figure 6.2 is a photograph of prefects at Su'u marking the class roll as students walk into the chapel for the Morning Prayer service held each day before classes. The deputy principal scrutinised the completed class rolls at the end of each day and announced at Morning Prayer the following day the names of the students to receive punishment for their absences (community service for first time offenders, detention for recidivists). The other schools had similar processes in place to discipline students for tardiness. For instance, student adoption of the behaviours of a person capable of life in the formal sector could be tested by periodically relaxing enforcement of some rules and routines. Doing so allowed students the chance to demonstrate they had turned the school's expectations into enduring habits. It also meant that Term One was often the strictest part of the school year as teachers sought to remind returning students of their expectations and new students learnt the program for the first time. Term Four likewise gave new prefects a chance to set high standards for the following year. Moreover, minor instances that in the eyes of teachers did not warrant official punishment, but did warrant admonishment, were daily occurrences. For instance, students could be admonished for failing to knock before entering the

staffroom because it showed a lack of courtesy and self-discipline. Adding a telling connection to the purpose of colonial era schooling, Joseph said explicitly it was a lesson intended to teach the practices of the *waetman* (white man).

Figure 6.1: The daily and weekly timetable at St Joseph's NSS. Note that while it is the 2013 timetable nothing had changed in 2015

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL - TENARU
DAILY SCHOOL TIMETABLE - 2013
WEEKDAYS - MORNING SESSIONS

5:30 - 6:00 am
 6:00 - 6:30 am
 6:30 - 7:10 am

RISE
 BREAKFAST
 MORNING DUTIES

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
Time	Period	Time	Period	Time	Period	Time	Period	Time	Period
7:30	1	7:30	1	7:30	1	7:30	1	7:30	1
8:10	2	8:10	2	8:10	2	8:10	2	8:10	2
8:50	3	8:50	3	8:50	3	8:50	3	8:50	3
9:30	4	9:30	4	9:30	4	9:30	4	9:30	4
10:10	Recess	10:10	Prayer	10:10	Recess	10:10	Recess	10:10	
10:40	5	10:40	5	10:40	5	10:40	5	10:40	5
11:20	6	11:20	6	11:20	6	11:20	6	11:20	6
12:00	7	12:00	7	12:00	7	12:00	7	12:00	7
12:40	8	12:40	8	12:40	8	12:40	8	12:40	8
1:20	Lunch	1:20	Lunch	1:20	Lunch	1:20	Lunch	1:20	Lunch

WEEKDAYS - AFTERNOON & EVENING SESSIONS

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY

2:30 - 4:00 pm Work Session
 4:05 - 4:55 pm Shower
 5:00 - 6:00 pm Study
 6:00 - 6:30 pm Mass
 6:30 - 7:00 pm Dinner
 7:30 - 9:00 pm Night Study

TUESDAY & THURSDAY

2:30 - 3:30 pm Afternoon Study/Cultural
 3:45 - 5:45 pm Sports
 5:45 - 6:20 pm Shower
 6:30 - 7:00 pm Dinner
 7:30 - 9:00 pm Night Study

9:30pm
 9:45pm

BED TIME
LIGHTS OUT

WEEKENDS TIMETABLE

SATURDAY

5:45am Rise
 6:00 - 6:30 am Breakfast
 7:30 - 8:30 am Study
 8:30 - 10:30 am Work Session
 12:00 Lunch
 5:00 PM Roll Call
 6:00pm Shower
 6:30pm Dinner
 7:00 - 10pm Entertainment/Bedtime

SUNDAY

5:45am Rise
 6:00 - 6:30am Breakfast
 8:00am Mass (compulsory)
 12:00 Lunch
 5:00pm Roll Call
 6:00 Shower
 6:30 - 7:00 Dinner
 7:30 - 9:00 Night Study
 9:30 Bed Time

There were differences in the style of discipline across the case study schools. Whereas Su'u enforced the school routine swiftly, Tenaru and Mabiri were more lenient, giving the students the chance to demonstrate their own adherence to the routine. However, both strategies were a means to the same end; all school leaders hoped the students would reach the same conclusion as this female Tenaru student:

like, what can I say, if you follow, if you are organised, like if you say "oh today I will go to class and study etc etc" then come back, go, like you organise all your time, then you will know, you will see that "oh that was fruitful." At the end of the day you will be satisfied that you have done everything. Like you yourself... it's not that the dining bell rings and everyone moves. If you do not follow what you're instructed to do then you will miss out. Then you will feel out of place. So my organisation, when I came here it built inside of me. Nobody told me what to do but I know that "oh, this is right and this is wrong." So it built up in me that I decide what I will do.

Figure 6.2: Prefects at Su'u stand at the entrance to the chapel to mark the roll as students enter before the morning religious service



Christian and relational educated persons

While there were real pressures on teachers and students from a disciplinary regime that emphasised formal sector employment, teachers also understood that life in the formal sector was impossible for every student. Therefore they sought to make sure students knew they could have a productive, happy and meaningful life in their villages. For example, Joseph, a Tenaru teacher in his forties in 2015, had been of this view for a considerable time. He said:

in fact when I was a student in Goroka, we were doing assignments, like the politics, one of the courses [was] the politics of education. And I was writing something about that formal education has kind of educated us, we were half educated people. So it has not given us a complete [education]. So whatever you learn you must try to become complete people: completely educated.... So if you are educated you learn about academic[s], you learn about the things that, in society as well so that you can live peacefully and relate well with the people that you work with, [that] you live with. Those things are very important.

Thus Joseph had decided, first, that it was essential to become a completely educated person, and second, that a completely educated person not only understood their place within society but also could exist peacefully with those they live and work alongside. In this section I demonstrate that this latter half of the educated person revolved around the elements of Christianity and *kastom* that teachers and students realised they had in common while sharing the school environment with each other. Many students revelled in the chance to become completely educated persons.

The religious schools were pre-occupied with ensuring their schools taught students (and teachers) an ethos specific to their denomination. They generally preferred teachers and students be of their denomination, which they hoped, in the words of a former director of the Catholic Education Authority for Honiara, Cypriano Nuake, would be “a culture that would be overarching.” Thus, each day at Tenaru, at six o’clock in the morning, midday, and six o’clock in the evening, a student would sound a special bell to tell students and teachers it was time to recite the Angelus’ prayer. It was intended to be a distinctively Catholic way to teach students to find two minutes a day to have God in their lives.

In similar vein, a distinctively South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC) part of life at school at Su’u was its prohibition on teachers chewing betelnut. According to SSEC Education Director, Joash Maneipuri, it is the Education Authority’s (EA’s) preference that teachers already abstain from these practices before they are employed. Although they cannot insist on it, he said:

the government discourages those things to be practiced in schools and we should stop. But we go beyond that. We want to not only say that it is a rule that you have to obey, it is more of a life you have to live... the reason for [prohibiting] smoking...is not in the Bible. No, it’s more like honouring God with your body.

Joash said it was an ethos the EA tried to instil with its hiring practices.

Despite some denominational differences across the schools, the Christian and relational ethos was often framed in opposition to a reified discourse of individualism (see Martin 2007; Sykes 2007; Wendel 2007). At Catholic Tarlena I attended one of the many in-service training workshops (from

the Catholic education office) in which teachers at church-run schools participate during a school year, and I sat uncomfortably while the teachers were subjected to a lecture from the priest that ran the workshop. He seemed to assume the teachers were incompetent and selfish. They were told, forcefully, that at a Catholic school a teacher's family includes the students under their care, particularly because teachers spend more time with the students than their parents do. So teachers should discipline themselves to spend time with students; "we don't need lazy teachers here," the Priest said. Then his voice rose as he addressed reports that some teachers had been taking holidays or not supervising duties. They would be sacked if that continued. The priest asserted that an attitude that the government only pays a teacher to teach in the classroom was not good enough for a Catholic school. It was a reminder to be cognisant of their responsibilities to the whole school community. Although several teachers politely tried to suggest that they were not responsible for some drivers of rule breaking behaviour, one nun still maintained that lay people are individualistic and therefore often refuse to listen to others, their students, and God.

Students received the same messages. At an otherwise typical pre-class church service at Su'u the teacher providing the sermon asked the students "what action will you take this week or today to strengthen your ties to the people in this building?" And he ended emphatically: "no individualism here." At Catholic Tenaru, I observed a Grade Seven religious education lesson in which a teacher altered the syllabus to insert relational values. The syllabus required the teacher to discuss "good" decision-making, but the teacher wanted to teach "wise" decision-making instead. He taught that for an individual to make a wise decision they must reflect on the situation to understand it deeply, consider whether or not it would be good for them to be involved in the situation, and then understand the effect the decision might have on others. He explained to me later that his innovation was the final step; a good decision meant good for the individual but a wise one considered the interests of others.

Although Avu'avu was a government school its program was also religious. The school even made allowance for the different denominations present at the school—Seventh Day Adventist students observed Sabbath on Saturday and did their share of manual labour on Sunday. And the school's theme for the 2015 school year, "education for excellence under God's provision," was emphasised at the school's graduation ceremony. The speaker made sure the graduating class knew it was the latter part of the phrase that they would need if they were to become leaders in their families.

Additionally, an educated person's concern for their families and communities was often asserted as an element of *kastom* common to the diversity of cultural and linguistic groups represented at each school. Within each school community, as in society more broadly (Douglas 2000, 5), there were more cultures and languages represented than there were Christian denominations and schools had to accommodate this diversity of cultures. Consequently, individual students and teachers found that they could not assert specific *kastom* practices. However, in the course of everyday life individual students and teachers found commonalities between their *kastom* and that of colleagues and peers from other places, even if the details of the practices could vary. Swearing, for example, is extremely offensive across Solomon Islands and Bougainville. During Period Eight one morning several of Tenaru's teachers, who had set work for their classes and returned to the staffroom, overheard a female student swear at a boy just outside the window. The teachers—representing cultural groups that spanned the archipelago—reacted in unison, each with a different sound to signal their disgust. Catherine rose quickest and hurried from the staffroom, returning a few moments later with the student in tow. Catherine took the girl to a quiet corner of the staff room and lectured her quietly so the rest of us could not hear. Because the student had committed a serious breach of *kastom* another teacher (from another province) suggested that community service would not be enough and internal suspension (a day of manual labour) would be more appropriate. The student had not behaved in a manner consistent with how the teachers believed their shared *kastom* dictated she should behave towards others.

An incident at Avu'avu further illustrates the close association between the school rules and a version of *kastom* coterminous with (in this case) island and province (Akin 2013; Allen 2018). I recorded at one morning assembly how the students had been admonished after the "centre circle"—the well-kept circular garden bed at the intersection of the school's four major walking paths—had been vandalised overnight. Plants were uprooted and the stone in the middle knocked over. The message to students at morning assembly was that the culprits had broken *kastom* against the school. I was told later that the association between the school rules and *kastom* has been deliberate. If the incident had occurred in the village then the vandals would have had to pay compensation for acting *main man nau*, a phrase akin to *bikhet* in PNG Tok Pisin that indicates a selfish disregard for an individual's connection to others. One student, Max, certainly understood the admonishment in cultural terms. He explained:

according to *kastom* if you damage the centre circle it's like you hit the person that made it. Even though you did not actually hit them the action you did to the centre circle, it did not build itself, somebody built it. So if you damage it without reason, the

reason people will attribute to you is that you want to harm the person that built the centre circle. Even though you did not mean it that way, that is what *kastom* will bring.... The *kastom* here is practiced by the whole of Guadalcanal.

Clearly, the student understood the message to be one directing students' attention to their embeddedness in relationships with others. Note, also, that the student's logic resonates with the idea, presented in chapter 4, that damage to the material objects used in reconciliation ceremonies (shell money and planted trees and stones) amounted to damage to the people and relationships who completed the ceremony.

One essential point is the deliberate attempt by school administrations and teachers to direct their students' attention to behaving in a way that fulfilled the students' obligations to others, which was a more expansive vision of educated personhood than the disciplinary regime was set up to establish. Another is that the teachers and students discovered connections across their cultural differences in the process.

The pedagogy of life at school

In this section I show that even if teachers had wanted to enforce the disciplinary regime strictly, they would have had to overcome a range of constraints on their capacity to do so. These constraints meant that teachers and students had to embrace and utilise elements of sociality that they shared and which would make them enemy friends. In doing so they also produced new ideas about what it meant to be a professional.

Government neglect and financial uncertainty drove further encounters between the disciplinary regime and everyday practice. Teachers in Bougainville felt particularly neglected because they had little reason to trust the government to pay their salaries. My fieldnotes after one fortnightly pay-run from Tarlena read:

[the teacher] didn't get her pay last fortnight (though she did today). So when she went to town on the pay-run she bought a lot of things she could sell from her house.... She bought flex cards [mobile phone credit] and cigarettes, which she will sell to students. When I joked that didn't seem like a Catholic school thing to do [because phones and smoking are prohibited], she laughed and said she hasn't got a choice. Plus everyone else does it so why shouldn't she.

In fact, on the same day the principal learned from the ABG Education Department that more teachers would be going off payroll that week. My notes read: "It's lucky dip. [Teachers] won't know it is them until they go to the bank and discover their pay hasn't been deposited." Financial uncertainty was thus one factor that drove teachers to what Tenaru's teachers playfully referred to

as “AOBs,” which stood for “Any Other Businesses.” All teachers had AOBs that would distract them from their school duties, and school duties that prevented them from pursuing AOBs too vigorously.

A further constraint on a teacher’s capacity to adhere closely to the school’s program was her or his obligations to relationships at home. Refusing to acknowledge a kin relationship risked damaging one’s reputation in the village. It would be interpreted, teachers said, as a sign of selfishness and thus cause a loss of respect from a large proportion of the community. Teachers at schools close to town were regularly faced with unscheduled visits from *wantoks*¹⁰ seeking accommodation after arriving from the Provinces and teachers rarely refused these requests for assistance and accommodation despite the financial constraints they faced. At all case study schools teachers and students alike would temporarily abandon their daily programs to attend to the needs of relatives passing through. Teachers (and sometimes students) would often leave the school for weeks at a time to attend serious village events like funerals and weddings; if they could not attend the event at home they contributed financially, which to arrange required them to temporarily abandon their school duties. Thus, a female teacher at Mabiri argued that being physically separated from home changed nothing about family relationships. She remained actively involved in a religious movement at home, and, as was typical, had relatives living with her to attend school and whose school fees she also paid.

Despite the cultural and financial pressures, many teachers had strategies and tactics to limit their exposure to their obligations to home, as do many members of an emerging middle class in Melanesia (Gooberman-Hill 1999). When faced with requests from relatives to enrol close kin, teachers could remind them that they were not personally responsible for enrolment decisions. Or to save money when relatives came to stay they could change their shopping habits. Instead of buying a large bag of rice, which his guests would eat rapidly, one Tenaru teacher bought a small bag daily to limit their consumption; the less they could eat the cheaper it would be to look after them. Teachers would also hide the exact details of their salaries, and another Tenaru teacher took care to never walk around with his wallet in his pocket. If he did, he explained, his kin would see it and assume it was full. In fact, he told a story I later recorded:

¹⁰ *Wantok* literally means “one talk,” but, as Brigg (2009, 152) explains, can be defined “as a system of generalised obligations and supports that permeates contemporary Melanesian social and political life.” It can be applied to kin relationships but can be scaled up to include language or island groups. Even Papua New Guineans can regard Solomon Islanders as their *wantoks* when they leave the region, and vice versa.

[he] once saw that there were a lot of relatives on the wharf when he arrived in Honiara. He took everything except the bus fare out of his wallet to show them he was broke when they asked. They did ask and his trick worked. Having an ATM card helps too. He can withdraw just the money he needs when he goes to town.

This teacher also owned a bus and employed his kin to operate it. Despite his efforts, he was still finding he could not limit his income and energy to his nuclear family. Kin were constantly demanding his attention.

Additionally, teachers' obligations often conflicted with attempts to impose rule following behaviour. When I arrived at Mabiri in Term One 2016 I witnessed a school rebounding from a chaotic academic year in 2015. The Catholic administration had appointed a raft of new teachers in 2016. The new teachers were thus trying to demonstrate their own good habits to their new colleagues, learn the specifics of the ethos of their new school, and set standards for new and returning students. Therefore Term One was a period of heavy-handed discipline of the students. The Marist Brothers, for example, had been sleeping in a room adjoining one of the dormitories to enforce the rules and routine in the morning. One of them said "I was like a policeman, you know, with the hailer." However, the teachers were also in the process of forming connections to each other, which Bradley was the first to instigate. He bought and killed a pig, cooked it in a *motu* (earth oven), and distributed portions to his colleagues. When he had done so other teachers took note of their debt and their need to reciprocate.

The high standards set in Term One did not last, however. When I returned to Mabiri around two months after the end of my first visit, teachers' commitment to their duties had waned. I recorded after one conversation with a teacher that "he isn't thrilled with the personal lives of some teachers... [Bradley] had brewed home brew and drunk it in front of the students." Apparently Bradley had even invited the Marist Brothers to drink it with him. Then, implying it was the critical indicator for the health of the school community, the teacher I spoke to lamented that many teachers had stopped attending Mass on Sunday. Thus, when Bradley offered to include the Marist Brothers in his drinking he was likely honouring and respecting his relationships to them, which was itself a part of the moral order that teachers tried to promote. However, the form that his sharing took (drinking alcohol in front of the students) contradicted a different part of the moral order.

The physical organisation of the school was an important driver of the tension between Bradley's sociality and the religious ethos of the school. Teachers' houses also often bordered students' walking paths and dormitories, classrooms and other school infrastructure. Moreover, students

would often visit teachers at their houses to request help with homework, access to storerooms, assistance with duties or because they were hungry. These circumstances meant teachers would effectively never be off duty if they were to enforce a school's ethos all the time. Consequently, many teachers let a lot of rule breaking go unnoticed and students could often expect to move through out-of-bounds areas with impunity. It was almost inevitable that some students would have seen Bradley drinking.

Living in these circumstances meant the task for teachers was, in the words of a senior teacher at Tarlena, Francis, "to learn how to mix their culture with being a working person." Personal and professional lives could not be separated. Francis thus conceptualised a tension between Melanesian sociality and an ideal of what professionalism should be in these terms:

in this community [Tarlena] we tend to, even though its, we'd like it to be a professional [community], sometimes we are informal with each other.... [In reality] we socialise, we go to other teachers' houses. We share, we still practice our, like our traditional ways, ah. It's like a mixed community, yeah. Professional and then informal.

His perspective, consistent with my observations of all case study schools, suggests that a strict interpretation of professionalism would just have to make way for some measure of Melanesian sociality:

if you are in a community and you isolate yourself, you won't, I don't think you will feel, you will feel alienated or something like that, ah. I mean you are by yourself, maybe you will get *longlong* [crazy] in the head.

In other words, no sane person would seek to withdraw from their social relationships. The pedagogical function of everyday life at school was to instil in teachers and students the importance of finding ways to mix sociality from home with the discourses about educated persons derived from introduced models of schooling and success in education.

Learning this balance was particularly challenging for younger teachers. They seemed to have expected to maintain a more distant relationship to students before they began their teaching and they also felt the students impinge on their daily lives more acutely than senior teachers did. One male early career teacher at Tenaru complained to me explicitly about this and it concurred with my observations when I lived with the school's single male teachers at Avu'avu. Similarly, Jane, a young female teacher, had apparently arrived at her school expecting to maintain a strict "professional distance" and had been strict with students and unsociable in her first year there. Ultimately she found her "professional distance" an unsustainable impost on her social life.

For young teachers socialising with people of a similar age not associated with the school, especially dating, was virtually impossible without clashing with religious, professional and social expectations. Jane said she had tried to be more social in her second year teaching but it had led to some loss of respect from the students that was detrimental to her teaching; she found it much more difficult to get students to listen to her in class. Additionally, the apparent loss of respect was a problem “especially with the boys,” some of whom began making flirtatious attempts to get her attention. The administration said she would just have to expect and resist this as a young female, and consequently she was trying to adjust her sociability when I met her by re-asserting a measure of professional distance. Jane had not been the only young teacher at her school to be called into the principal’s office for questioning about their private lives in the previous twelve months.

The teachers’ financial constraints, obligations to kin, and need to mix professional life with a measure of informality inevitably shaped their students’ experiences at school. For example, the students learnt to expect a great deal of flexibility in teachers’ classroom attendance. Teachers often did not have desks in the classroom where they could work after setting tasks for students. Moreover, their duties for extra-curricular activities could often take them away from teaching. One morning I found the following letter from a social studies teacher on my desk in the staffroom: “good morning, David. Our lesson observation Today – 8:10–9:30 will not be possible due to: I’ll leave for town to follow up on the payment of Yr11 examination fees in the morning.”

Consequently, teachers used their classroom time principally for the explanation of new concepts to students. At other times they could set work for them and return to the staffroom to prepare other lessons. On such occasions they had to trust that the students valued their education enough to complete their work, although they could also compensate for daytime classroom absences after dinner during “night study” (see Figure 6.1). Occasionally they would also opportunistically steal classes from their colleagues if that teacher was absent: “[I catch up by] stealing extra times from the other teachers. When they don’t come to class I steal their time. I did it yesterday” (Avu’avu teacher).

However, students did not necessarily consider a teacher’s absence a problem. Some students became so attuned to their teachers’ absences that they could predict and plan around them. I once surprised a student by asking what she thought of the lesson I had observed in Period One that morning. It turned out she had not attended the lesson because she had assumed the teacher would not be there. Instead, she had done her homework in the dormitory. Additionally, when some

Tenaru students explained why they respected Catherine as a teacher it was because she always made up for the classes she had missed. Flexibility was fine so long as their teachers caught up.

Furthermore, principals could be forced to recruit their students into overcoming the school's financial hardships. This came at the expense of the school's disciplinary regime and played on the students' kinship relationships. Schools were forced to budget carefully to ensure they could continue operating until the end of the school year because they could not count on receiving timely government funding. While the severity of capacity limitations varied from school to school, all were typically underfunded but in desperate need of repairs to physical infrastructure, lacking access to the internet, over-enrolled and, according to one teacher at Mabiri, "begging for textbooks." Mabiri was responding to the financial strain even before the end of first semester 2016 by asking students' families to donate food; the principal would drive students to their rural homes to request food aid for the school from their parents and families. An administrator declared in a staff meeting that these measures were necessary because the government "will never help us." This comment positioned the school not as a technology of government that might discipline teachers and students into proper modes of behaviour, but as potential recipients of government services a step removed from the government itself (Street 2012, 17).

Notwithstanding that two of the study schools (Tenaru and Su'u) were among the most elite schools in Solomon Islands, there were thus deep cracks in the disciplinary regime that sought to instruct students and teachers in the values and comportment of life in the formal sector. However, although the regime at Avu'avu crumbled almost entirely in 2015, the school's Disciplinary Committee nevertheless proved surprisingly effective at enforcing the moral basis of life in the village.

Avu'avu and the disciplinary regime

Avu'avu's difficulties originated a year earlier at another school on Guadalcanal. Near the end of the 2014 academic year a group of men abducted and raped a female student from her dormitory at Ruavatu PSS, on the Guadalcanal plains (Newter 2014). Many of Ruavatu's students had to be sent to other schools in 2015, and Avu'avu was one of the main destinations. The school was over-enrolled at each grade level, which strained the school's infrastructure to breaking point. In addition to the challenges inherent in Avu'avu's remote location on the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal, classrooms, dormitories and the dining hall struggled to handle the influx of students; and, over the course of the year, the infrastructure failed. When the ablutions blocks broke down students were forced to wash

in the sea and go to the toilet in the bush. When the main generator broke, a smaller generator was only enough to light the dining hall in the evenings, leaving classrooms, dormitories, and the assembly hall without power. This meant that evening study could only be done in shifts in the dining hall. Then, just before the national examinations, the smaller generator also broke, making night study effectively impossible. The extra students also stretched the school's food gardens beyond their capacity, which left students complaining about a shortage of food.

The national examinations were fast approaching as I arrived at Avu'avu in November, but I found that academic pursuits were subservient to honouring the relationships to colleagues, peers, and home. Classes were cancelled for over a week while the school prepared for the graduation ceremony and the feasts for visiting parents and each class. In addition, the grounds needed maintenance, the assembly hall had to be set up, and the program written and rehearsed. Despite all the work and organisation, there was a notable air of excitement during the entire week of graduation, and for many students and teachers it began to feel like a holiday.

Organising and conducting the graduation ceremony had been a major strain on the school's remaining financial and material resources. However, Avu'avu was more intimately embedded in the social life of the villages surrounding it than the elite schools and there was no question of abandoning the ceremony. The majority of the teacher and student populations came from the villages surrounding the school and villagers were regular visitors, and even occasionally helped the teachers enforce school rules. It was thus relatively easy for relationships at home to encroach on life at school. Students could even be absent from school for weeks at a time to attend to demands at home.

After graduation, classes became secondary to the necessities required to keep the school running long enough for the Grade Nine, Eleven and Twelve students to sit their national examinations. The school's vegetable gardens were depleted shortly after graduation and the students not in exam years were sent to forage for wild vegetables. Graduation had also left the school's supply of rice critically low, and there was some concern that the grade Seven, Eight, and Ten students would have to be sent home if a ship with provisions (and materials for a new staff house) did not arrive in time to re-stock the school's stores. Fortunately, it did arrive in time and classes for Grades Seven, Eight and Ten were cancelled for several more days while these students unloaded the ship onto the beach and then carried the cargo to the school (Figure 6.3). All the while the students in Grades Nine,

Eleven and Twelve had been given a reprieve from classes and work duties to prepare for their national examinations.

Figure 6.3: Avu'avu teachers and students pulling a raft load of supplies from a container ship to the beach then gathering them on the beach to carry to the school



That said, however, not every student in an exam grade was intent on studying. Students knew that Avu'avu had a poor history of passing Grade Twelve students, and would often remind me about it.

Max, the student that drew the connection between the school rules and *kastom* in the previous section, lamented the lack of competition among students in his class; of the approximately seventy students in Grade Eleven he guessed there were only ten of them competing for marks. Keen students like him were forced to find hiding places, like at the river, a teacher's house, or their classrooms after lights out, in which to study away from the distractions of the school campus. The data from the final weeks of Avu'avu's academic year accord well with Demerath's (1999, 187; 2000, 211) observation that the students uninterested in academic success certainly had the scope to evade school discipline and enjoy the personal experiences school offered. In fact, the restlessness of many students across all grade levels was plain to see, and the teachers, at least those that were still attempting to keep the school running and not pre-occupied with their AOBs, were on edge. One teacher wondered if the school could employ security guards to protect school infrastructure from vandalism from the students.

It was in these circumstances that some teachers had taken to patrolling the grounds at night, and, on one patrol, one of them caught a group of between ten and twenty male students attempting to enter one of the girls' dormitories. It was just after bedtime on the Friday night the week before national exams. A teacher on patrol saw the students, sounded the alarm, and the boys scarpered.

After that, and to my surprise, the school's Disciplinary Committee achieved an efficacy to rival even the National Secondary Schools. The patrolling teacher had identified enough culprits to enable a member of the Disciplinary Committee to begin interrogations the following day. The Committee member set up in the library and called on students one at a time. Each student admitted their involvement. A couple had been visiting girlfriends. The others were playing a game aimed at getting as close as possible to the dormitory of the other sex before the students inside sounded the alarm.

Thus, several girls were also brought into the Committee's investigation, one of whom was in serious trouble after it came to light she had actually entered the boy's dormitory. As mentioned, teachers and students alike drew parallels between the school rules and a shared form of *kastom*, which was in this instance reflected in the imposition of a measure of separation between boys and girls. One of the female students involved in the incident had told me earlier that the prohibition on student movement after dark was one of the rules the school enforced strictly. The indiscretion of the girl who had entered the boy's dormitory was considered in line with what the school's constitution labels a major offence, which includes punishments for students who "prowl around the opposite sex's dormitories which results in sexual intercourse." Thus, the game had invoked moral concerns

about proper behaviour with implications for the students and their families. This was a serious issue for the school because it relied on community assistance to enforce the school rules and provide material assistance. As noted, it had already been relying on the surrounding villages' land to supplement its dwindling food supplies.

Of interest here is how the punishments reflect the teachers' resolution of the sensitivities around the circumstances and relationships affected by the investigation. The punishments reflected the seriousness of the students' offences and were also minimally disruptive to their exams. The students deemed to have committed serious offences were handed punishments individually, while the rest were grouped by the offence they committed. For the serious cases, six to eight boys were given off-campus suspensions and sat their national exams in a neighbouring village ninety minutes' walk from the school. A relative of the deputy could monitor them there. Three girls were given the same punishment but sent elsewhere. One female student's situation was complicated because she was terrified of her brother, who lived in the village the Committee planned to send her. The committee protected her by sending her to sit her exams in the medical clinic near the school. Several other girls, whose indiscretions were deemed less severe, received an in-school suspension and spent a day carrying bags of gravel from the beach to the girls' dormitory (about a kilometre). All students understood, accepted, and completed their punishment.

The students' relationships and upcoming exams were deemed of much higher importance, than, for instance, the school's reputation with MEHRD. One Committee member was deeply concerned about the school's reputation, and raised the issue when the Committee met, because some of the students being sent off campus were the school's smartest students. She had marked national exams before and knew that the Ministry would mark them as "external" students, which would mean their exams would be marked separately and could affect the school's reputation at the Ministry. A decline in the school's standing relative to other schools could have serious consequences as the Ministry assigns the best performing students to the best performing schools. Yet her concerns fell on deaf ears. It was more important to manage the school's relationships with parents, villages and the students themselves.

The effectiveness of the Disciplinary Committee's work in circumstances in which most students knew they had little chance of academic success and were in the main not attempting to achieve it

was possible because the students accepted the authority of the school to punish them for violating standards derived from both *kastom* and Christianity.

Lessons about justice and the violent past

The examples I give in this section show teachers and students doing what the pedagogy of everyday life encourages them to do—evaluating desires for progression through the education system in the context of their relationships to others. As the examples concern how students pursue just resolutions to disputes amongst themselves, they also illustrate that teachers and students discover commensurable practices among the cultural diversity at secondary boarding schools (Errington and Gewertz 2004).

Staying with Avu’avu initially, to underscore the legitimacy of the punishment the students in the last section received, Max described how boys resolve disputes amongst themselves in the dormitory. He said that the boys settled issues between themselves with reference to Guadalcanal *kastom*. Just like in the village, a fight between two students would result in the payment of compensation. Although the students would be required to pay much less than if they were at home, the payment was nevertheless intended to mend the relationship. Female students at Avu’avu described doing the same practices in their disputes. In fact, students everywhere, male and female, were clear on the process required to resolve a dispute. They would consult with the two parties in private first, then bring protagonists together to mediate an apology between them. Then they would lead a prayer, shake hands, agree to any exchange of gifts (if the disputing students thought it required), and then move on. The method was strikingly consistent with the reconciliation processes described in chapter 4.

The students resolved conflicts in this way because they understood that if they used their school’s formal disciplinary process they would put a peer’s place at the school at risk. For instance, when Stella’s best friend at Tarlena stole the mobile phones of two male peers she put each student involved at some risk of punishment. Mobile phones were contraband, stealing prohibited.

Additionally, not only was the thief at risk of violence from the boys but Stella worried for her own personal safety because if she reported the incident the thief’s relatives at the school might react violently towards her. She had seen enough of the victim’s relatives to form the opinion that they were not a *gutpela lain* (good/proper people). She feared that retaliation from them towards her could even provoke escalation from her own relatives at the school towards her assailants.

Ultimately, Stella argued that these factors—threats to everyone’s place at school and from a cycle

of violence and retaliation—persuaded the thief to feel *sem* (shame) and return the stolen property. Similarly, a Grade Ten student at Tarlena recalled being falsely accused of stealing another girl's mobile phone. Upset and angry at having been verbally abused for something she had not done, the Grade Ten student stormed off to report her accuser to the teachers. However, the Head Boy and Girl prevented her because if she did, one girl would have to admit to owning a mobile phone while the other would be reprimanded for her angry reaction. It put both their places at the school at risk. In these cases students skirted around their schools' disciplinary technologies. Consequently it was their relationships to each other that enabled their on-going progression through schooling rather than the rule following behaviour of a person constrained by the techniques and technologies of governmentality (Foucault [1978] 1991; Hirsch 2014, 73).

It is also important to emphasise here that the methods students used to resolve disputes included refusals to talk about them once they had been resolved, and that students thought it more important to refuse to talk *after* they had established strong relationships with their peers (who were also the other parties to their disputes). For example, Coleman, a Grade Twelve student at Tenaru who had attended Su'u from Grades Seven to Eleven and identified as a person from Guadalcanal, argued that his experiences at the two schools had taught him that schooling can play a vital part in peace-building. Coleman described the cycle of retaliation through which a conflict would escalate—the same sequence of events that had Stella concerned about her safety. Yet, he argued his schooling had taught him to avoid this sequence because he has learned not to resolve problems by fighting. He pointed out that neither Su'u nor Tenaru organised its classes by cultural groups. Instead, students lived together and were encouraged to mix with each other and share everything they have. Therefore, he would not involve himself in a fight because it would harm the relationships he had built with other students.

Importantly also, Coleman had lived on Malaita for five years and during that time was one of only a few students that could not draw on *wantoks* for support. He said that his time at Su'u had taught him to build, maintain and value relationships with non-kin members. In fact, he argued that if Su'u had no students from outside Malaita the benefits of living together at school would still apply: the Malaitan students would still form relationships across Malaita's different groups. He said that at Su'u he was careful how he talked to his Malaitan friends. He was on their island after all and could not be sure how some of his Malaitan peers would react if he did not constrain his talk. Thus he had remembered his sociability at Su'u, in which he showed deferential respect for the owners of the

land on which he lived, in terms that paralleled the way Malaitan settlers on Guadalcanal understood the terms of their eviction during the Tension (McDougall 2016; Stritecky 2001, 105–106; and see chapter 1).

Finally, it is possible to draw parallels between the models of educated personhood produced in everyday life at school and the argument about history education in chapter 5. After perhaps the most in-depth account of either violent past I heard, one teacher stated plainly that he would not personally tell the story to his colleagues. Nor would he tell his students for fear that “they might do the same,” meaning be inspired to violence. Yet in the next breath he argued that it was better for everybody to know the story as he had told it to me, at least if they were educated, that is:

Teacher: Maybe they only know this if they, like, go do studies and all that. Because you say that after you go to Australia you’ll write the thesis and bring back the copies to the schools. But what I mean was, I myself, as a [names his locality] I don’t want to, you know, pass this message to people there, in [locality]. Maybe it’s better for [them] to know only if they get educated. Because if those people in the village, if I tell them this, they, you know... [long pause] only the educated people will read this [dissertation]. Not the people back in the village.

David: And the danger of people in the village knowing what...

Teacher: Because [the] soldiers, they never went to school. All of them, many of them, are like illiterate, you know. And to them, they don’t know, I mean, they cannot reason out that what they are doing is wrong, you know: the killing and all that... the shoot-to-kill mentality is still there.

For this teacher, villagers were not educated people and therefore not in a position to learn about the violent past. He could not even be sure of his colleagues and students. Moreover, many in his home had been soldiers that never learnt to “reason out” the immorality of their “shoot-to-kill mentality.” Chapter 5 demonstrated that a textual account could be read as “just like history” and therefore largely devoid of social relevance, but that there were signs of an alternative and more meaningful understanding of classroom knowledge emerging at Tenaru. Having described in this chapter how the pedagogy of everyday life at school encouraged students and teachers to value and honour their relationships to others, I would suggest that “reason out” did not mean evaluate objectively according to western scientific principles, but rather evaluate the story through one’s relationships to others. In fact, the teacher had been doing that himself. He was an educated person and simultaneously knowledgeable enough of his place within his social relationships to understand that he could not *personally* pass on the story he told me. For the uneducated people at home, and perhaps some colleagues and students, I would have first had to render his story “just like history.”

Conclusion

School administrators, teachers, and students imposed their own Christian and *kastom*-based versions of what it meant to be an educated person on institutions that were intended to channel young people into formal sector employment. The educated persons into which the administrators and teachers hoped to form their students would be equipped for life in formal employment, but they would also remain enmeshed in their relationships to others. Furthermore, tending to those relationships would be achieved by deploying elements of Christianity and *kastom* that they discovered they shared while living together. In any case, simply producing model workers for the formal sector would have required the strict enforcement of order, and daily life simply did not permit it. Young teachers, in particular, were forced to change their view of what professionalism looks like. Everyday life served a pedagogical function in which teachers and students had to learn to be flexible and respond regularly to changes in the routine. In overcoming the challenges each school year brought, students and teachers filled the new identities available to them, like “teacher,” “professional,” and “student,” with a significant measure of sociality from outside school.

Moreover, surrounding communities held the schools to moral standards, particularly in relation to sexual morality, and the schools went out of their way to meet their expectations. At Avu’avu, where in 2015 forces largely beyond the school’s control had conspired to stretch the disciplinary regime to breaking point, the Disciplinary Committee leapt into action when an incident occurred that threatened the moral basis of life in the village, and the students understood the terms of their punishment. While Avu’avu might have been an exception among the case study schools because its students knew they were less likely to advance beyond secondary school, students at all schools would have understood the terms by which Avu’avu’s students were punished. In fact, they applied the same standards when they sought just resolutions to minor conflicts amongst themselves and in doing so they were able to use their relationships to evade the disciplinary technologies of formal schooling.

Cultural production helped me develop the argument I outlined in the previous chapter, that classroom instruction could encourage an orientation to knowledge transmission consistent with criteria for knowledge transmission indigenous to many cultures of Bougainville and Solomon Islands. The data presented here has shown that life outside the classroom conveyed a similar message, that participation and decision-making required individuals to possess a deep understanding of the relationships that apply to them, and that those relationships are built in the dining halls,

dormitories, work sessions, sporting fields, and the cracks in the disciplinary technologies of formal schooling.

In my view, the lesson from this chapter for education as a mechanism of transitional justice is the potential for life outside the classroom to contribute to the opinions and practices students form about justice. When students (particularly those empowered by the school rules) evaluated just resolutions to conflicts amongst their peers, a foremost concern for them was the health of their relationships to their peers. It is fundamentally important to the place of schooling in turning students from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds into enemy friends. Thus Coleman's example begins to show that students were well-equipped to perform the logic of "disentangling" (White and Watson-Gegeo 1990) at school, which included the need to refuse to discuss the violent past. I develop this theme further in chapters 8 and 9, but before that I turn to how educated personhood differed between boys and girls, and men and women.

Chapter 7 “They Forget that You’re Humans”: Women and the Paradox of Professionalism

The education of women and girls brings to the fore moral, cultural and religious values (Adely 2012), prompting questions about whether girls should pursue education to the same extent as boys, if the objectives of their education should be different, and what risks might be associated with their education (Munro 2018, 26). Opening up education to women and girls can thus come with significant constraints on their agency. For instance, Kurshid (2017, 260) found that while communities in Pakistan had adjusted their gendered norms to allow women to “enter male-dominated public spaces” like schools, women’s agency remained regulated because it was contingent upon them being exemplars of virtuous female behaviour. In contemporary Melanesia questions about girls’ education arise during a period in which expanded opportunities for women have led to a backlash, framed as a re-assertion of “tradition,” which is often manifest in violence towards women (Macintyre 2017, 8). Spark, for instance, found that educational attainment put urban Papua New Guinean women at an increased risk of violence (2011), and that rates of violence against women keep some parents from enrolling their daughters in school at all (2014).

In Solomon Islands and Bougainville, questions about the education of women and girls also take place in the aftermath of civil violence and years of post-conflict transition, both of which can transform notions of morality, acceptable behaviour, and the place of women in society (Theidon 2013). As seen in chapter 2, feminist scholars within transitional justice have done a great deal to demonstrate the way that women’s experiences, and enduring forms of structural violence, have been silenced during the operations of other transitional justice mechanisms (Ross 2010; Theidon 2013). National narratives proffered by male elites can also silence women’s experiences of violence (Kent 2014, 310). On the other hand, periods of conflict can offer women the opportunity to assert a measure of agency, as they did in Solomon Islands and Bougainville, by drawing on their role “as mothers of the land” (Sirivi and Havini 2004). Even women’s silences in post-conflict everyday life can reflect a measure of agency that allows them to attend to their present and future lives (Kent 2014; Fangalasuu et al. 2011).

In this chapter I draw attention to some of the ways that the conflict and post-conflict dynamics of Bougainville and Solomon Islands interacted with the expectations for girls’ education produced in everyday life at school. I do this using Choi and Jolly’s (2014) analytical construct “the paradoxes of domesticity.” This construct makes it indisputably clear that contemporary understandings of

domesticity in Melanesia are not the products of never-changing cultures but have their origins in historical processes. When Choi and Jolly deployed the paradoxes concept, they showed that the lived experiences of the foreign women who came to the region as missionaries was very different from the image of domesticity those women hoped to establish among indigenous peoples. Choi and Jolly demonstrated that, paradoxically, the missionary women who came to the Pacific ultimately found themselves actively engaged in the public domain even as they advocated to restrict Pacific women to a private one. Moreover, Choi and Jolly made no attempt at a catch-all definition of domesticity but instead encouraged researchers to think about “what constitutes the domestic in context” (2014, 4) from a vantage point that sees no sharp dichotomy between domestic and public spheres. This was a useful insight for my purposes because formal schooling, as I outline below, has long been considered part of a masculine public domain, but has, according to government data, seen far greater gender equality in access to it in more recent times. Choi and Jolly thus oriented my thinking to ways notions of domesticity might become part of what it meant to be an educated woman, but which paradoxically enabled women to subvert the social order that imposed a measure of domesticity on them.

I will argue that the cultural production of the educated woman at the secondary boarding schools reproduced a long-standing discourse of domesticity for women and girls, which came to inform how women saw themselves as students, teachers, leaders and professionals. But, paradoxically, women could utilise their professionalism to challenge their marginalisation in a school’s public, decision-making arena. Thus my argument here is not about reproduction in the way early critical ethnographers of schooling understood the process (chapter 2), but instead it traces some of the mechanisms through which schools can help young people learn and form opinions about the “flux and change” in gender relations going on around them (Macintyre 2017).

First, I explain how the discourse of domesticity emerged in the colonial era to make education largely the domain of boys. Second, I explain how contradictory circumstances emerged for women out of the civil conflicts and peace processes: during the conflicts women enhanced their agency in public life by inserting themselves into peace-making, but the way they did it subsequently became (highly contested) grounds for limiting their political agency. Third, I demonstrate how teachers and students reproduced the conditions that have constrained women in public life, which caused one teacher to reflect that “they forget that you’re humans.” In short, much of the cultural production constructed public and private spaces within schools, made women disproportionately responsible

for the private one, and looking after that private domain was a part of a woman's professional identity.

However, in the fourth section I begin to develop the idea that the paradox of professionalism for women was that, in addition to including their domestic work at home and for the school, it also gave them the scope to resist the division between public and private spaces; I describe how female teachers utilised their identities as professionals to overcome the constraints on their agency. There is an important point here for my overarching argument about the formation of enemy friends: in the process of contesting the limitations of their agency female teachers and students, and their male colleagues and peers, discovered and enacted commonalities across their constituent cultures. Specifically, commensurable understandings of shame were one venue in which teachers and students found similarities across their cultural differences. Finally, I make explicit the connections between the new identities learnt at school—student, teacher, and professional—and refusals to talk about the violent past.

The colonial origins of domesticity

A division of labour between the sexes did exist in pre-colonial Melanesia and the different roles for men and women were by and large considered complementary (Eves et al. 2018a, 6–8; Mowbray 2014, 171). The sense that men's and women's roles were of greater and lesser value emerged during the colonial era. Dickson-Waiko (2010, 2013) has shown that the process of state formation in PNG was essentially the domain of men. It took until the 1950s and 1960s for women to begin to reside in the small urban enclaves out of which colonial administrations operated. Men were also the beneficiaries of wage labour policy, be it through minor positions in the (urban) administration or cash cropping (Mowbray 2014, 172). As in PNG, so too in Solomon Islands. Women there were likewise kept from administrative centres well into the colonial era (McDougall 2014, 199).

Moreover, colonial officers were blind to any customary authority women performed. In fact, in PNG and Solomon Islands the colonisers—administrators and Christian missionaries—made deliberate and concerted efforts to change fundamentally the nature of family life (Choi and Jolly 2014; Jolly and Macintyre 1989; Dickson-Waiko 2013). Notwithstanding that there were a range of responses to colonisation in the Pacific, there was a generally consistent image of domesticity among Christian missions, as well as the desire to introduce it (Jolly and Macintyre 1989, 9–11). Missionaries and the colonial administrations

hoped to “lighten women’s load” through a refocusing of indigenous women’s labour practice around family and the home, with the home envisaged as a discrete physical space marked by the boundaries of a well-kept house and garden (though not food gardens), and family as a nuclear unit comprised of mother, father and children. (Mowbray 2014, 169)

The missions were not completely successful in this endeavour. For instance, the domestic sphere came to mean the whole village, including its food gardens, rather than the home of a nuclear family (McDougall 2014, 205). Nevertheless, it was colonisation that made “domestic” and “public” spheres and established unequal and gendered power relationships between them. Concerted pressure from missions and colonial administrations had led villagers to move their homes into neat, definable, and therefore governable locations (Mowbray 2014, 168). Additionally, with men in new positions in the public domain, women were also forced to do much of the labour, like clearing land and building houses, for which men were once responsible. Then, at least in Buka (Bougainville), when the administration encouraged men to begin commercial agricultural ventures to participate in the cash economy, women actively worked for that cause too, but it was still considered to be a part of their domestic work as mothers (ibid., 184).

The work of a “good mother” did not end there either. She was “required to generate income to cover the costs of those things now needed by her family in the everyday—clothes, food, kerosene, transport money, and so on” (Mowbray 2014, 189; see also Macintyre 2014, 98). School fees were the heaviest burden and have been since. Women have typically been charged with finding the money, which required them to devote time and labour producing food to sell at markets. In some circumstances, such as in New Ireland, PNG, the payment of school fees then enhanced the renown of men because marshalling the exchange relationships required to pay them was considered evidence of his good standing in the community (Sykes 1995, 259).

In any case, school fees typically only paid for boys’ schooling because girls had little need for formal education when entrenched in their domestic sphere. Moreover, girls who did get to school found many important decisions had been made for them. As a child, Mary, a teacher in Solomon Islands and an important character in this chapter, dreamt of becoming a plumber. Her family, however, simply gave her a choice between teaching and nursing because they were jobs she could do in her home village (see also Mowbray 2014, 192–94). Ironically, it had been several years since she had lived in her home province when I interviewed her in 2015, which suggests, in keeping with Choi and Jolly’s concern with paradoxes, that her family’s wishes have been difficult to assert in practice.

Gender relations during and after the conflicts

Overwhelmingly, although not exclusively, the role of women in the conflicts and in the subsequent peace processes in both Bougainville and Solomon Islands was as peace-makers. As the rule of the gun began to supersede customary modes of authority in Bougainville, and as women experienced violence and sexual atrocities, they felt compelled “to challenge their predicament and reassert their matrilineal authority” (George 2016, 172). The Arawa Peace Conference in Bougainville in 1994 was a major opportunity for women to organise peace-building efforts across Bougainville, and they continued in these efforts as the Crisis wore on, providing essential pressure for peace (Braithwaite et al. 2010a, 35–36; Ninnes 2006, 18). Women had created a network that crossed battle lines and divisions, as they would do later in Solomon Islands, where women’s groups like the National Council of Women and Women for Peace in Solomon Islands emerged (Paina 2000; Pollard 2000). These groups prevented escalation of violence and ensured families on either side of the blockade around Honiara had access to essential supplies (Braithwaite et al. 2010b, 31; Brigg et al. 2015a, 8).

In predominantly Catholic and matrilineal Bougainville, “motherhood” was a trope with considerable reach and persuasiveness that enabled women to assert themselves as peace-makers (Sirivi and Havini 2004). Motherhood’s persuasiveness came from its place in popular custom and religious discourses. The customary one drew on women’s position as landowners, such that “motherhood” encompassed not only a woman’s own children, but all the children born on the land on which she was a custodian and indeed, all Bougainvilleans (Hermkens 2011). According to Hermkens (2011), the religious dimension drew specifically on Mother Mary who it was argued endured similar suffering through the death of her own child, Jesus. The entanglement of customary and church influences in the notion of motherhood during the Crisis allowed women to revive many elements of matrilineal culture. Doing so helped women who supported the BRA reach out to women who supported the Resistance Forces, and vice versa.

Motherhood was also a persuasive trope for women in their peace-building work during the Solomon Islands Tension, although in somewhat different terms from that in Bougainville (Brigg et al. 2015a). Certainly, land as mother was a persuasive ideology for many militants from Guadalcanal, as it is consistent with the matrilineal kinship system in which women are custodians over land and a foundational concept, the militants argued, for Guadalcanal culture and identity (Allen 2013, 122–25). Unlike in Bougainville, the Tension involved more than only Catholics and matrilineal descent systems. Regardless, however, Solomon Islander women have been lauded for the work they did to

hold society together during the conflict. They grew crops, traded with each other, raised children, and even provided microloans to each other to ensure that they could provide for their families (Brigg et al. 2015a, 9–10). They did this at great risk to their safety and it helped women reach across divides and assert themselves as peace-makers and mediators during the conflict (ibid., 8).

Post-conflict peace processes create their own constructions of gender relations, which often silence women's agency or only include women to the extent that they be seen as protected and passive non-combatants (George 2016, 168; Theidon 2013). In post-Crisis Bougainville, men have reasserted a reign over political space and made it increasingly difficult for women in public life (Hermkens 2011). This is particularly evident in the way ex-combatants have dominated post-conflict politics (Wallis 2019). Moreover, the "motherhood" discourse enabled the dispossession of women from a place in politics because the discourse came to demarcate the boundaries of women's political action. Mother Mary is a particularly important figure and Bougainvillean women were seen as "custodians of the holy nation [of Bougainville] and messengers of peace" (Hermkens 2011, paragraph 45) who were expected to make way for men in politics. George (2016, 175) adds that global narratives derived from the UN's Women, Peace and Security agenda "have encouraged women to reconstitute their experiences as rightful and dutiful agents of 'bottom-up' peace-building," which has also delegitimised them as political actors by obscuring the ways they participated in the conflict.

Women have not simply accepted this, however. One senior women's leader in Arawa, Elizabeth Sawai, asserted her own authority to speak up, which she derived from her participation in the Crisis. In fact, she adopted the ex-combatant "tag" as we were talking and she sat up straight, spoke louder, stronger and with a surge of authority took control of our conversation:

sometimes, you know, for the strength, you feel like them. For the strength... not to be defeated, you have to, it's like a tag. Oh! And then you gain that momentum of, you know, it's not really, I'm not really them but that gives me strength to say 'ok. I also fought. I also, you know, [am] where I am today because I fought'. Sometimes, like, it's just helping me to be strengthened.

This, she said, has helped her pursue several small businesses after the Crisis, and is a stark contrast to her identity as a victim of the Crisis: "I put it this way, 'victim' is all of us. Because, I mean me, I am the victim of this Crisis but if I keep calling myself a victim I am going to be defeated."

The erosion of customary authority during the conflicts also influenced gender relations, as it drove increased rates of gender-based violence (Brigg et al. 2015a, 2; Eves et al. 2018a, 8–9). Kent and

Barnett (2012) have made the most detailed analysis to date of the impact of the Crisis on young Bougainvillean men who were too young to have been combatants but old enough to remember the war. They argued that the Crisis altered three of the social structures from which young men derived much of their social status. First, community leadership changed. It saw authority figures shift from customary authorities to leaders of armed groups. Second, the Crisis left far fewer opportunities for education and employment, which robbed young people of the chance to participate in activities that might have enhanced their social status. Finally, “the influence of former commanders in local, district, and regional affairs...ironically reinforces a perception among young men of the utility of violence for obtaining status and power” (2012, 40). Indeed Kent and Barnett argued that the Crisis produced a culture of violence in Bougainville. In the words of another senior women’s leader in Arawa, youth, particularly young men, have been “acting BRA”; the term is used to describe delinquent, *bikhet* behaviour. This women’s leader spent considerable time during our interview describing the climate of fear that has pervaded even well into the peace process period, which includes the heightened risk of gender-based violence. She noted that with the existence of guns in communities and the normalisation of criminal behaviours, chiefs lost much of their authority and were yet to recapture it. Although the Crisis was over, the fear, including of those youth “acting BRA,” had certainly not dissipated fully. Significantly also, the burden of caring for broken families and individuals within them has fallen disproportionately on women because, as shown above, the discourse of domesticity makes them primarily responsible for caring for family (Brigg et al. 2015a, 5).

Yet despite the reassertion of male dominance in public life in the post-conflict periods, PNG and Solomon Islands have made considerable ground in equalising access to formal education. More girls and women are becoming students, teachers, and professionals than at any point in the past. In fact, by 2008, according to the PNG Education Department’s data, 41.5 percent of students in Grade Nine (the first year of post-primary schooling in PNG) were female and 40 percent of students enrolled in Grade Twelve were female (Department of Education 2008, 45). As for teachers, 36 percent of staff members at secondary schools were women in 2008 (*ibid.*, 42). In Solomon Islands, by 2017, MEHRD data indicate that 49 percent of students in Grades Seven to Twelve were girls (MEHRD 2017, 44). In the country’s teaching service, although only a third of secondary school teachers were women, in the education system as a whole, 51 percent of teachers were women in 2017 (*ibid.*, 66). Added to their increased presence at school are the many rules, policies, procedures and parallel leadership positions (head of department, head boy/girl, prefect, class captain etc) that are the same for

women and men, at least on paper. Consequently, at the same time as girls participate in schooling in ever greater numbers they also have more examples of professional women and men modelling gender relations, which have the potential to contradict and counteract the reassertions of male authority of the post-conflict periods (Cox 2017).

The paradox of professionalism

Cultural production at the secondary boarding schools I studied often reproduced the conservative form of domesticity outlined above, and, paradoxically, for women that version of domesticity formed a part of what it meant to be professional. Moreover, female teachers' domesticity was (in part) imposed through the constant threat of male violence. As was the case outside of school, underlying the cultural production of domesticity was a concern about the proper moral behaviour of women and girls. In fact, at one school in Bougainville, a female teacher, Sarah, drew a near explicit causal linkage between discourses around women's Christian, moral behaviour, motherhood, and her domesticity. Sarah said:

I guess it comes with gender and what you're expected to do at home and all that. Like you're a mother don't drink beer, don't even go out dancing or having time with your girlfriends and all that. It's like you want to spend time with your friends and you know just laugh or have a glass of beer or something and then they are saying you should be at home. You are wasting your time you should be at home looking after your kids or working in the garden... especially in a school like this it's a Catholic school and you have all this, you know, Catholic philosophy or whatever that you have to live with. And they forget that you're humans. It was worse in [my previous school] you had to live like, you know, Mother Mary.

The "Catholic philosophy" made it difficult for Sarah to move beyond her home and garden, much less have fun with other female friends. Additionally, Sarah had to live like Mother Mary at her previous school, where her domesticity was enforced with a regime of violence. She once had to flee from the school's own security guards after they had threatened to, in her words, "cut my boyfriend into tiny pieces" because he had visited her at home and intended to stay overnight; she had seen the violence the security guards had meted out on local drunkards that came too close to the school. She did not return to work until a third party had mediated an apology from the security guards.¹¹

Such violence from the school's security guards surely had a demonstrative effect on the female students at that school, because instances of violence had that effect in other settings. For example, the incident in November 2014 at Ruavatu on Guadalcanal in which a girl was abducted from her

¹¹ Similarly, recall from the previous chapter the case of the student who weighed her decision to report the theft of a mobile phone against the threat of violence from the thief's *wantoks*.

dormitory and raped (Newter 2014; Buchanan 2014) had a special resonance for teachers and students at Tenaru and Avu'avu in 2015. Ruavatu is a short bus ride from Tenaru and, as mentioned, many former Ruavatu students had transferred to Avu'avu. Moreover, acts of physical violence on women and girls themselves were common. My fieldnotes record several instances of "sharp pokes in the stomach [from boys] that looked really hard, even though intended playfully" and others in which a boy would forcefully grab a girl's arm and force her to follow him against her will. I never saw teachers admonish this behaviour.

Female teachers and students also had to accept the threat of violence through sorcery. Far from denoting a never changing cultural practice, sorcery as a contemporary phenomenon is intimately linked to, as Taylor and Araújo (2016, 198) describe, inequalities derived from new political economic relations, urbanisation and strain on customary forms of authority and kinship obligations. Girls appeared far more concerned about sorcery than their male peers. They feared it would be used to make them fall in love with the boy or man that used it, or that they would be sexually assaulted by an apparition of the sorcerer as they slept. I was present at one school in Bougainville when it shut down a week before the end of Term One after a sorcery case spiralled out of control and caused mass panic among the student population. The incident began as an attempt by a student to woo a female peer.

At the same time as girls and women were learning to accept the presence of male violence, they were also learning that they were largely reliant on men for their physical safety. For example, at one school in Bougainville I recorded this in my fieldnotes: "girls reported a prowler around their dorms last night. [The principal] instructs them to shout as loud as they can when that happens." They shout so the boys will come running to help. Likewise, a female student at Tenaru recalled exactly this scenario happening after a school event in 2014. Her explanation was a common theme among interviewees and resonated with the discourses of domesticity: girls were not expected to fight back because men, who consider themselves the bosses of women, were supposed to do it for them.

Moreover, protecting themselves from violence from men meant girls had to police their own behaviour. For example, when it came to protecting themselves from sorcery, one Bougainvillean student told me an important way to do that was to be kind to the boys. This was explicit advice for girls in this next example of a response to a fight between two boys in the dining hall at Su'u. A male student had punched another boy who had been seen alone with the aggressor's sister (it transpired

that they had been discussing their homework). When one of the school's teachers addressed the whole school about the incident, he told the girls not to put the male students, and the school itself, in danger through their behaviour. The actual violence in the dining hall was subservient to cultural and moral concerns about the proper sexual behaviour of adolescent girls (see also Sykes 1995, 343–47). The responsibility to prevent any violence resulting from breaking the cultural taboo was disproportionately the responsibility of the female students and it prevented girls from moving around the school freely.

Ultimately, the necessity of policing their own behaviour forced women and girls into their schools' more private spaces. It kept many of them from participating in the sorts of illicit activities boys would often describe. Whereas boys told stories of mischief after lights out, which ranged from capturing and cooking pigs to alcohol and drug use, girls appeared to have less capacity to do this (though they certainly had some). Tenaru's girls' dormitory, and one of Bishop Wade's, were surrounded by security fences and the gates were locked each night. But even when fences were not in place girls generally appeared less willing to venture out. Sorcery was one reason, noted above. More direct threats from boys were another. When a group of about twenty male students led a riot at Avu'avu in first semester 2015, the girls, who were not fenced in, did not participate but spent the night of the incident in the dorm anxiously trying to work out what was happening.

Consequently, despite rules mandating that boys and girls split domestic tasks equally, women and girls struggled to get boys to assist them and did the vast majority of the domestic labour themselves. I regularly listened to female students complain about the poor performance of male students in the preparation of, and cleaning up after, school feasts. I observed the boys' poor performance in this respect regularly as well. During the school fete at Tenaru, the female prefects did not sleep at all the night before and spent the entire day of the fete preparing food to sell at the student-run stalls. One observed that the experience had left her well behind with her studies. By contrast, Rodney, a male prefect, walked around the stalls with friends, bought plates of food and listened to the performers. It seemed that for the female prefects their leadership positions had paradoxically given them greater responsibility to complete the domestic tasks involved in the fete.

A similar paradox was evident in how teachers understood their roles and responsibilities. As professionals, teachers had official responsibilities that were effectively the same for men and women and were an important reference point for the teachers, not least because the linguistic and cultural diversity among the teaching staff at all my study schools made disagreement inevitable. In

the previous chapter Francis, a senior teacher at Tarlena, had said that a strict interpretation of professionalism must make way for some measure of sociality from home. However, he went on to say that official responsibilities were a bridge across cultural differences and it was a message teachers hoped their example would set for students. Francis said:

they [students] have to learn to mix cultures and traditions. Like what is practiced in my community in small Buka is not the same as what is practiced in Buin. It's totally different... it's quite different as you go from village to village... so maybe what they learn is I try to...for me as a working person I try to relate to somebody from Buin who is also a working person, in our professional work we are the same. In our professional work, like, we are both teachers, we are the same.

The logic of Francis' argument was that teachers' identities as professionals help them smooth over differences between their cultures because a professional (as an educated person) knows how to balance work and sociality from home. Nevertheless, in practice it was difficult for women to find that balance. One female teacher in Bougainville noted that because *Kastom* prohibits women from being physically higher than men her community leaders disapprove of her teaching in the school's second story classroom.

In fact, many of the differences between cultures that teachers encountered revolved around relations between men and women, and professionalism did prove to be the bridge across them.

Lawrence, at Tenaru, described how this happened for him:

Lawrence: One time I got on the ladies also, in the staffroom, because—that is not their responsibility, to clean the staffroom—but I said “you ladies should clean the staffroom. This is your job. You should clean the staffroom it's very, very dirty, very mess.” But that is not their responsibility it is the students' responsibility, ok, the girls are, the girls who are in charge of that. That's their responsibility. Not their [the female teachers'] responsibilities.

David: What happened then?

Lawrence: They were not happy with me because of what I said. And then I found out, oh, they, that is not their job. It's the students' job to come and clean the staffroom. I was new here also, so I, you see, the way I talk the way I approach them it's, it's more based on my cultural belief¹² that women should do this. The house is dirty women should clean it... I was not conscious of that mentality I was bringing.

Tellingly, the party that was responsible for cleaning the staffroom was a group of female students. I can also draw an informative comparison between Lawrence's experience here and Jane's challenges asserting her “professional distance” as described in the previous chapter. Jane found that being a professional meant she could not adopt a strict and anti-social form of professionalism and that

¹² As demonstrated above, the colonial era may have shaped his cultural belief in part.

relenting on that ideal put her at risk of unwanted attention, which even made her position as a teacher tenuous. Lawrence learnt that professionalism meant letting go of expectations from home while at school. In other words, Lawrence had the luxury of beginning with the assumption that he could assert a cultural practice, while Jane began with a strict interpretation of professionalism and toning it down had put her place at the school at risk.

In fact, younger female teachers in similar circumstances to Jane ultimately found themselves forced out of their jobs because “professionalism” was in practice more onerous for them than it was for men. Their professionalism encompassed all the work required in their jobs and the running of the household—“the double shift” (Macintyre 2014, 98)—which was impossible to sustain and a threat to their place at the school. Elizabeth, a young married teacher with a newborn baby in 2015, described her challenges at the school in terms that demonstrate the pressure domestic responsibilities could place on professional duties. She said neither her husband nor babysitter could be trusted to look after the child (and her husband seemed unwilling to learn) so the responsibility fell to her, which meant she occasionally had to miss classes and was often prevented from attending to her duties outside of class. It is a significant point, therefore, that Elizabeth and other early career teachers, who were often on single year teaching contracts, were assessed for re-appointment on their commitment to classes *and* extra-curricular activities. Elizabeth and at least one other female teacher did not have their contracts renewed by the Education Authority because of an apparent lack of commitment to duties outside the classroom. The other teacher also cited responsibilities to family for failing to keep up with her extra-curricular responsibilities. The situation led one senior male teacher to conclude that boarding schools were simply inappropriate places for young female teachers. That is, they could not fit professional life around their obligations to family until they were older and more settled.

Challenging the paradox

Although the vision of professional conduct produced in everyday life at school included, for women, a significant measure of labour for the home and family, a woman’s professional identity nevertheless legitimised her place in her school’s formal spaces. Here I show how female teachers used those public spaces, staff meetings specifically, to assert themselves in school decision-making. Moreover, while women emphasised diligent rule-following behaviour to assert themselves, this is not to suggest that the disciplinary technologies of formal schooling I described in chapter 6 were more effective on women than men; women also drew on shared cultural practices to challenge their marginalisation from school decision-making.

Given that a teacher was expected to follow official procedures and protocols, contributing to staff meetings was an expression of a teacher's professional self. According to one teacher at Tenaru:

the special thing about staff meeting[s] is we always share our discussion together. That's one thing. And if we have special agendas to discuss then that's where we jump into discuss other issues.... Whereas outside [the staff meeting] it is more like [an] informal way of sharing information or discussion with other teachers. Like staff meeting is more formal.... It's more professional when we talk about anything in staff meeting[s].

He added that staff meetings allowed teachers to reach consensus about disagreements in the administration of the school. Indeed, I witnessed female teachers (senior ones in particular) participate in staff meetings on roughly equal terms with their male colleagues. Mary even addressed the inappropriate behaviour of a male colleague directly in front of him at a staff meeting.

Female teachers' success in asserting themselves in staff meetings was dependent on the way staff meetings were understood within the broadly consistent cultural mechanisms for achieving reconciliation and disentangling troubled relationships I described in chapter 4. Mary gave an enlightening account of the staff meetings at her previous school that allowed her to assert herself as a professional. The parallels to the reconciliation ceremonies that disentangle conflicts between people embedded in enduring relationships to each other are stark:

in the staff meeting, it's inside the staffroom, it is finished there. When we go out whatever we talked about in there, it is finished in there. We leave and it's over, I mean it's normal. It is hard for us to get cross... we will argue, that's what I mean, we will get angry with each other inside the staffroom when we have a staff meeting. But when we go out there is nothing. There is no anger and everything is finished. We go out, we shake hands, eat together, because we always have food after every staff meeting, after eating we story good, we laugh and everything is finished now.

It is noteworthy that at her previous school they shook hands, ate together, and left their anger behind—three essential components of reconciliations that mark the transformation of relationships between the conflicting parties and the resumption of normal social relations. In these reconciliation-like circumstances women could draw on their identities as teachers, which (on paper at least) put them on roughly equal terms with their male colleagues, to participate knowing that there was little risk to their relationships with other teachers at the school.

Parenthetically, I note here that even students applied the logic of reconciliations to formal gatherings. At one class graduation feast at Avu'avu I watched a procession of public apologies for misdemeanours throughout the year. Then, when the feast ended, the boys left and the girls cleaned up.

Thus teachers generally agreed on the reconciliation-like format that should govern a staff meeting. In practice, however, they drew on other shared cultural practices to achieve that format. In this way female teachers could draw on their culture to challenge their colleagues to perform their official duties. I make this case with a close analysis of Mary's and Grace's perspectives on shame and the impacts it has had on their professional lives.

In the moment individuals in any culture feel shame they are acutely aware of their failure to uphold the culturally acceptable patterns and habits of everyday life (Probyn 2004, 328). This is socially productive if individuals become more aware of the social obligations they should maintain with others and resolve to uphold them as a result. The ethnographic record in Melanesia shows the culturally specific ways in which shame has governed interpersonal relationships and helped maintain social cohesion (Hogbin 1947; Fajans 1983; Epstein 1984; White and Watson-Gegeo 1990, 16). Although difficult to generalise across the region, shame appears to be felt particularly acutely in relations between men and women because it reinforces socially acceptable behaviour between them and even where they are allowed to move in a community (Eves et al. 2018a, 25–26). In fact, shame abounds in many contemporary settings and concerns in Melanesia, and its effects have often created added difficulties for women. For instance, several studies of gender violence across Melanesia, including research carried out specifically in Bougainville, Malaita and Honiara (Eves et al. 2018a, 2018b), have observed a range of contemporary experiences of shame on women. Elsewhere in Melanesia, women subjected to sexual violence have been blamed for the shame they caused for their family (Newland 2016, 60); men have responded violently after feeling ashamed of their own failure to perform a stereotypical male role or because a spouse had publicly not lived up to hers (Gibbs 2016, 134 and 147); and shame has prevented women from reporting violence from their husbands to police or leaving abusive relationships (Eves et al. 2018b, 36).

Similarly, Mary cited shame as a barrier to her participation at her current school—not the one with the reconciliation-like staff meetings. In contrast to the reconciliation-like staff meetings of her previous school, she remembered an incident at her current school in which a male teacher became angry about something she said in a staff meeting because the teacher knew the issue she raised applied to him personally. Resolving the incident was not easy, and it affected her willingness to contribute to solving problems at the new school. The story went like this:

I go and apologise for what I said [in the staff meeting] but when he, he responds he shows that he does not accept my apology, so I retreat. I stay at the house until he comes to apologise and say he was angry too. So yes, it affects me when I try to solve

problems. Many times I have, I have tried, I have gone, just to say sorry, then [the person] has not accepted and I feel shame too. So I retreat. So that time last year the principal had to intervene... but for me to initiate it... I feel shame, I do not feel free to do it.

Not having the reconciliation-like processes around the staff meeting saw both teachers feel shame. The man felt it during the staff meeting when his shortcoming was revealed, Mary when her apology was rejected. At staff meetings in 2015 I saw the effect of the shame she felt in the experience above; Mary retreated farther than she wanted from the public space of the school. Thus shame worked to force her from the school's formal public space and into an informal, private space where domesticity was expected of her.

However, and crucially, although Mary constrained herself in the public domain of staff meetings at one of the case study schools, she was far from silent. She was engaged and vocal in staff meetings; as I noted above, I once watched Mary find a way to address a male colleague's professional failing at a staff meeting. To do it she broached her colleague's indiscretion indirectly by talking to the principal about the issue in abstract terms while the man at fault was in the room. Such constrained agency seemed to work in that instance, as the male teacher admitted his error and outlined how he would fix it. On another occasion I watched Mary use shame directly in a staff meeting. As the meeting progressed her frustration grew to the point that she stood up and walked out, which was intended to make the teacher running the meeting feel shame by communicating her disagreement to him. Another female teacher present certainly understood Mary's behaviour that way. She said:

even some of the teachers, you saw Mary, she had to stand up, I mean she gave an excuse, to fix the roof of her house, but indirectly, how I see it [she thought] it was just a waste of time to sit in this meeting so she left. That is how I see it. She left and never came back because she saw that it was no use, just a waste of time kind of thinking she had. So you saw her questioning the chair. And the chair was a little bit upset at her question too. So she said "lots of cases you have investigated but how come you [call a] meeting for just the incident [last week]. How about all these other cases?"

Talking in the staff meeting had not worked, so Mary refused to participate any further and left the room in disgust. I could not ascertain if her strategy had the intended effect on the teacher in question, but it certainly caused the other female teacher to reflect on the man's role and his capacity to carry it out. Moreover, the discussion above showed, first, that women could put themselves on an equal footing with men as professionals in formal staff meetings and, second, that teachers understood staff meetings as the socially appropriate avenue for all teachers to speak their minds, which suggests the man in question likely got the message.

Culture, shame and gender were central to the way Grace understood her agency as a professional to be so limited that she could not perform some of her official duties. Teachers and students alike held Grace in extremely high regard. She was a head of department, experienced in that role and committed to classroom teaching. Several students described how inspiring they found her and I did not hear such praise for any other teacher. At first glance she would seem to possess the social capital among her colleagues that would permit her to make use of her professional identity. Yet our conversations about her participation in her school's decision-making processes revolved around what she described as a "fear of crossing boundaries," which Mary had indicated could lead to shame. This fear of crossing boundaries meant she defined the agency of a head of department quite narrowly. Grace said:

from my department, I, I talk on, in terms of class and assessment. So that is from where I come from. In terms of my subject I'll tell them on what needs to be done and if they are doing it how well they are doing it. Ok that is, like, directly related to the curriculum or the subject. But with other general duties I feel that it is, and for a teacher that is not in my department, I feel that it is the responsibility of the deputy or principal to communicate with them. It's just on the fear of crossing boundaries... we can only suggest but we cannot advise them on what they should do because they should know as teachers. It's like we expect them to know these things, whether they know it or not.

Her position as a department head allowed her only to correct teachers about their classroom practices if they were in her department, which is to say she had considerable agency within her narrowly defined role. The constraint, as she saw it, on her agency was that professionals would already know their "general duties," which were mostly responsibilities Grace was not specifically charged with enforcing. Therefore, she said, advising teachers of their roles threatened to cause conflict and produce shame because it crossed a boundary. In her opinion she was not a legitimate authority for "general duties" despite the enormous respect she commanded as a teacher.

However, Grace *did* have official responsibilities for some "general duties." Specifically, she held some responsibilities for her school's disciplinary process. Briefly, to perform this role she needed all her colleagues, not only those in her department, to update punishment lists diligently. Despite some efforts to remind her colleagues to do that they rarely did and she did not have sufficient information with which to do her job. She eventually abandoned her effort entirely by complaining to the deputy principal and letting the principal himself take over her role. In making that complaint she had followed the school's chain of command, as a good teacher and professional would, and thus had not crossed a boundary. But she had refrained from acting on her own initiative when the task was her official duty.

Grace couched her professionalism within a relational logic that gave a cultural dimension to her fear of crossing boundaries. Thus, Grace said:

if I cross boundaries and it is not well received by another person then that would create maybe disagreement or conflict. And so [I] just [try] to maintain that [good relationship] between me and my colleague or maybe those in authority.

It paralleled life in the village:

in a family if, if something happens then the parents would take the lead in resolving the situation. If it is in the village then it would be the village elders. And so in this situation [the school] I am looking at those in authority under certain, that are given the responsibility over certain issues in the school.

She said that, just like at home, crossing boundaries in professional relationships would lead to conflict and put those relationships at risk. Thus, it was those teachers empowered by their senior positions who had the authority to resolve issues at school.

Echoing the point, above, that many encounters with cultural difference revolved around gender relations, Grace stated explicitly that the situation was particularly fraught with her male colleagues. She said:

I need to be more mindful of the way I carry myself around among the men. In terms of, if there are all men on the [couches in the staffroom] and I came in then the way they, just in the way they talk, um, or in the way we communicate I have to be mindful that whatever I say is not, does not um, what's the right word? Is not offending to anyone. Or if I am the only female working around here sometimes the men they say things and they are not mindful of us the females even though I am out there at my table, whether they are aware [I am] up there or not, that just the way they talk maybe some of the conversations are not so good and so I have to, maybe, walk away.

In this way, professionalism, which was imbued with a logic from life in the village, required her to adjust her own behaviour. In the quotation above she described two circumstances. In the first she said she must adjust her behaviour so men would not feel shame, which also echoed the female students and teachers above whose policing of their own behaviour forced them out of public life at school. In the second circumstance the men did not show her the same courtesy she must show to them. She did acknowledge that being a professional provided a framework that helped mitigate this a little bit: "I would say, it's not a big challenge because after all we understand our responsibilities in the school and our duties." But professionalism was not enough to get her colleagues to update the punishment lists so she could perform her role.

Importantly also, while characteristically modest in the quotation ("so I have to, maybe, walk away"), just like Mary had done, Grace said she could physically leave the relatively public space of the

staffroom if she did not approve of the way the men were behaving. I interpret this as a deliberate strategy intended to shame the men into behaving appropriately because I later witnessed Grace attempt to use shame in this way. Grace, two male teachers and I were sitting in the staffroom after lunch. Politely, at least it seemed to me, Grace tried to begin a conversation about the disciplinary process that she would ultimately give up trying to perform. Shame descended over us as both male teachers refused to engage her. One of the men stared at his lap and tried to ignore her. When she pressed further, without even looking up he quickly referred her to the two teachers charged with organising work duties and tried to look busy with his marking. The second man looked down at his hands, refused to even utter a word and left the room shortly after. Not sure what was going on I made eye contact with Grace who shot me a look that recalled the conversation I outlined above. She had caused shame simply by talking about an important part of the school's program, which a teacher with a role in that program would be entitled to do.

I understand Grace's use of shame as a reflection of the social order at the schools in which female teachers in particular defined their responsibilities in formal arenas narrowly, but then in more informal venues generally defined their responsibilities expansively to include domestic work at home. Therefore, shame was an important means, that teachers from a range of cultures and language groups understood, through which Grace saw the limits on her agency as a professional and simultaneously sought to overcome them. Although the disciplinary regime that taught the values and comportment of the formal sector was one means to overcome their marginalisation in public, women also had agency, albeit a constrained form of it, beyond that regime.

Resisting silence

Two further examples illustrate the connections between the avenues through which women find agency at school and the post-conflict settings outside them. Firstly, although I have shown that the cultural production of gender roles made female students take up domestic duties within their official responsibilities, when left to themselves inside their dormitories several female students described the relative freedom they had. A female student in Solomon Islands contrasted this with how she behaved around her male peers. She said she felt free to talk about the Tension with her female friends and laughed about how easy disagreements were to solve with other girls. She even joked that she could break strict cultural prohibitions against swearing in the process: "if she swore at me I would swear at her and it's no problem." However, she could not be so flippant with male students because she had seen that they can rush to anger and take a long time to settle down. While living with other female students had broken down barriers between them, her experience of

gender relations seemed to have done little to shift how she expected men to behave. In fact, she accepted she would have to police her own behaviour (by not speaking freely about the Tension) out of fear of male anger and violence. Her perspective calls to mind the circumstances that prohibit female participation in reconciliation processes and which make refusing to talk about the past the safest option for them (Fangalasuu et al. 2011).

However, her perspective also illustrates that living with her culturally diverse female peers, away from the threat of violence, had created a social context in which it was possible to put aside cultural strictures they all agreed they had in common, such as swearing and talking about the violent past. With schooling experiences like these, it is perhaps unsurprising that initiatives like the ICTJ-supported workshops that led to the women's submission to the Solomon Islands TRC (Fangalasuu et al. 2011) were so successful (chapter 4). The workshops gave women a degree of separation from the social relationships that enforce a regime of domesticity on them and posed a real risk to their physical safety (see also Spark 2017).

Hannah, a teacher whose perspective is my final example, was admired for the quality of her work and wise (meaning Christian) counsel on school related issues. In other words, she was admired for being an educated person. One colleague said:

I came to understand that [she] is a woman of faith [and]... all of the children especially [her] girls became successful. They are all university students... coming here, [she has been] one of the people I have really admired in her commitment... [she is] still bringing out the spirit that was here and that is very important for us to continue with that... in terms of work commitment.

Achieving the credit, respect and social capital for being a woman of faith required her to get her children to university and remain committed to her work. It gave her the authority to talk at public events like staff meetings (even while she felt, just as Mary did, that gender relations at school put limits on her participation in those events).

Hannah understood her professionalism in almost the same way as Grace, although she described it as "respect for authority." Her respect for authority was relational and it meant not only deference to individuals in more senior positions, another typical component of shame in Melanesia (Sykes 1995, 191), but also conflict avoidance with colleagues with whom she was on an equal footing professionally. In fact, she stated explicitly that the respect for authority silenced her:

for example if you have something, I don't like something that you've done, ya. And um—but then I respect you too as my colleague—and so sometimes I just keep it. I will

not come tell you. But then maybe one day you make me so angry and that's when it comes out. But when it's still yet that we could have solved it and talked about it that respect I have for you as a colleague, because we are equal in a way as colleague, it means I will not come right out and say, "David I don't like the way you say this and that" because I just keep silent.... And sometimes it's even worse [between] women and men.

Her deference took the form of reluctance to speak out about problems she saw in the school, which she said women experienced more acutely than men. Thus, like Grace, Hannah was silenced by her social relations with her male colleagues.

However, Hannah differed from Grace in one crucial respect. When Hannah considered the origins of her respect for authority, she said: "maybe it's because of we are still in this kind, what can I say, cultural—cultural or is it the colonial or I don't know—but maybe the respect we have of authority." She started to attribute the respect for authority to culture but then stopped herself and acknowledged its colonial origins. Her uncertainty rings true given that although shame has been only one of many responses to colonisation and its salience has varied over time (see Munro 2018, 179; Bashkow 2006, 13), it was nevertheless a quintessential experience of colonisation in which colonisers the world over taught that they were at their core superior to their colonised subjects (Marshall 2006; Munro 2018, 98–99; Thaman 1993). Formal education, as I showed in chapter 5, was one means to achieve those ends.

To draw out the implications of Hannah's experiences for my argument about the formation of enemy friendships, Hannah stated explicitly that she would not insist on practicing all aspects of the *kastom* from her home while living at the school. We discussed the steps she had taken to discipline one of the male teachers, which had involved raising the issue of his behaviour with the principal through the proper mechanisms, although with less vigour than she would have done had she not already felt silenced. When I pointed out that the steps she had taken would seem to violate what she had told me was the *kastom* practice from her home, she corrected me, saying: "maybe not *kastom*, because that *kastom* applies to mine only. But then it [is] also embedded in my silence to say bad things about people." She had simultaneously refused to apply her specific *kastom* practices to her relationship with her colleague *and* identified her refusal to say bad things about people as an element of her *kastom*.

A further connection between school and broader post-conflict circumstances revolves around Hannah's experience during a fight at her school between a teacher and a student, which many teachers and students witnessed. She said first: "once again I think the Melanesian thing inside me

took over in a way in [regards to] solving problems. I feel like going in and saying how we should be to bring [the teacher and student] together or to talk to them.” The “Melanesian thing inside me” was a reference to the role of women as peace-makers, as described above. Hannah’s first reaction was to perform that role. In the next breath, however, she said: “but then I was on the reserve because the principal was there, the deputy was there, and all that.” Thus instead of becoming the peace-maker she chose to be a teacher by deferring to the principal and deputy’s authority. On the one hand, in asserting the agency of a professional teacher she had silenced a role for women as peace-makers, which in the context of the ever-present threat of male violence could have been important for female students to see. On the other hand, she recognised that the school’s authority figures were present and deferred to them, as a professional would do. By refusing to intervene, then, she enacted a version of professionalism that, if every member of the school community adhered to, would give her, other female teachers, and female student leaders an avenue to influence decision-making at school.

Conclusion

As female teachers and students in the five schools I studied learnt to accept violence from the men in their lives they also learnt to police their own behaviour, restrict their movement around the school campus to its more private spaces, and perform the bulk of the domestic labour. Through their everyday practices, teachers and students created a distinction between public and private spheres within schools that have historically been considered part of a male public space; female student leaders ultimately had greater responsibility for the domestic tasks at a school fete, for example, and female teachers and students included domesticity in their understandings of professionalism. This arrangement ultimately shaped what it meant for women and girls to call themselves teachers and students, respectively, and the ways they could act in those roles. In this way, for women it turned out that what constituted the domestic in their school contexts, as per Choi and Jolly’s (2014) concern, was a good deal of their professionalism. The evidence presented here shows the ways in which notions of the domestic entered notions of the professional, and vice versa; at least two teachers lost their jobs because they could not uphold both their duties to the school and their roles at home. Thus professionalism pulled in opposing directions simultaneously—towards more domestic labour and also to a place in a school’s public decision-making realm that male and female teachers acknowledged should be a space for women to participate on equal terms with their male colleagues. Female teachers utilised their professional identity in staff meetings when those staff meetings closely resembled cultural reconciliation

practices. Outside them, cultural and colonial logics around shame simultaneously constrained and enabled their agency.

In some respects, then, this chapter demonstrated in respect of gender a similar form of social reproduction to that described in the early critical ethnographies of schooling; schooling reproduced the gendered social order that marginalises women. Female students came to accept the presence of male violence at school and the agency they did have was often exercised from within the structural surrounds of that violence and a discourse of domesticity that set expectations on their behaviour.

However, I suggest the schools also produced the circumstances similar to those through which women could mobilise to effect peace-building during the Crisis and Tension, and come together to prepare a submission to the SITRC. The dormitories were for the most part free of male violence and female students were able to mediate across their cultural differences and discover cultural practices they shared. Hannah's refusal to intervene to resolve a fight between a teacher and a student was likewise an assertion of a more equitable vision of the social order at school and what professional life should be outside it. In this way, the cultural production was not reproducing the existing social order in which women have been marginalised in public life, but the means to overcome it, which Spark (2011, 2017) has shown is happening in PNG's urban centres.

It is significant, too, that the fight Hannah refused to resolve took place at the athletics carnival at St Joseph's, Tenaru, which I discuss in chapter 9. In chapter 9 I will show how students adopted a role-following rather than an ethnic interpretation of that conflict. They measured the protagonists against the constructs of educated personhood I have described in chapter 6 and in this chapter. At the carnival, if models of educated personhood offered an alternative interpretation for students and teachers, it was also because they had learned ways to engage with cultural difference at school. Much of that engagement occurred around relationships between men and women in a professional context, as I have shown here. In the next chapter I discuss what the explicit cultural programming activities the schools undertook contributed to the process.

Chapter 8 The “Enemy” in Enemy Friends: “Area” Groups and Cultural Shows

Thus far the chapters on schooling have dealt more explicitly with the “friend” than “enemy” part of George Gray’s concept of enemy friends. Classroom lessons at Tenaru demonstrated the potential for the refusals that respect the relationships between people to become a part of classroom knowledge (chapter 5). Then the educated person constructed by the pedagogy of everyday life at school was a framework around which teachers and students reached broad agreement (chapter 6). Even though women experienced educated personhood in markedly different terms to men, teachers and students still found elements of common culture as they navigated through interruptions to the gendered social order (chapter 7). In this chapter, I illustrate how the teachers and students also produced the “enemy” in enemy friends during everyday life at school.

Recall that there is now a body of evidence linking schooling to the outbreak and recurrence of conflict (Bellino and Williams 2017, 3; King 2014; Smith 2010). As a consequence, the impacts of education policies, schools, curricular material and classroom practices are thought to sit on a continuum between education’s negative, conflict promoting “face,” and its positive, peace-promoting one (Bush and Saltarelli 2000). Issues of identity usually sit towards the negative end of the continuum because scholarship has concentrated on situations where group identities appear antagonistic and insurmountable (E. Cole and Murphy 2011, 338; Tint 2010). Any potential for schooling to transform conflict-related identities has thus become a key question for education and transitional justice, but one which the field has yet to investigate outside contexts of protracted identity-based civil violence (E. Cole 2015).

Also remember that there were multiple identities at play in both the Bougainville Crisis and Solomon Islands Tension. Secession from PNG drew on pan-Bougainvillean sentiments and provincial/island affiliations played some role in the Tension as well. Underneath these broader affiliations, in both cases, an “ideology of landownership” (Filer 2007) also defined boundaries between people. As Golub (2014, 177), quoting Filer (2007, 161), explains: the ideology “‘asserts that ‘clans’ and ‘land groups’ are essentially the same thing’ and that ‘these ‘customary landowning groups’ are the basic building blocks of Melanesian society.’” This ideology has been in development particularly in places where extractive resource projects have commenced, including in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. The ideology has been a threat to the importance of extended kinship relationships to social life (Filer 1997, 2007; Bainton 2009; Allen 2018) and even the openness to

others that helped prevent further violence during the Tension (McDougall 2016; Stritecky 2001). Additionally, other multi-cultural institutions in Melanesia in which people live away from their villages and kin have been shown to sharpen regional identities (Errington and Gewertz 2004, 95; Munro 2018, 123–40; Syndicus 2018). For instance, in contemporary PNG universities, Students Associations, whose memberships are often coterminous with regional boundaries, have become venues where an attachment to place can take on an extra-local character. In the process it becomes possible for people to make broad generalisations about exchange practices, for example, which in turn become essentialised traits of specific provinces and a framework through which students understand the attitudes and behaviours of their peers (Syndicus 2018, 115–33).

In this chapter I trace the development and effects of a vision of, in the students' terms, "real culture." First, I explain how the schools organised students into "area" groups, which, among other functions, organised performances at "cultural shows." Second, I explain how students considered the cultural shows *the* opportunity in the school program to engage with cultural differences, effectively separating the shows from the regular pedagogy of everyday life at school. Then I detail the cultural production of a vision of "real culture" that situated that culture in the village, the past, and with the elders. This image of "real culture," I suggest, made the vast majority of students into "persons in waiting" in regard to cultural knowledge (Jeffery 2010; Bellino 2017). This position of "waithood" had some positive effects for students because they could use it to maintain their connections to their kin in the village; they *could* become knowledgeable about their culture, they just had not *yet*. They could also, as I describe with an example from Mabiri High School, learn to apply the logics of reconciliation across cultural differences. I argue that "real culture" and the affirmation of reconciliation as the place-based form of transitional justice encouraged students to respect customary sources of authority that broke down during the two civil conflicts. However, while "real culture" was a measuring stick against which students could assess their performances at cultural shows, I conclude that their cultural production of it also left the students susceptible to the "ideology of landownership" that obscures from their view their elders' expansive connections and openness to others.

Area groups

The demographics of each school shaped the composition of the area groups that were the basic unit that participated in cultural programming activities. Area groups were made up of students from either a single cultural/linguistic area or several geographically adjacent ones, and the composition of

each group to a significant extent determined how close students could get to “real culture” during their cultural performances.

Although their names varied from school to school, area groups have been a part of life at boarding schools for decades. School administrations have changed the composition of the groups based on changes to the demographics of the school population, but only rarely. For example, the “Islanders” group at St Joseph’s Tenaru only formed in 2013 but Su’u had not changed its groups since their inception in the 1980s. Tenaru’s area groups, which it called “cultural” groups, are shown in Figure 8.1. Figure 8.2 shows the “ethnic” groups at Su’u and Figure 8.3 shows Mabiri’s area groups. Tarlena had area groups too, but these were largely inactive during my time at the school, although the Siwai students hosted a small fundraising event. This was largely true of Avu’avu also; its area groups comprised students from different regions of Guadalcanal and formed for the school’s cultural show and then disbanded immediately afterwards.

Figures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 demonstrate the arbitrariness of the area groups at all three schools. For instance, Su’u had so few students from outside Malaita that all these students were put in the “Southern and Outer” ethnic group, which was primarily for students from South Malaita and its other islands. Additionally, at Tenaru, Su’u and Mabiri, students whose parents came from different areas were allowed to swap between different groups. One student that had transferred to Su’u from a secondary school on Guadalcanal, which he said was a deliberate attempt to learn about his “other half,” joined the Are’are ethnic group even though he had been President of the Guadalcanal group at his previous school. He was enjoying learning to speak Are’are but admitted he had tried to hide his Guadalcanal origins at first due to fears deriving from the Tension. Reflecting the proximity of Tenaru to Honiara, students there would often say that they were from more than one place; one student even said she had three homes because her father was from Guadalcanal and her mother from Malaita and Western Province.

The maps also suggest the different scales at which identities might be formed when students do work for their area groups. Whereas the area groups at Su’u and Mabiri were formed largely within Malaita and Bougainville, respectively, the students in Tenaru’s groups came from further afield. Additionally, Figure 8.1 even indicates significant variation in the composition of Tenaru’s groups; the “Islanders” could certainly not speak a common language but this might have been possible for some students within Malaita’s sub-provincial area groups.

Figure 8.1: Regions represented by “cultural” groups at Tenaru

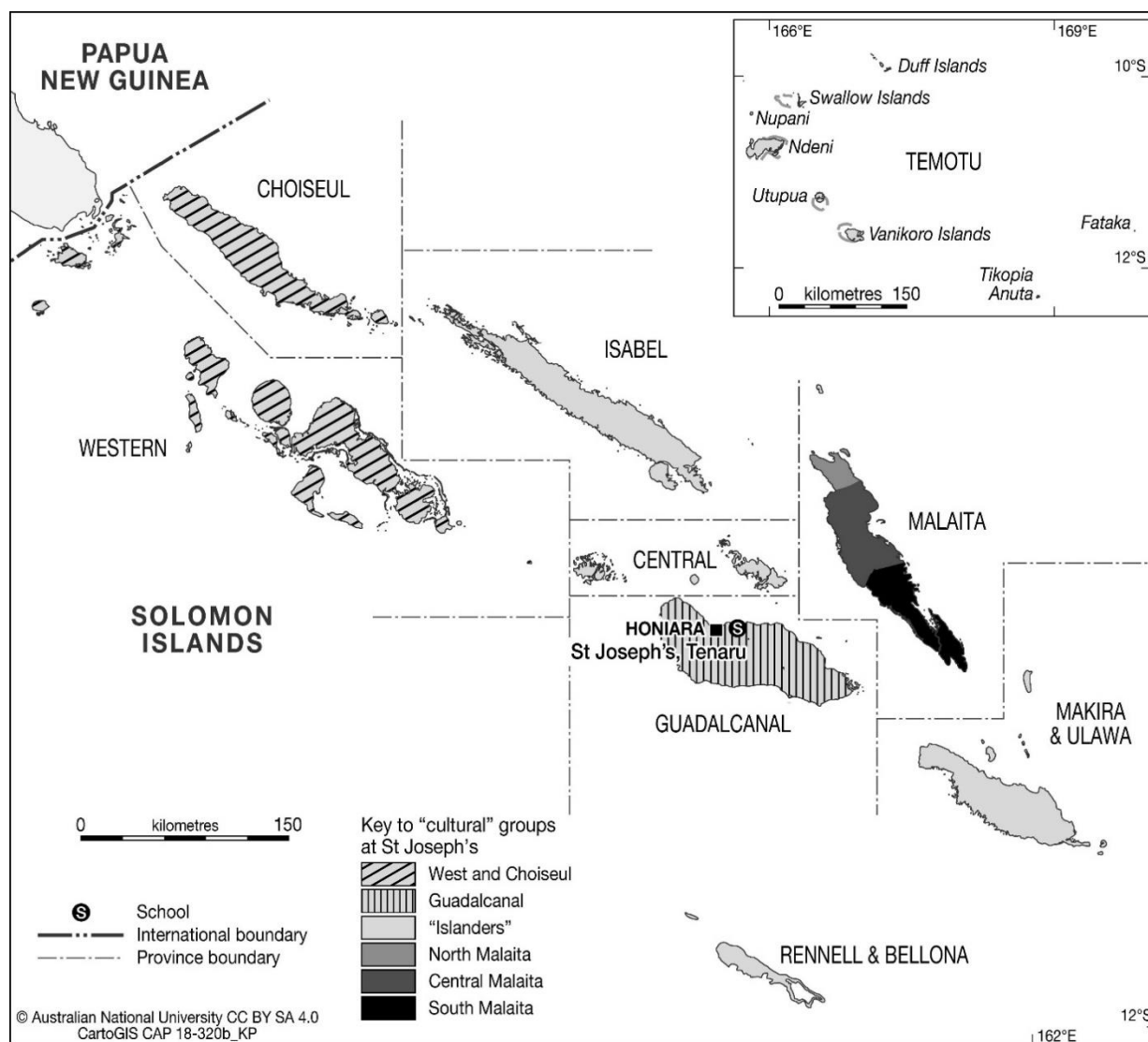


Figure 8.2: Regions represented by “ethnic” groups at Su’u

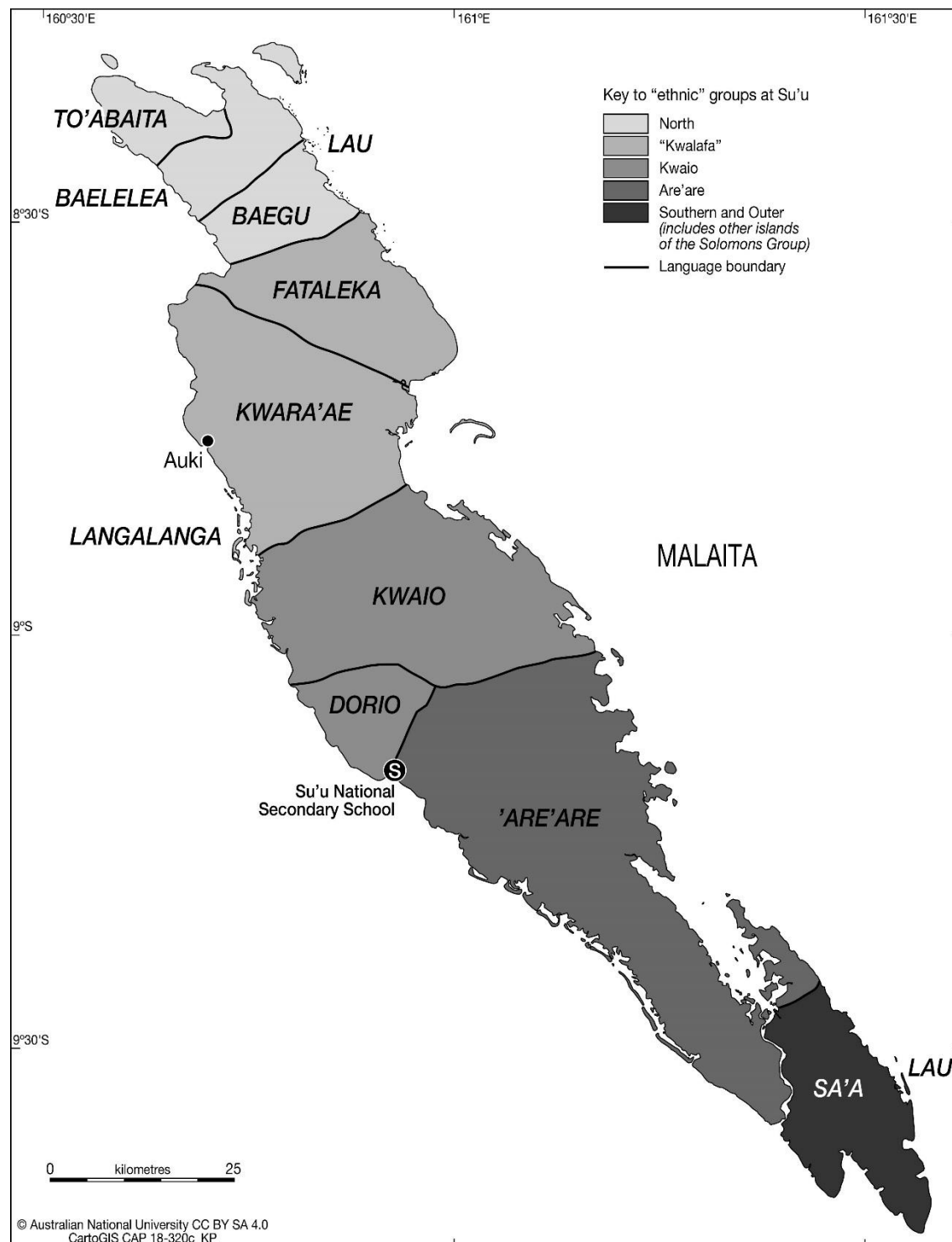
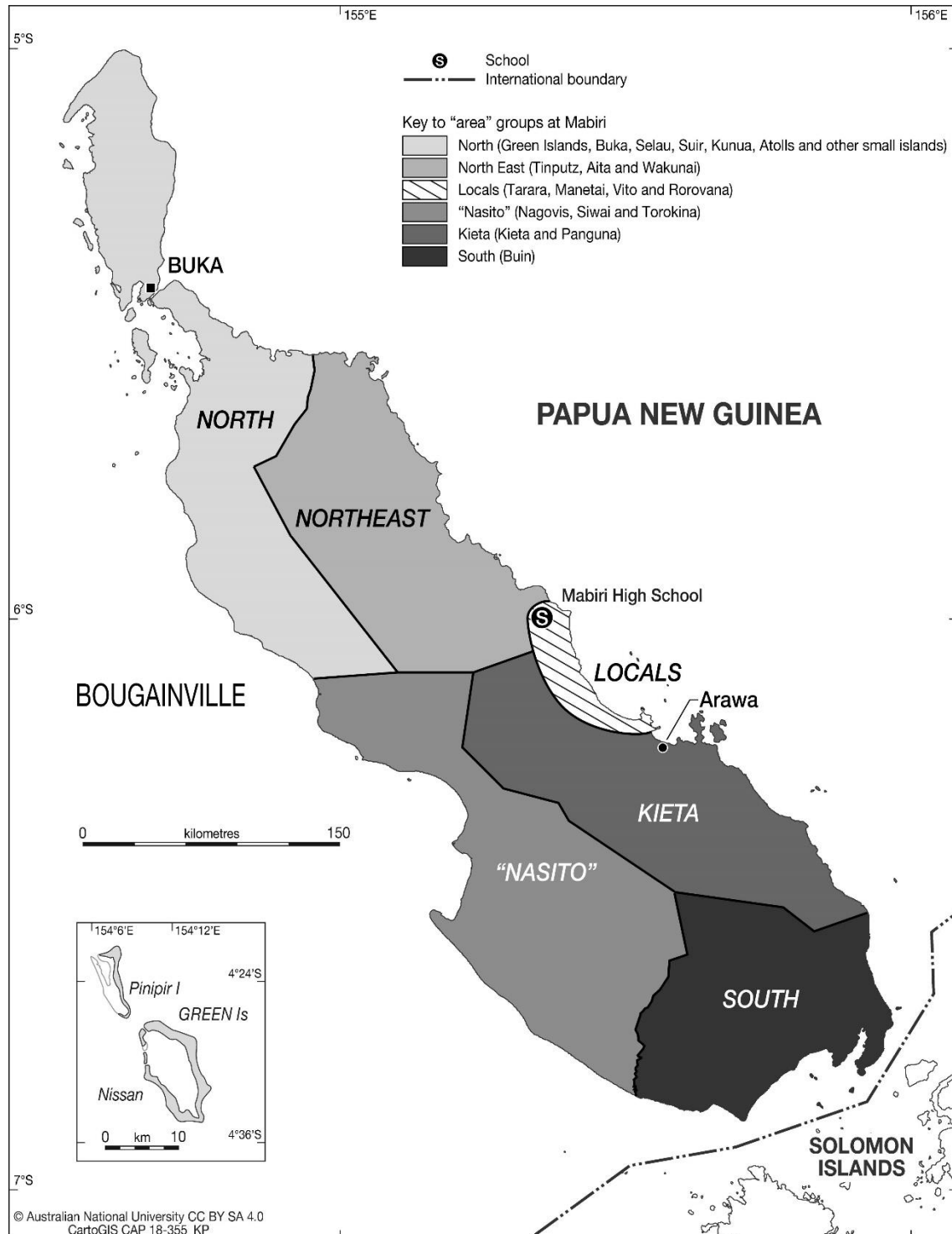


Figure 8.3: Regions represented by “area” groups at Mabiri



The work the students performed in their area groups was similar at all schools. The groups had leadership teams, such as the President and Vice-President (and Pastor at Su'u), who were supervised by a *wantok* on the teaching staff. At Su'u all groups and supervisors were overseen by the school's pastor too. The groups organised performances for the cultural show (discussed below), held feasts to welcome new leaders and farewell graduating students, raised funds for those feasts, and took turns arranging religious ceremonies. The area groups at Su'u, Mabiri and Tenaru had gardens on which students grew food for their feasts but gardens had not been assigned to Tarlena's area groups in 2016, although they had been in the past.

Area groups were not, however, the major formal unit around which students were organised. In fact, Hannah at Tenaru (from chapter 6) said the only times that students congregated in their cultural areas were when they raised funds for their area groups or prepared for the school's cultural show. Nor was the work of area group matrons and patrons particularly taxing, said one matron at Tenaru. She merely had to check on the progress of her group's preparations for the cultural show and school fete (see chapter 9). Individual classes, religious groups, and sports teams, whose memberships were not restricted by culture or language, performed many of the same functions as area groups and ensured that friendships between students formed across a variety of cultural differences. Yet the work of area groups is important to emphasise because it was through them that students participated in cultural shows, formed their ideas about "real culture," and positioned themselves in relation to those ideas.

Engaging with difference at cultural shows

Cultural shows have long been annual events on school calendars and the major responsibility for area group leaders. In fact, the cultural show was one of the first activities Tarlena implemented when the school opened after the Crisis. It was an early effort to bridge gaps created during the conflict. At cultural shows the area groups perform dances or dramas that explain some part of their culture to their peers, as well as to any parents and onlookers from nearby communities in attendance. Mabiri's cultural show was the only show I was able to observe directly. Students revelled in the chance to share a part of their own culture and learn about others', and their performances accorded well with the accounts I heard from students and teachers at other schools. Each area group performed a cultural item, as the students from Buka, in the "North" area group, are doing in Figure 8.4. The subtle differences in dress and dance, and listening to Bougainville's different languages were highlights, just as they were highlights for students at other schools.

Figure 8.4: Students from Buka dancing at Mabiri's cultural show



The first point to emphasise about students' understanding of cultural shows is that the shows broke the typical pattern for how teachers and students engaged with cultural difference; in everyday life teachers and students at all the schools I visited learnt not to insist on cultural practices specific to their homes at the same time as they discovered and enforced the practices they had in common. Students at all schools often remarked that they did follow *kastom* in everyday life at school. Refusing to swear at the opposite sex, and especially against another student's sibling of the opposite sex, were held up as exemplars of this behaviour. While swearing was subject to a more general prohibition, one Tenaru student added another example:

like for my culture...for a boy to cross a girl's leg would be against *kastom*.... [but] as everyone starts to know each other and they get to know each other well and so they just, they don't really consider the cultural, um, their *kastoms* and stuff. And when I first came here I saw one of the boys just like walk over a girl's leg and I was very shocked to see that. But as time goes on then I understand that "oh we are all from different places and they have different *kastom* and cultures," so I just accept it.

This student discovered some specific differences between her Are'are (Malaita, Solomon Islands) *kastom* and the practices of her peers from other provinces. But she did not try to assert the practices from her home. Instead, as she built closer relationships to her peers, she learnt not to insist on them.

However, this situation was reversed at the cultural show. Students reported that these shows were the only occasions when they could draw attention to, and revel in, the specific cultural practices of different places. Jessica, one of Tenaru's area group leaders, said:

I think one event when cultures are shown is the cultural show. That's when we are able to see the different cultures from the different cultural groups. So that's where we can differentiate that this is Guale, this is Malaita, Western Province.

Cultural shows generated great excitement and interest because they were *the* opportunities to draw attention to cultural difference, which in this case she situated at the island and provincial level.

Drawing attention to cultural differences had a profound effect, according to one of Jessica's fellow area group leaders. She said it was learning to live together at boarding school that was bringing students together:

my opinion about education; it has brought us together...I mean I have heard stories about Malaitans having difficulty moving to Guadalcanal. But because of, now we have learnt to live together, [and to] understand each other because of education. Even though we come from different cultures, but [we are] able to live together.

Her comment about having heard stories of Malaitans having difficulty moving to Guadalcanal resonates strongly with the drivers of the Tension as well as suggesting on-going discord in the period since. Importantly, however, the stories she had heard were incongruous with her experiences at boarding school:

Student: At first I lived with my parents and went to school. So I did not understand the other students from other places but when I came I learnt, was able to learn, about others too. Like I know about the lives of other different students at school here. We are not the same, we come from different places. It was interesting for me when I started boarding because I learnt lots of different things.

David: For example?

Student: Like at Cultural Night. I even learnt a little bit of language too. It is the first time, I mean, I now know two or three words of other cultures, I mean other places.

Amidst the pedagogy of everyday life in the boarding school more generally she singled out the cultural show as the opportunity to see expressions of cultural difference.

As much as students, teachers, and spectators generally enjoyed the chance to learn about other cultures, the experience could also confirm stereotypes they held of others. Stereotypes of people from Buin in South Bougainville depict them as prone to aggression and violence. Following a particularly aggressive gesture from one archer during their performance (Figure 8.5), the woman

standing next to me turned to the woman next to her and said “they really look like Buin now.” Instead of attributing the sometimes violent behaviour of students from Buin to the effects of the Crisis and the persistence of violence in Buin (the local-level “Konou Crisis” was only reconciled in 2011) the violence was attributed to an alleged fundamentally violent character of a group of people.

Teachers and students could also build on regional stereotypes in everyday life at school. One teacher in Bougainville described how a normal lesson was derailed when differences between students from two areas, one in Central and the other in North Bougainville, erupted. Students from the respective groups physically rearranged their desks and chairs to band together. And all students in that episode expressed an anti-PNG sentiment when they found they could all agree that all people who were not “full” Bougainvillean should leave Bougainville. Likewise, one Tarlena student from South Bougainville said her attitude about people from North and Central Bougainville had solidified in her experience of gender relations at school. Sarah, who in the previous chapter described how she had to behave like Mother Mary at her previous school, used that experience to support a positive view of her region of Bougainville relative to others. One female teacher at Su’u was blunt in her assessment of Malaitans and drew on a pervasive, if inaccurate, trope in Solomon Islands (see Kabutaulaka 2001). She thought it was better for her security that men outnumbered women on the teaching staff because they would be able to protect her from aggressive students. Nevertheless it was cultural shows that gave students and teachers the most explicit opportunity to learn about their own cultures and those of their peers.

Figure 8.5: Students from Buin performing during Mabiri’s cultural show



Proximity to “real culture”

A second important point to note about cultural shows is that as students planned, rehearsed, and performed their acts they developed and discussed their own ideas about what they described to me as “real culture.” “Real culture” was located in the students’ homes in rural areas (see Gooberman-Hill 1999) because they perceived that the further away they were from home the less authenticity their performances had as demonstrations of “real culture.” Thus the schools located in rural areas were better equipped in regards to the components of educated personhood relating to *kastom* than schools in or close to Honiara, the latter having area groups made up of students from much further afield.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from schools close to Honiara, the more local composition of the student population at Avu’avu meant that the area groups that formed for its cultural show were comprised of students from different parts of Guadalcanal. One Avu’avu student even referred to the cultural show as “Island night” and said it was a chance to demonstrate both an island identity and the variation within it rather than a national one. Moreover, several Avu’avu students embraced the learning experience cultural shows afforded them; another student argued that it would be motivation for students to learn more from their elders:

[at the] next cultural night [they will try to] perform well too, try their best to win the prize.... they will go home on the June holidays [and] on holidays they will ask about their songs and other *kastom* activities for their performance. Same as us [in the East Guadalcanal group].

One student at Avu’avu had been so interested and had researched so much about his culture with the chiefs at home that his peers had nicknamed him “chief,” and, he said, he thought they had begun treating him somewhat like one. They deferred to his cultural knowledge and had also asked him to help resolve disputes when they arose.

Experiences like these were notably different from experiences at National Secondary Schools in Honiara. Presley was in a strong position to make this point. He had participated in Avu’avu’s cultural show in 2015 and one at the NSS on Guadalcanal (not a case study school) he had attended in 2014. At the NSS the students had to work hard to find common ground across Guadalcanal’s constituent cultures, which in his judgement prevented them from “winning” the cultural show. By contrast, he described how he felt performing with students from his own locality at Avu’avu:

when I wore *kabilato*,¹³ and we danced, I felt that culture was strong. We tried to reproduce what our ancestors had done. So when I dress in *kabilato* I feel “oh, this is true. This is the traditional clothes my ancestors used.”

Avu’avu’s proximity to the village had made it possible for the cultural performance in which he participated to achieve a high level of authenticity.

Note also the historicity of *kabilato* in Presley’s account; dancing while wearing *kabilato* brought him closer to his ancestors. He had been unable to do that at the NSS further from his home. His feelings expressing his own *kastom* were typical of students who had access to the objects from home.

Coleman, the Grade Twelve student from Guadalcanal attending Tenaru but who had completed most of his schooling at Su’u, described the difference when students were further from home.

Although in chapter 6 Coleman said he valued how his time at Su’u had helped him build relationships with a variety of people, he lamented that at Su’u the Guadalcanal students had been forced to substitute hessian bags for *kabilato* during the cultural show. The two archers from Buin in Figure 8.5 were doing likewise. Coleman and other students in similar circumstances considered the bags a poor substitute for cultural dress. It made it difficult for students to connect with their ancestors.

Performing “real culture” was also possible at Su’u, according to teachers and students. Although an NSS like Tenaru, its area groups were composed of regions of Malaita rather than Solomon Islands more broadly (Figure 8.2). For instance Coleman, who had participated in cultural shows both at Su’u and Tenaru, argued the show at Su’u closely resembled the “real culture” of the Malaitan groups represented: “you can see by yourself the real culture of those, by those indigenous people.” He said the Su’u students had better knowledge of their performances because more of them have grown up in rural areas and he could see clearly the similarities and differences of the cultural groups on Malaita at the show.

The performance of the students from Nissan Island at Mabiri’s cultural show illustrates further the way that historicity could be achieved when the performances came closer to the village level.

Although students from Nissan Island were part of the “North” area group, at Mabiri’s cultural show in 2016 they insisted on breaking away from the rest of their group to perform separately (Figure 8.6). In fact, “North” completely dissolved into Nissan Island, Buka, Selau, and Suir groups during the

¹³ A form of customary dress on Guadalcanal made of bark loin cloth and worn by men around their waist (Allen 2013, 127).

cultural show. One teacher admired the effort the Nissan students made to prepare their performance. She knew they had fasted in the week prior to the performance and had spent that time living in North's bush camp (the area group's garden) but otherwise knew little of what they had done there to prepare the artefacts for their performance. However, it was clearly significant, she said, because the students had sought permission to return home after their performance to dispose of the objects they used appropriately. The teacher was in awe, which caught me off guard:

Teacher: and the thing that really touched me was the way the Nissans did theirs: organised. And if you don't believe me but they came with the rain. Do you believe that?

David: huh?

Teacher: Yes!... And when they finished they stopped the rain and came back and danced their second song... my culture is like that. My mother is from East New Britain and my ancestors the same with the Nissans, all came from New Ireland. So when the Nissans were doing their song and the dances kind of brought me back to my mum's place that I hardly go.

The teacher lauded the Nissan students because their performance was "real culture" rather than an approximation of it, and it helped her form a connection to her mother's home.

Figure 8.6: A captivated crowd watching the Nissan students perform at Mabiri's 2016 cultural show



Although Coleman said that Tenaru had given him the opportunity to demonstrate the "real culture" of Guadalcanal, generally speaking Tenaru's area groups were the furthest away from their home villages. The effects of this were particularly evident for students and teachers when drawing

comparisons between students who had lived in rural areas with those that grew up in Honiara. Indeed Jessica, one of the cultural group leaders, recalled that in previous years her cultural group had had difficulty preparing a cultural dance because most students in her group had grown up in town and did not know any. In similar vein, one student in Grade Twelve told me that the cultural show was the first time he had ever worn *kastom* dress. Additionally, interviewees at Tenaru consistently argued that cultural shows were particularly important for the students that had grown up in Honiara because they knew far less about *kastom*. A Grade Eleven student gave a detailed account of this argument, saying that students born and raised in Honiara had not yet learned the history of their connection to the land their home communities inhabit. Echoing the ideology of landownership, he added that the performances at the cultural show introduce the stories to the students from town, which they must learn because the history protects them when somebody from outside makes a claim to own their land.

In sum, the composition of area groups played an important role in bringing “real culture” to the school. At Avu’avu students could form area groups roughly coterminous with their villages and those villages were accessible enough for most students to research and prepare performances that they deemed highly authentic. Such authenticity was beyond the reach of students further from home. In fact, at Mabiri students from Nissan Island had to break away from their peers in “North” to achieve a level of authenticity comparable to home. Their performance excited and impressed their audience, which brings to mind the agency that students have to resist the categories schools and national education departments try to impose on them (Coe 2005). Locating cultural authenticity in their rural homes contributed to a discourse about “real culture” that made cultural differences visible to everyone. It was thus the students at non-elite schools or elite schools in rural areas that were best placed to learn one key component of educated personhood: knowledge about *kastom*.

Persons in waiting

A third important theme to emerge during cultural shows for students more generally was the way they diminished themselves in relation to their discourse about “real culture.” In the main “real culture” was not theirs, or even their teachers’. It was the domain of their elders in the village. This cultural production, I suggest, made young people into “persons in waiting.” A state of waiting is often assigned to young people based on broader structural constraints on their agency (Bellino 2017; Jeffery 2010, 3–4; Syndicus 2018, 40). Post-conflict circumstances in which the “postwar” is just as, if not more, dangerous than the conflict itself, can leave youth waiting for the real peace to begin (Bellino 2017). “Waithood” can also result from the promise of education to lead to

employment or social advancement; students conceive of themselves as in a transition to a new subject position characterised by waged employment (Syndicus 2018, 40), which is a state that gets drawn out the longer that promise goes unfulfilled (Jeffery 2010, 34–35). The state of waithood students typically constructed for themselves at the boarding schools tethered them to the “real culture” of their rural homes. They were not authoritative sources on “real culture,” they said. Not yet.

The initial step in students’ construction of themselves as persons in waiting was to associate “real culture” not only with the village, but specifically with their elders. It was standard practice for teachers to encourage students to seek out their elders over school holidays to prepare for their performances. Indeed, at Mabiri in 2016, senior teachers Philemon and Lucy both saw the value of the cultural show as a learning experience for the students, even though Philemon thought the students from his group were “stiff” and Lucy assigned her students a failing grade (45 percent) because she could see their mistakes. The solution, they thought, was to involve community elders more actively the following year. Moreover, the principal agreed and had even made enquiries with communities in Tinputz about borrowing *upe*¹⁴ for the performances. In addition, there were even reminders for students that they were still learning. An elderly female guest at Mabiri’s cultural show walked passed the *mumu* (earth oven) that several students were preparing for the cultural show and could not help but laugh and comment that it was “rough cooking” and that the boys were still learning.

Similar themes were evident in Sylvia’s account of the cultural show at Su’u when she compared the performance of the mixed “Kwalafa” (Kwara’ae, Langalanga and Fataleka) to the Are’are group’s performance. The Kwalafa students performed a drama in which a girl from Langalanga met a boy from Fataleka and their marriage had to be arranged to satisfy their respective communities. Sylvia said of this performance:

but in culture it’s not like that.... In culture you have to, like, if you want that girl from the other group you have to come and ask. You have to come and ask from the parents. And then they have to make *tabu* [exchange red money and make a feast].

¹⁴ An *upe* hat is an initiation headdress for adolescent boys and is unique to Bougainville (Havini 2003, 124). *Upe* initiation practices went through profound changes during colonisation, and the *upe* had been eliminated in Buka by the early 1920s (Oppermann 2011, 123). Nevertheless, the practices have been revived in parts of mainland Bougainville (Firchow and Firchow 2008, 60). The *upe* is worn during the entirety of a boy’s initiation period, which can last up to three years. During this time they live in jungle camps completely segregated from women and learn indigenous knowledge. The hats are marked with sacred designs with meanings specific to the boy’s clan (Havini 2003, 124).

Then she lamented what she saw as a loss of culture following increasing rates of inter-marriage; in “the olden days, they don’t usually married far. It is just within that same tribe or same community... but this time inter-marriage is too much” because many children do not learn the culture or language of at least one of their parents’ communities. By contrast, she praised the Are’are group because their performance demonstrated a good understanding of cultural knowledge:

but the Are’are group they did it very well. I think they got the first prize...they explained how the chief and [his] wife, like, the things that the chief’s wife usually wear[s], like the traditional necklace, we call it the shell money.

The Are’are performers also explained the cultural significance of other artefacts that a chief and his wife would carry with them while travelling, and such was the students’ depth of knowledge that Sylvia said she learnt parts of her culture that she had not previously known. The perceived inauthenticity of the Kwalafa students’ performance lay in its basis in a contemporary setting where a marriage took place along a network far larger than it would have done in “the olden days.”

The next step in students’ construction of themselves as persons in waiting was for them to contrast their contemporary knowledge and practices with their discourse about “real culture” and their elders. The students at Tenaru in 2015 developed the association between “real culture” and elders in their dialogue with each other about a change to the cultural show’s program. The school had instructed each “cultural group” to prepare a contemporary musical arrangement to one of their cultural songs. Students were divided about the change. Jessica, the area group leader mentioned above, fully endorsed the change because she thought it would help students learn and remember the songs. However, one of her peers, Oscar, disagreed because the modern music and contemporary dances were not “real culture”:

I think if we did it with real *kastom* songs it would be better. Like how the songs are sung now is not really *kastom*... This modern beat, yeah, the modern music and keyboard.... contemporary [songs] I am not sure about. It’s like mixing traditional with modern music; it doesn’t show real culture.

Notably, Oscar took it for granted that he could perform “real *kastom* songs.”

A further dimension to student debate about “real culture” at Tenaru emerged from the opportunity they had to perform for tourists. Given Tenaru’s proximity to Honiara, all cultural groups were allowed to perform cultural dances for tourists at a hotel in town to raise money for their end of year parties. Most students felt no pressure during these performances because tourists did not understand the dances and would not have spotted mistakes. Oscar considered performing to foreign audiences barely cultural performances at all. He felt nothing of the enjoyment and

confidence performances at cultural shows could generate. However, one of Oscar's peers did feel some anxiety about how he might respond if a tourist asked about his culture:

most of the things, we [students] don't know. We don't know yet. And so, we find it hard to explain to all [foreigners]. So, that's one fear, it would not be good if they ask us questions like that. For example, if they ask us if that is really the culture from before which we don't know. Maybe our grandparents would know, but we don't because... we grew up different from our grandparents.

This student argued that he and his classmates possessed only a limited understanding of their cultural performances relative to their elders and in doing so conceded any legitimacy they might have as sources of cultural knowledge. However, he said "we don't know yet" to imply they will later.

The students' transformation into persons in waiting, particularly in respect of *kastom*, also shaped how cultural shows could contribute to transitional justice and peace-building. The authority of their elders to resolve disputes and maintain social order was in many respects undermined when the rule of the gun took over during the conflicts, especially among young men (Kent and Barnett 2012). So too were compensation practices manipulated for personal gain (Fraenkel 2004). Yet at the cultural shows students reaffirmed their connections to practices and places they associated with "real culture," even if most found they were not yet in a position to practice that culture themselves. Students' "waithood" in respect to cultural knowledge was consistent with how they did not consider themselves authoritative sources of knowledge about the violent past; as mentioned, students, whose parents and teachers regularly refused to discuss the conflict with them anyway, would often argue that if I wanted to learn about the violent past I was better served talking to people with personal experience of it. Nevertheless, they still aspired to maintain a culturally appropriate relationship to it. Mabiri's area group "chiefs" bring this point into stark relief.

Learning to be chiefs

In this section I elaborate on a form of cultural programming unique to Mabiri among the schools I visited. The data show that students adopt silences about episodes of violence at school and believe those silences were consistent with logics surrounding conflict resolution at home. This was the Marist Brothers' intention from the moment they established the school at Mabiri in 1999; they created "chiefs" and "vice-chiefs" to organise the school's area groups. According to the school's first principal, Benedict Tooming, the chiefs were originally an explicit attempt to restore respect for customary authority figures. Tooming said that they worked back then, and I saw that they did in 2016 as well. In returning to conflict resolution at school I am building on the lessons students learnt about justice that I described in chapter 6. There I showed that students applied the logics of

disentangling to minor disputes amongst themselves. In this section I show that students and teachers could apply that place-based version of transitional justice to more serious conflicts between area groups—groups that the schools used quite deliberately to draw attention to cultural differences.

The Marist Brothers returned to Central Bougainville as soon as they could after the Crisis, and in 1999 they established a high school at Mabiri, which they designed to facilitate post-Crisis rehabilitation. They privileged ex-combatants and trauma sufferers in their enrolment and provided trauma counselling (McCane 2004, 364). Practical subjects, such as carpentry, mechanics and agriculture, were emphasised to ensure students would be productive members of their communities after they graduated. And, as mentioned, they created area group chief and vice-chief positions to be filled by election among the students. Each area group was allotted land on which to build camps and grow food as the school would not feed students on weekends. The school also made the area chiefs responsible for organising their students and resolving conflicts between them.

The early successes of the area group chiefs were remarkable given the circumstances surrounding Mabiri's first intake of students. Recall that the Bougainville Crisis degenerated into increasingly localised conflict over time, which made the area groups of 1999 roughly coterminous with different combatant groups in Central Bougainville. Thus many of the students, having only just become "ex"-combatants, were sharing dormitories with students who had been members of rival factions during the Crisis, surrounded (if they had been in the BRA) by potentially unfriendly BRF affiliated villages. Unsurprisingly, many students brought their guns to school at first and treated them much like students in 2016 treated their mobile phones; they either hid them in their dormitories or left them with teachers for safe keeping. But Tooming explained that he could not "just cut off" the boys from these groups, which had been sources of personal safety and security for them during the Crisis. Equally, he hoped the chiefs would start building bridges between different area groups. It was a testament to the school's rehabilitation initiatives, and the students' desire for education, that students soon began to leave their guns behind.

The chiefs worked as Tooming had hoped. The students were expected to report issues they had resolved to the school administration and seek assistance from the administration if the dispute was beyond their capacity to resolve. It was his explicit intention to make dispute resolution at the school resemble customary reconciliation as much as possible. Tooming recalled one particularly successful example following an argument between a student from Buka and a peer from Buin that resulted in a

brawl between all the students from their respective area groups. Tooming recalled how they reported the incident to him:

when they came to the office there were these four boys. The two chiefs and the two boys who started the fight. And they briefed me how they sorted it out. First the boy that was the culprit was the Buin boy and then he admitted that he did that so he has to pay the compensation to the Buka guy. And when the Buka guy got the compensation he said “no, this is too much.” So he gave him back something. He was giving him fifty kina for the problem, for the fight, and he said “no fifty kina is too much. I’ll give you back thirty kina.” So you see in Melanesia that’s two things done at the same time: compensation and reconciliation... then I told them that is the Melanesian way so keep it up.

That was the end of it. I asked Tooming if there was any official punishment from the school. Of course not, he said. If they deserved anything it was a “word of thanks [to] make them feel high that they have done something [so well].”

David Miringtoro, a student in Mabiri’s opening year, remembered that the uncertainty he felt around his fellow students eased quickly because most of the students already knew each other, having attended the Marist Brothers’ school in Rigu together before the Crisis. Nevertheless, they had to rebuild their (in his words) “family spirit,” which they achieved outside their classes. Particularly influential, he said, were sports, work activities, and “reconciling with different students, you know, from different areas. That was very important. I liked that one.” Those reconciliations reminded the students to remain committed to the peace process more broadly.

However, he and his classmates also made a conscious effort to leave the Crisis behind:

we said to ourselves, “well we have to think small now. We just have to think like kids, ah. If we want to think like, you know, big macho man [like] during the Crisis, with guns you know, then there won’t be any positive thing for us and [we] will not achieve [what we want].”

Thus Miringtoro argued that success for Mabiri’s first students hinged on whether or not they could transform themselves into persons in waiting and stop “acting BRA.” They were doing this for their education and for the greater good of a successful peace process, said Miringtoro, and part of this involved refusing to talk about the Crisis with each other. By contrast, when he graduated from Mabiri he completed Grade Eleven and Twelve at Tarlena, where he lived with students from further afield with whom he had no conflict, and in that setting he was able to talk more openly about the Crisis.

From student and teacher accounts of events that transpired during my stay, it seems that in 2016 these same themes about the value of locally meaningful forms of conflict resolution were explicit messages from teachers. Just before dinner a play boxing match in the dormitory between two students (a “Local” and a boy from “South”) became too competitive. The student from South lost when he was cut on the head. He was still upset in the dining hall at dinner where his fellow Souths saw the blood from his wound. The student reported what happened to the duty teachers and left the dining hall in tears. One duty teacher, Yvonne, then made an announcement to all students that the other boxer should remain behind after dinner so she could speak to him.

In hindsight, Yvonne said, talking to the boy in the dining hall was a mistake. While she spoke to the boxer several students from South had formed a group, grabbed their knives, and positioned themselves in the darkness just outside the dining hall. They confronted the student and teacher as they left and demanded fifty kina from the student for drawing blood. Ignoring Yvonne’s instructions not to involve the whole area group one member of the mob pointed a knife at her and threatened violence if the student refused to pay. Yvonne recalled that a stand-off developed in which the South students were together and the “the Locals [were] in their corner” on the other side of the dining hall. It was beyond her capacity to resolve and she hurried to the administration building (about forty metres away). Two senior teachers, Philemon and Abraham, who were already on alert after another incident earlier that evening, came straight away, dispersed the area groups and told the three main protagonists (the boxers and their referee) to follow Philemon to the staffroom. I should note, however, that one area group chief thought he was having some success defusing the situation when Philemon and Abraham arrived.

To establish the facts of the case Philemon made the three students each write statements then interviewed them separately. After that he got them together and turned the episode into a lesson, asking them “now that we have broken this relationship how do we solve it?” Philemon had in mind some form of compensation, not money but something like a bar of soap that was both useful for the South student and a demonstration that the apology was meaningful. But the victim said there was nothing to it and an apology would do. Besides, as one of the boxers later told me, compensation is a *kastom* practice from home used for major incidents by important community members. This incident was just a school fight and a minor one at that. Apology made, and relationship restored, the boxers went together to the school’s medical clinic “telling stories as they were walking down,” said Philemon. He did assign them to Saturday community service for disturbing the peace at the school, which they understood and agreed to do. Therefore the restoration of meaningful

relationships between peers, which the pedagogy of everyday life at school teaches students and teachers alike to value highly, eclipsed the cultural differences between groups that cultural shows drew attention to explicitly.

Maintaining good relationships with others was even a lesson that educated persons could take home with them after their schooling. Philemon said “the intention was to show them that we are a community and we can solve some of these things on our own.” There was thus no need to involve the students’ parents, which the school’s formal disciplinary process would require. He continued:

maybe there are certain things that you will straight away, you will like to involve parents in but this kind of thing I’m sure the kids can be taught how to deal with this, and how to deal with them in more positive ways. Like I told them, referred to them about our, like our traditional ways of solving problems and reconciliation is not just about compensation as in money. Compensation can come in different forms too. Like you may harvest *kaukau* (sweet potato) or vegetables and then when you give that to the person you hurt, simple things like that that meant you were reconciling with the person.

Thus they could avoid the formal structures of the school’s disciplinary regime, and opportunistic claims for compensation, with their “traditional ways of solving problems.” He continued:

I told them that we need to change the people at home. Like, anything like this happens the whole tribe comes and instead of us just dealing with the little problem we have, we actually have to deal with a much bigger one even to the extent of rebuilding or all these things.

The reference to “rebuilding” meant the reconstruction of infrastructure destroyed when a conflict escalates. And the method extended to what should happen after the reconciliation. His very next sentence:

so I told them maybe you can deal with your little problem here and once it’s finished it’s finished. If you decide to shake hands then shake hands and finished. And I told them that’s the message they should also bring home so that when something like that happens they can actually be able to facilitate that.

Thus Philemon encouraged the students to see the incident as an opportunity to learn about the mechanisms through which reconciliation should work at home and to take the opportunity as a step in re-establishing “traditional” forms of dispute resolution at home. Critically also, the path the teachers and students walked through this affair was in keeping with the original logic underlying the creation of Mabiri’s area groups—restoration of respect for customary dispute resolution and the figures responsible for carrying it out. He made this the focus of the event when he asked “now that we have broken this relationship how do we solve it?” His conclusion to the whole event was that the students should refuse to discuss it from then on.

The boxers also heard the same message from their chiefs. One chief stated explicitly that the incident was finished and he would be disappointed if he overheard students talking about it in a way that might indicate it was not. Even joking would be indicative of a problematic attitude, which the chief called "*kros kwik na pait*," meaning "rush to anger and fight."

More broadly, the chiefs' perspectives indicated that students did learn the lessons that the school intended for them because the chiefs practiced conflict resolution regularly. In fact, taking an issue directly to the teachers without attempting to mediate it first was considered a sign of a "bad" chief. Consider the following examples from different chiefs comparing their role in conflict resolution at the school with the role of chiefs at home:

If a student from one area fought with a student from another area, the two fought, their chiefs, say the Kieta chief and the Locals chief would hear the cases of the two that fought. It's the same. That's no different there.

The chief at home can judge peoples' behaviour. And our chief here is the same. Our role is to control students, tell them they cannot do this and this.

When two students fight [within the area group], they will, one will give money and the other one will too. And they will shake hands. They will shake hands and it is finished there. And the money they exchange, we will take it and we will eat. We will eat and fix the issue. The problem is fixed.

Likewise, another chief and vice-chief described a fight the previous year between their area chief and a student who had been ignoring him and refusing to do any work for the area group. The student had swung his bush knife at the chief but missed. They resolved the issue at an area group meeting and the process went like this: they "reconciled, the two together, and finished. Everyone forgot about the issue."

Moreover, the chiefs (and other school leaders such as prefects and the head boys) expected the students to obey them in the way they obey chiefs at home. For example, one said "at home everyone supports the chief. We have our own chief [at Mabiri] too. What the chief says everyone must follow." This related specifically, he said, to the work required in the area group's garden. Another student leader described occasions in which he has resolved incidents between students restoratively. This leader even drew direct comparisons between his leadership style and those of (good) leaders and politicians at home:

because when I talk to them, those ones who listen to me, they respond quickly to what I tell them.... So I see myself as a chief here in the school because sometimes if I call the meetings and I talk to the students and I ask them what to do, those who listens to me,

a very good number of them they respond quickly... so I was respected by those boys who listen to me.

Similar sentiments were expressed by Mabiri's other area chiefs.

Notwithstanding the similarities, the area group chiefs also drew some clear distinctions between themselves and the chiefs at home, making it clear that they were not performing "real culture." Two of them insisted on the similarities surrounding dispute resolution but nevertheless saw their role as essentially a conduit between the students for whom they were responsible and the teachers. Three others pointed to several powers that chiefs at home had, like ruling on land issues or banning consumption of alcohol, which they did not. Two more even stated explicitly that they were not trying to copy reconciliations from home, because different cultures within their area groups had different protocols for reconciling with chiefs. However, the major difference between home and school was:

at home it is huge. You need clans and all clan members to help the person compensating the chief. At school, we have come a long way, we have paid for transport and we must budget our money to return home. If we paid the chief, for all the chief needed, we could not afford to return home. So we just leave it. Shake hands, reconcile and finished. That is it.

Home and school were different, but the logic—"shake hands, reconcile and finished"—was the same. Much like the cultural shows described above, when chiefs identified their differences from home they placed the knowledge and practices found there on a higher plane than what they performed at school. In this way the students enhanced the authority of customary leaders, which was what Mabiri's founders hoped introducing chiefs would accomplish.

It is noteworthy, also, that the chiefs' understanding of their roles at the school were underpinned by their desires for formal employment and Christian principles. The chiefs spent time instructing their area group members to be good students, particularly at the start of the school year in 2016. As I was at Mabiri for the beginning of the 2016 school year, one chief and vice-chief from the same area group said it was the time of year to be re-establishing proper standards and expectations for student behaviour. In fact, they approached the task with more vigour than they might have otherwise, even emphasising that the Grade Ten students needed to re-learn the school culture, because the entire school was starting afresh from a calamitous year in 2015. So the chiefs told their students that if they followed what the chiefs told them and kept to the rules they would be a success at the school. If they were to act *bikhet* (self-centred, obnoxious) instead then when they leave Mabiri they will be, as one chief put it, "useless" at home. The two chiefs effectively argued

that students must be willing to “think small,” which David Miringtoro said was the key to success after the Crisis, because doing so would be of benefit to their home communities. One of the boxers certainly felt pressure from a desire for education and it even shaped his relationship to the boxing match episode. There should be a silence about the boxing match from that point, he said, and he could not fight again because he was now perilously close to expulsion. Similarly, both a teacher and student recalled (independently from each other) an incident during the previous year in which one chief, with the principal’s and Marist Brothers’ help, was able to prevent a revenge attack from some students. Those students had actually sought the principal’s permission to launch the attack, but were ultimately dissuaded from it because it would jeopardise their education. Additionally, to help students “think small,” two chiefs identified re-establishing the school’s prayer life as a method to help students focus on their schooling.

Conclusion

So far, cultural production has brought indigenous orientations to knowledge transmission into the classroom, constructed an expansive vision of the educated person, and given women grounds, albeit contested grounds, from which to assert themselves as professionals. In this chapter, I have shown that although the area groups at the case study schools were not the students’ primary sources of friendship and connection, they were nevertheless an important part of their identity formation around culture, particularly at cultural shows that students considered *the* occasions to draw attention to cultural difference. The composition of the groups themselves played a minor determining role in the students’ identity formation, but more typically the artificial boundaries between area groups gave way to the students’ own discourse about “real culture” that located authentic cultural knowledge in their rural homes. Consequently, the students that were close to their homes were generally better able to realise a measure of historicity in their performances. Despite this, however, the majority of students attributed ownership of “real culture” to their elders in the village, which meant that students established themselves as “persons in waiting” in regard to culture. In doing so they restored a respect for the sources of authority that were diminished during the civil conflicts. These points were evident in the disentangling that Mabiri’s area group “chiefs” have undertaken since the school’s first cohort of students after the Crisis. In fact, in 2016 Philemon instructed the students at the boxing match that they could take the principles of disentangling back home with them after school. In the terms used in transitional justice and education, this was a decidedly positive “face” for schooling.

However, if the analysis were to stop with the winding back of one conflict legacy, it would miss how difficult it is to disentangle the positive and negative faces of schooling: that is, the “enemy,” from the “friend.” The interview and observation data in this chapter has revealed potential hazards for students and teachers in the cultural production that made them into friends. The hazards lay in the discourse about a “real culture” concentrated on the village, elders, and the past because the discourse risked painting a flat and unnuanced picture of students’ cosmopolitan rural homes (Golub 2014, 179–94; McDougall 2016). Although the students might not have drawn the links themselves, their cultural production aligned them with a persuasive discourse in PNG’s national imagination about the grassroots “innocent population” (Golub 2014, 169). It is a discourse, common among the middle class of Melanesia more broadly, which renders the cultural diversity of Melanesian nations into discrete, territorially bounded and homogenous populations out of which participation in politics—especially in relation to extractive industries—revolves around the “ideology of landownership” (Filer 1997). In Melanesia contests over customary landownership have led to social fragmentation, and, as I showed in chapter 1, in Bougainville and Solomon Islands the contests have even become violent (Allen 2018).

The students’ discourse lent itself to that boundary-making form of politics, which also developed in a way that minimised their elders’ more expansive connections to each other. Consider *kastom*, for example, which for many students in this chapter was synonymous with “real culture.” *Kastom* is “the pan-Melanesian term that points to ancestrally sanctioned, locally distinctive, ever-changing ways of living that has come to stand for many forms of local self-determination” (McDougall 2016, 224; see also Allen et al. 2013, 34). It is a dynamic concept and has long been a resource for engagement with and resistance to colonial and national administrations (Akin 2013; Keesing 1992). *Kastom*’s emergence and development in rural areas were entangled with the development of those administrations (Akin 2013, 343; Allen et al. 2013, 34). Moreover, generations of Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have engaged with formal education on their terms and for their own ends, forming new connections and ever larger networks of relationships. Not only people, but anti-colonial ideas have flowed across the Pacific through these networks (Banivanua-Mar 2016). These are also the legacies of the students’ ancestors, but an explicit connection to these legacies is absent in the data on area groups and cultural shows. In fact, cultural difference was effectively cordoned off from the rest of everyday life at school where students form the relationships that span their diverse backgrounds. Attention to only the positive face of the cultural shows, while important in the

context of post-conflict recovery, not only obscures the complex entanglement of the “enemy” and the “friend,” but prohibits a history education about legacies of colonialism and anti-colonialism.

Chapter 9 Nation-Making and Conflict at the Athletics Carnival: “Enemy Friends” in Practice

In the preceding chapters I explained how in their cultural production, students and teachers developed the conceptual resources that could turn colleagues and peers into both “enemies” and “friends.” In this final chapter on life at school, I describe how those resources were employed during a school conflict that threatened to escalate into more widespread violence. To be clear, when I describe how a Malaitan teacher used corporal punishment on a student from Guadalcanal’s Weather Coast and brought to the fore two of the identities at play during the Tension, I am describing a reconciled conflict. All schools, either while I was there or in the recent memory of teachers and students, had serious conflicts that had the potential to escalate beyond the school (on school violence in PNG see Forsyth et al. 2019). In each case, reconciliation processes were in train in some form. It is clear to me now that I should refuse to write about most of them, but the conflict at Tenaru was resolved to the satisfaction of the parties involved and thus, fundamentally, this chapter is a story about relationships restored to good order and how teachers and students achieved that.

In the first section of the chapter I outline how both sides to the enemy friend relationship developed in the same sites of cultural production. Although I focus specifically on cultural shows and Tenaru’s school fete here, the two sides to the enemy friend relationship formed in a variety of school events and the banal elements of daily life at school because students and teachers viewed their “real cultures” not as fundamentally different from each other but as variations on a theme. Tenaru’s school fete, the “Grand Bazaar,” is a noteworthy example because it did not only enable the students to understand their differences as commensurable. It also enabled the teachers and students to construct the nation of Solomon Islands as an important interpretive resource, which they could use to analyse the dramatic events at Tenaru’s athletics carnival.

In the second section of the chapter I describe the carnival and the drama surrounding it to establish what happens when the “enemy” and “friend” jostle with each other for prominence as interpretive resources for teachers and students. Although it might have looked like the use of corporal punishment gave Malaitans and people from Guadalcanal at the school good reason to see each other as enemies, students and teachers interpreted events through the lenses I have described in preceding chapters, namely, their expansive vision of educated personhood and ideas about professional behaviour. Importantly, in their analysis of the events the students show their capacity to contribute to social change.

In the third section, I illustrate that teachers and students understood what the ramifications could be if the Malaitan/Guadalcanal dimensions to the incident reached the outside community. Consequently, teachers and students were aware of the need to resolve the incident quickly. I also show that it was the teachers and students from Guadalcanal who were more inclined than those from elsewhere in Solomon Islands to view the incident in terms of the sometimes tense relationship between landowners and their guests.

In the fourth section I investigate the dynamics of the nation-making process at the boarding schools, Tenaru specifically, using Robert Foster's (1995, 2002) distinction between nation-building and nation-making. Nation-building, according to Foster, denotes "the self-conscious production and dissemination of national consciousness and sentiment—of a felt sense of national identity" (1995, 3). It is an elite project for state officials and intellectuals, much like the production of a new national narrative to unite formerly warring parties. Indeed, Foster identified education as one of the main mechanisms of nation-building. Nation-making, by contrast, captures the contested, on-going and open-ended social processes in everyday life through which the nation materialises as a frame of reference for its citizens (Foster 1995; 2002). The materialisation of the nation in rituals (Kaplan 1995), national days and print advertising (Foster 1995, 2002) has been the standard fare of research into nation-making, although schooling has also featured (Jourdan 1995; Oakeshott and Allen 2015). Recent research has shown that nation-making processes contribute to a hardening of perceived divisions between an urban middle class and "grassroots" villagers (Cox 2021; Golub 2014, 170–76). The observation and interview data presented here lend support to these recent findings, and therefore illustrate how the nation became an important context for the formation of enemy friend relationships.

Consequently, I argue that nation-making is a useful framework for transitional justice theory in education. Transitional justice characterises the contexts in which post-conflict education reforms take place as being in the process of immense social and political changes: they are transitioning from authoritarianism to democracy; or from conflict to peace. From this starting point, Bellino and Williams note that a "persistent question in the field remains whether reforms in the education sector are mechanisms for peacebuilding and social reconciliation, or whether they simply reflect a changed society more ready and willing to confront its violent past" (2017, 6). Although Bellino and Williams concluded that the answers to date have trended towards the latter, that education reform follows broader political and social change, there has still been considerable theorising about how

education can contribute to social and political change. For example, truth commission recommendations for education tend to focus on forward looking curriculum reforms involving the introduction of human rights, peace, civics and values education (Paulson and Bellino 2017, 368). Similarly, transitional justice scholarship has been actively theorising approaches to “justice sensitive education” (Davies 2017) and citizenship education (Worden and Smith 2017), which attempt to unite young people around democratic citizenship and/or human rights. However, these developments resonate better with the state’s nation-building project than they do with the organic process of nation-making because they require the implementation of new policies, curriculum and pedagogy by the state. As I show below, the framework of nation-making reveals that nation-building approaches sit within longer and more enduring processes of nation-making that have their own dynamics.

Making friends and materialising the nation at a school fund-raiser

In this section I aim to show that in addition to “real culture,” which was the discourse that teachers and students developed at cultural shows that left them susceptible to an ideology of customary landownership (chapter 8), they also developed a way to interpret the variations in their cultures. Specifically, they came to see their cultural differences as constituent and equivalent parts of the nation (or autonomous region in Bougainville’s case). In other words, students and teachers could identify a range of similarities amongst the diversity of their “real cultures.” Consequently, when they inevitably identified differences as well, these reflected what Foster (1995, 20) described as variation in kind rather than radical difference (see also Hirsch 1995; Errington and Gewertz 2004, 85–108). As I show below, this was evident in student and teacher descriptions of their cultural shows, but was clearest to me at Tenaru’s “Grand Bazaar.”

A few short examples about cultural shows should suffice to illustrate that students and teachers did not understand their “real cultures” to be oppositional or incompatible, but rather as complementary and commensurable. At Mabiri, Lucy, the teacher who had assigned her area group a failing grade at the cultural show, nevertheless maintained that: “even if people don’t really understand each other this is where we get to understand each other just singing a song and dancing and... different, but still one people.” Likewise, one male Tenaru student said:

I felt happy...because after we danced and cultural night was over we expected the newspaper would report it. Then there were photos in there...in the paper. So I was happy because the whole country could see us in the Solomon Star.

This Tenaru student had been pictured in the photograph that appeared in the national newspaper. He was dressed in his cultural attire and it made him feel proud to show his Makiran identity, but especially his Wainoni identity, he said. Moreover, he learnt that all provinces respected girls and women the same way because in each group's performance the boys and girls danced separately. This rendered the convention at school assemblies for boys to sit on the left side of the assembly hall and girls on the right an element of national culture, he said. The school culture reflected all the local ones that make up the nation. And students could even learn the dances and songs of cultural and linguistic groups to which they did not identify. Indeed it was a normal thing to do at Tenaru, said one student who had performed for both Central and North Malaita. At Tenaru in 2015, the "Islanders" had resolved to perform a dance from each of their cultures, which involved each student learning new dances and considerable pragmatism. For instance, as Temotu province is so far away and it was too hard to find the correct clothes to wear they used grass skirts from Isabel province instead. Nevertheless the "Islanders" I spoke to said they enjoyed the chance to mix all of their cultures together in a way that meant no member of their group felt left out. Therefore, students and teachers perceived a measure of commensurability in their cultural differences, which they often understood in national (or pan-Bougainvillean) terms, even though they might have thought that those differences originated in a "real culture" attached to a place and with their elders.

The perceived compatibility of their differences is an important factor in the formation of enemy friend relationships because, in my view, it shows that the two sides to enemy friends co-exist. A particularly noteworthy example of this co-existence came at Tenaru in 2015 when the school's area groups were charged with organising the stalls at the school's annual fete, the "Grand Bazaar." The Bazaar was the major fund-raising event for the school and all money raised would contribute to the construction of a new administration building. Unlike the previous year when parish groups ran the stalls, the administration reasoned that they could increase participation and interest among parents, visitors, and students (and ultimately raise more money) by fund-raising in area groups. They were correct.

Preparation for the Bazaar was a complex and time-consuming exercise, and not one undertaken solely by area groups. Amongst the teachers, the "Bazaar Committee" met regularly and the area group patrons and matrons discussed amongst themselves how best to organise their groups, which added a sense of common labour and effort to the use of area groups. Amongst the students, although area groups were responsible for most of the work during the Bazaar itself, much of the preparation was done in their classes and work groups. In the months before the Bazaar all students

took turns after classes selling raffle tickets in Honiara, which the teachers had divided into “begging zones.” Moreover, the products of the students’ woodwork assignments (chopping boards, chairs and coffee tables) were sold at the Bazaar.

The female students were responsible for much of the effort as the Bazaar grew closer. The Friday before the Bazaar was spent building and decorating stalls, cleaning the school, and preparing the food. Students went back and forth from Honiara. Some ran errands for the school while others laboured for their area group. Female students were disproportionately responsible for the cooking and found it galling that the boys were less helpful than they could have been; a group of boys had even begun a basketball game while their peers worked around them (see chapter 7). By Friday afternoon attention had turned to the preparation of cassava pudding cooked in *motus* at each group’s matron’s or patron’s house. This took all night and well into the next day. Several senior students, mostly female, did not leave the houses until late afternoon the following day, not even to sleep. Thus, the area groups had considerable autonomy to plan the event but did so around their other commitments to the school’s preparation and in concert with other student groups.

Nevertheless, many parents treated the organisation of the Bazaar by area group as a call to arms of sorts; many came to help with the cooking (Figure 9.1). Additionally, the organisation of the Bazaar by cultural group even sanctioned identity as a tactic to discipline students; Joyce, whose classroom teaching I described in chapter 5, remembered disciplining some boys: “come here, come here, you and I are the same colour...where were you on Friday night?” She knew their parents and felt she could speak more freely in her area group, which meant she felt she could maintain their culture and identity while she admonished them for not helping to prepare.

There was thus a friendly fundraising competition between the area groups, and there was indeed a prize for the group that raised the most money. There were students at each stall advertising their food and encouraging visitors to their stall with comments like “don’t eat Malaitan, eat Western!” Oscar, who in chapter 8 disapproved of the introduction of contemporary music at the cultural show, recognised that there was a little competition between the groups. However, he knew they were raising money for the school’s administration building and on the day itself his competitiveness was lost in his worry that they would be unable to sell all the food they cooked. Luke, a Grade Eleven student in the Islanders area group, made sure I understood the competition properly: “it’s good

because that's the one way to earn more money for the school." There was thus a unity of purpose overlaying the competition: the school.

Figure 9.1: Parents and students prepare the food at the Guale stall. Behind them stands a row of stalls that only appeared on the day



Another factor that helped teachers and students frame the Bazaar in national terms was that they did not consider the Bazaar a good opportunity to share their culture. Oscar said that everyone was far too busy concentrating on selling food and raising money for that. I was told repeatedly that the stalls were all basically the same, although the "West and Choiseul" stall apparently prepared some food that was distinctively western. One student explained that she was motivated to work hard because she did not want other "Islanders" to think "people from Isabel don't know how to work." Even the Islanders' insignia required considerable negotiation, which was ultimately subservient to the restrictions the Bazaar placed on them. They printed their insignia on a t-shirt to wear as a uniform and even put some shirts out for sale. Reminiscent of Foster's (2002) argument about the materialisation of the nation in print advertising, Luke and one of his peers insisted that their group had designed their insignia specifically for the Bazaar. Whereas in the previous year they had not tried to sell t-shirts and thus designed an insignia for their own t-shirts that reflected the provinces that made up their area group, in 2015 they printed a shield and spear because they wanted to sell as many shirts as possible.

The mass production of cassava pudding was another way the nation materialised at the Bazaar and rendered cultural differences as variations within it. Although nearly all students told me that their

home had a distinctive way of making cassava pudding, for the Bazaar all groups cooked a recipe that students said was the same everywhere. I was told it was easier to make a lot of the latter recipe very quickly, and one student joked that the only concern with a basic cassava pudding is its depth; if it is too thick, she said, “it is like eating a mattress.” Cassava pudding, which every group cooked and sold along with plates of rice, chicken and sausages, was given a national character and the requirements of the Bazaar largely prevented demonstration, even discussion, of regional variations.

Thus affiliations to the school and nation even formed in everyday life at school. They were another important resource for teachers and students to form enemy friend relationships. In addition to the resources students had at their disposal, such as the encouragement to see classroom knowledge through the prism of their relationships to others (chapter 5), the disciplinary regime, and the teachers’ and students’ alternative to that regime (chapter 6), school and national affiliations enabled teachers and students to manage particularly fraught incidents with the potential to make students enemies rather than friends.

Recalling old hostilities at the athletics carnival

Like the Bazaar, the athletics carnival was an important event on Tenaru’s school calendar. As per tradition, in 2015 the school randomly assigned new students to one of the four teams competing at the carnival and bought them all the sports uniform specific to their team. Keen students spent the weeks before the carnival training for it while their teachers, also assigned to teams, spent their break times gently ribbing each other about who was going to win. But in all this nobody ever indicated that winning was an important part of the carnival. When there was excitement it was about the chance to bring the school community together. In my field notes I recorded that I was struck by how diligently, and affectionately, the students cared for each other over the course of the day. Friends told their peers how proud they were of them, and they would rush to bring bottles of water to competitors at the end of each race. And at 6pm in the evening, as the runners in the senior girls 4 x 100m relay took their marks, the bell sounded for Angelus’ prayer and everything stopped while students and teachers observed the school’s evening ritual.

The nation materialised during the carnival as well. To open the carnival each of the four teams formed two straight lines in front of the officials’ tent, where a national flag had been raised. At the front were two students in Grade Seven displaying another national flag. The deputy principal led the singing of the national anthem, then the principal led a prayer and gave his welcome address.

Following that the two Grade Seven students holding the flag led the whole school on a parade march around the 400m track. The Solomon Islands Athletics Association presided over the carnival and there was considerable excitement when the gold medal winner from the men's ten kilometre race at the Pacific Games made an appearance. The best students at the carnival were subsequently selected to attend training sessions with the national Athletics Association in Honiara.

The senior girls 4 x 100m relay was the final event of the day, but as per the pedagogy of everyday life I described in chapter 6, there were many events still uncompleted. It had been clear for hours—particularly to those of us in the officials' tent—that the carnival would run well into the following day (Saturday). It had been so much fun I rather resented the meetings I had arranged in Honiara that would see me miss it. The carnival proceeded so slowly again that some events had still not been held as the sun was setting on Saturday night.

After two busy days, the students were restless and unruly and only a few teachers remained at the field. By late Saturday afternoon those teachers were struggling to keep the carnival running at all, let alone smoothly. They implored students repeatedly to stay clear of the track while races were run. But the students ignored every plea. With each race the students cheered louder and encroached further onto the track. The climax came at the finish line of the senior boys 4 x 400m relay. As the runners approached the students rushed forward again. This time they ran into the path of the competitors. One boy in Grade Eight, Mark, was the most brazen. He zig-zagged in front of the runners in full view of the teachers. For one teacher it was the last straw. He shouted at Mark in a rage and Mark tried to run away. The teacher chased him. When he caught up, he punched Mark in the head.

Tempers flared. Mark was from the region of Guadalcanal that participated and suffered most in the Tension: the Weather Coast. And the teacher was Malaitan. At the scene a group of Grade Twelve boys were openly challenging the teacher and a young student kicked the teacher in the back of the leg while his back was turned. One of those Grade Twelve students had to be physically restrained by his classmates as he tried to attack the teacher, even as the principal stood in his way. The situation was brought under some control at that point, but then the principal intervened again during dinner to calm a pocket of students apparently intent on confronting the teacher. Hannah, whom I introduced in chapter 7 and who had deliberately held herself back from playing the role of peace-maker on the running track, remembered that after dinner "the Grade Twelve boys, and Elevens,

were really showing their disappointment in the teacher.” Others confirmed that boys in the lower grades participated too, though nobody reported that female students participated in the unrest.

A third incident was reminiscent of how conflicts can escalate along kinship lines, as I described in chapter 4. In the boys’ dormitory relatives of Mark and the teacher were shouting at each other, smashing plates and cups, and punching walls. Outside the dormitory more of Mark’s male *wantoks* had begun damaging chairs in the assembly hall. Some students related to Mark phoned other relatives in Honiara and word spread quickly that a mob of angry *wantoks* were on their way to the school to confront the offending teacher. Several other students from Guadalcanal went to one of the Guadalcanal teachers’ houses to complain. This teacher was a regular port of call for Guadalcanal students. The teacher reported that the students were angry at the apparent injustice because Mark was only one of many students ignoring announcements; it was not fair that only Mark had been singled out.

However, by approximately nine o’clock that night the anger had nearly subsided. The school had cancelled the regular Saturday night “social night” for the students and the principal had made his final announcement; he told the few students still out of bed to stop throwing rocks onto the assembly hall’s tin roof (a typical form of student protest) and go to their dormitories. Most students were already in bed and the gate to the girls’ dormitory had already been locked as per the custom every night. The only students out of their dormitories were those at choir practice for mass the following morning. It was such a radical change of mood that one Guadalcanal boy, who had earlier been throwing furniture around the assembly hall, joined his *wantoks* at the entrance of the school to help turn the angry mob from Honiara around if it ever arrived.

I was able to confirm that the mob did form in Honiara, but fortunately it never arrived at the school and thus a reconciliation process could begin later that night. When I spoke to one of the relatives the students had called, he said the first thing he asked the student who phoned him was where the teacher was from, and he considered the mob a serious threat once he learnt the teacher was from Malaita. He drove to the school to meet with the principal, with the intention of brokering peace.

Reconciliation between Mark and the teacher was in train, but the threat of escalation beyond the school lingered until a reconciliation ceremony was held on Tuesday. Escalation was a particular risk when protagonists broke the silences that would allow the reconciliation process to continue. At

break time on Monday morning Mark's uncle caused a scene outside the staffroom. He stood there shouting, seemingly intent on a fight with the Malaitan teacher. The teacher, who had only emerged from his house for the first time since the incident that morning, armed with a metal chain in his bag, could hear everything from inside the staffroom and nearly, he said, "got angry again." Luckily, Hannah prevented him from going outside while the principal led Mark's uncle to his office to arrange a peaceful resolution.

The reconciliation ceremony was held the following day in the staffroom, out of view of most of the teaching staff and students, in contrast to the open and public performance of reconciliation in community settings. The cushion chairs and coffee tables that served as the teachers' social space during the day and which were typically covered with students' assignments and class handouts were tidied up. The thin rectangular coffee tables were all that separated the two parties—the teacher and Mark's uncle. The teacher apologised and gave 200 Solomon Islands dollars to Mark's uncle as a sign of forgiveness. After that, the incident was barely mentioned again.

It is important to highlight that the students considered the use of corporal punishment and the potential escalation of violence through *wantoks* to be rather commonplace. Recognising that the events were regarded as essentially commonplace affirms several of the points outlined in previous chapters, such as the way women and girls learn to accept the presence of male violence at school (chapter 7). The incident's relative ordinariness also meant that students had expectations about the incident's resolution, and as I have noted at several points, students were effective peace-makers when conflicts arose with each other. Thus, Oscar, who had resisted the introduction of contemporary music to the school's cultural night, explained what the students *usually* did when conflicts arose and even recalled two further examples from the previous two years in which the school had to mobilise to prevent a conflict from escalating. He said they draw on their friends and *wantoks*; if a Malaitan student was about to have a conflict with a student from Guadalcanal, he explained, then one of the Malaitan's Guadalcanal friends would be called upon to settle the argument.

This was essentially what happened on the night of the athletics carnival. Students attested to the peace-making role assumed by both Guadalcanal and Malaitan cultural group leaders (as Mabiri's area group chiefs were empowered to do) to talk to the students they were responsible for while consulting with each other throughout. The boys that could identify themselves as neutral parties were particularly effective, Emmanuel said. One of the student leaders was Harrison, who said his

leadership position meant it was his role to be involved in settling the dispute. He and the other prefects could see the potential for a split between Malaitan and Guadalcanal students within the school so Harrison and the other student leaders attempted to strip the incident of any ethnic dimensions. They argued it was a problem between the student and teacher, to which most students were receptive. In fact, Harrison was from Guadalcanal. Yet he was a successful mediator in this incident because demonstrating that Mark was also at fault enabled him to maintain his neutrality. Having established that both parties were to blame, even the angriest students could come together to talk through their differences.

The incident also gave teachers and students the chance to reaffirm the importance of acting for the good of the community, which Joyce and Anthony taught in their classrooms (chapter 5), and which I described in chapter 6. For instance one female teacher, Catherine, distinguished between formal education and the expansive ideal of educated personhood when reflecting on the athletics carnival affair:

had it happened between, maybe, a child who have come from a background that maybe doesn't have a proper, or good education, they may have reacted in a much different way. *No not education, but* those who are easily, who easily get angry when such situations arises. There are some people who may [have] quickly reacted without taking into consideration the effects of their actions, or the, what their actions would bring to the community, to the wellbeing of the community. And others would reason things out before taking action. And I think the parent of the child did that...

Catherine deployed nearly the same language as the teacher at the end of chapter 5 who argued that educated people could “reason out” that a “shoot-to-kill mentality” was wrong. She said Mark’s relatives had “reasoned things out before taking action,” which meant that they had considered the effects of their actions on “the wellbeing of the community.” Thus she made the case that it was not education itself, but educated personhood that made the difference between a violent resolution and a peaceful one.

Similarly, their close relationships to peers from different cultural and linguistic groups motivated some students to remain uninvolved throughout the incident. For example, Emmanuel had the chance to prove what he told me in our interview (see below), that it would be “nonsense” to live a whole year with an “enemy.” He was one of Mark’s closest friends, he said. But Emmanuel was also Malaitan. Several of Emmanuel’s peers noticed his passivity in the dormitory during the incident, apparently expecting him to have risen to anger like others had done. However, true to his own description of how students learn about each other during life at school, he said that Mark was like a

brother to him. Emmanuel neither misbehaved nor joined the peace-making efforts, and his behaviour was testimony to the friendly relations established between students in everyday life and at major events like the Bazaar.

Even the administration's decisions suggested that they hoped students would pick up the message about the centrality of relationships to educated personhood. Instead of focusing blame on the offending teacher, the school administration took a far more holistic view of the incident and its resolution. The offending teacher was one of the most committed teachers at the school and had not only put considerable effort into the organisation of the athletics carnival, but other major school events as well. Few of his colleagues had assisted as much at the athletics carnival. Moreover, in the moments before he hit Mark he had been responsible for organising the races, marshalling his team, and making announcements to all students about what they had to prepare next. Again, most of his colleagues had long since given up on the carnival. Official disciplinary action would have left his classes untaught, and would have also individualised blame when there was a collective failure on the part of teachers to supervise the carnival. I was told regularly that "presence" with the students was a key tenet of Marist education and the majority of teachers had not lived up to it. The administration had thus resolved to pursue an informal reconciliation with Mark's family and seek counselling for the offending teacher. Similarly, none of the students who damaged property or argued with each other were given any official punishment either.

In the observational and interview data on the athletics carnival I also find support for Hannah's decision to assert her professional identity by not playing the role of peace-maker on the running track. Recall that in chapter 7 I outlined how Hannah had felt the impulse to intervene but had resisted the urge because she saw it as the principal's role. Catherine likewise understood the incident through her interpretation of her professionalism: "to me that was misconduct as a teacher. A teacher should never hit a child," and thus she deferred to the authority of the administration to hand out punishment. For many of the students the incident also reaffirmed several characteristics expected of professionals. Emmanuel's opinion was representative of most students, and he said that the teacher had no right to hit Mark, but equally Mark was at fault for ignoring the teachers' instructions. Emmanuel also insisted that the school should utilise its formal lines of authority, the senior teachers and prefects. In other words, it was not an ordinary student's place to intervene because good students knew their place was to respect school rules and authority figures. Additionally, Paul, a student whom I show below saw the escalation of the incident as a trait of

Solomon Islanders, said the students' anger should simply be seen as a protest against the teacher's use of corporal punishment.

In the months after the incident teachers and students refused to discuss it with each other, as they would do for conflicts at home and as they usually did after conflicts at school. However, the school's informal resolution lacked a measure of legitimacy among the students because they interpreted the incident in the context of the official roles and responsibilities of teachers, which was consistent with Hannah's own view of her professionalism. And given that the students and female teachers held the offending teacher to a stricter interpretation of professionalism than the holistic interpretation of the the school administration, the incident illustrates that there could be no guarantee that students would adopt the model of educated personhood exactly as school administrations hoped they would. In that lies the potential for the students' cultural production to effect social change.

Tension memories

The principal later confirmed that Mark's family had attempted to link the incident to the Tension, as students and teachers alike expected they would. In fact, Hannah remembered that when the boy's uncle confronted the teachers in a rage outside of the staffroom he yelled "even though I am a Guadalcanal person, *mi man tu ya*...like I am a person, I can do things too."

This comment from Mark's uncle calls to my mind popular imagery in Solomon Islands depicting Malaitans as disproportionately prone to anger and aggression compared to people from other provinces. The image is, of course, a stereotype with little basis in fact (Kabutaulaka 2001; Gegeo 2001, 500). Thus the sterotype had very little explanatory value for the teachers and students, several of whom attributed aggression to people from other provinces besides Malaita. Moreover, while a few teachers and students did suggest that aggression was a trait of a particular group of Solomon Islanders, there was no consensus on which group that was; at the same time as one teacher thought the school was in trouble because Mark came from an "aggressive" part of the Weather Coast, a student breathed a sigh of relief that he did not. Myths about ethnic groups were hardly a reliable framework to help teachers and students make sense of and respond to the incident.

However, while the stereotypes themselves might have been little help, the reaction of some of the students and teachers from Guadalcanal reminded some peers and colleagues of the Tension. For

instance, on the evening of the incident younger students from Guadalcanal, in the course of complaining to one of their teachers, had asked “can we chase these people out?” There were even occasions at Tenaru that had strained the relationship between the Malaitan and Guadalcanal students, and which mirrored some of the drivers of the Tension, that students could draw on to understand the unfolding events; episodes of obnoxious and disrespectful behaviour were recalled and interpreted as inappropriate for guests on somebody else’s land. Similarly, Joyce and Hannah observed that the incident had upset their Guadalcanal colleagues and demonstrated how easily Guadalcanal parents could be reminded of the Tension. One of their colleagues even confided in Joyce in the days after the incident that “nothing is correct at the school right now.” This was a reference to (perceived) Malaitan dominance at the school, much like the Malaitan dominance on Guadalcanal that teachers and students often cited as causes of the Tension.

To vent anger at how the administration had been handling discipline cases one teacher had drafted a letter to the school administration. In the letter the teacher complained about inaction following the offending teacher’s previous cases of misconduct and asked how the teachers could ensure the safety of the students when they seemed incapable of disciplining themselves. Far from refusing to discuss the incident to maintain a peaceful relationship with the school administration, the teacher was actively considering using this letter to harm his relationship to the school administration in such a way that would require disentangling subsequently. As I mentioned in chapter 4, many Melanesians do not consider relationships to be fundamentally peaceful. Instead conflict within them can be a legitimate form of exchange and social activity, although the individuals who pursue conflict will also be subject to a range of social pressures to return the relationships to peace. Thus, while this teacher had even considered a more public demonstration of anger by instigating a confrontation during a staff meeting, he explained that he was also already thinking about the reconciliation. However, because Mark’s uncle made such a public spectacle of his anger outside the staffroom, the teacher reasoned that he did not need to instigate a conflict himself. The teacher said that Mark’s uncle’s outburst had:

[proved] my thinking that we are here looking after students, but yet these students have families and members outside... I [am] satisfied with what happened...what I mean is that sometimes we think that we are confining students here and no one else knows what we are doing here, but yet, people outside will respond to anything that they are not satisfied [about].

In this way the teacher understood the incident as a reminder to everybody that the students were embedded in relationships that extended far beyond the school and which could interfere and even derail the everyday operations of the school. As I show below, several students even considered the

presence of relationships during the incident, and the way Mark's relatives expressed their solidarity with Mark through confrontation and violence, as an element of their national culture.

Enemy friends and the nation

I have shown that resolving the athletics carnival incident proved another occasion for teachers and students to impose their high regard for their relationships to others on the operations of the school. In this way, the athletics carnival was another example of the social process that made students into friends. Mark's friend Emmanuel, who had refused to involve himself as the athletics carnival incident escalated, described this social process elegantly. He said first that students do not come to the school as enemies:

I think that because it is a Church school we should not fight here. We come as brothers and sisters. We live together in the school so it is just nonsense to fight with our brothers and sisters from other provinces. We come here, we live as a community and we share everything together because we are here together for the whole year. There's no point staying a whole year with your enemy.

And then he continued that it was how he and his peers used the daily routine that really made them into brothers and sisters:

I think because of its daily routine, [its] program. In the morning we all go to the dining hall for breakfast, after, morning duty, and go to the classroom. You know your classmates, boys and girls. Later on you go to dining again, you know your tablemates; joking, telling stories while waiting for sharing of the food. Then later on when to our working teams for work session you know all the boys in your team. Because when we work we have to tell stories, joke, laughing, things like that. And after working if during sports [you] went to your sport teams. For example, Real Greens, I can know all the member in my sports team, boys [and] girls. And that is, I mean [the] kind of activities that make us know each other and each one's culture.

I have suggested that the Bazaar was a further example of these types of occasions, but one in which the students viewed their cultural diversity as positive and enjoyable parts of their national culture.

However, although Emmanuel even listed his team for the athletics carnival, Real Greens, as one of his opportunities to get to know his peers, I show in this section that at the athletics carnival Tenaru's students and teachers found commensurability in traits they also considered national, but which they judged negatively (Robbins 1998). This is to say that during the incident at the athletics carnival the students also put the enemy in the enemy friend.

At this point it is important to remember several points about conflict and violence in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. As I showed in chapter 4, violence has been understood in the context of

relationships between people, families, and villages. It was one form of sociality, of a piece with wealth exchange (Rumsay 2003; Harrison 1993). Importantly, this understanding of conflict has been central to the formation of communities in Melanesia. Harrison (1993, 21) explained that this was the case because in Melanesia “what the existence of political society requires is less the suppression of conflict, than a constant effort by political actors to affect and be consequential to one another” (see also Goldman 2003). Harrison described a version of the social order that resonates with the way students and teachers strove to enter into relationships with each other and were able to resolve conflicts when they emerged.

Students and teachers found a measure of common ground in the way the conflict at the athletics carnival escalated because it mapped onto that understanding of conflict as a legitimate part of social life. Catherine, for example, said that on the night of the incident:

I was worried about the child knowing that he comes from Guadalcanal, because they were shouting. The students were shouting some words. One cousin brother of his was crying when I came past the dormitory. And he was saying ‘I’ll go and see my uncle’. Because he’s [Mark’s] cousin I think that maybe he’s referring to the boy’s father...So I was worried cause it happened in the night. And something might happen, knowing such issues can bring in unexpected, maybe unexpected reaction[s] from parents. And so I told the principal the child needs to go home but I think it’s better if somebody accompany him and explains the situation to the parents. So yeah, that was my reaction at that time...the parents might react in such a way that they might come, with, maybe their relatives.

Thus Catherine worried that the incident would have marshalled the relationships to which Mark belonged and that retaliatory violence would follow, which was the sequence teachers and students at all schools described when they explained how conflicts escalate. And Catherine herself had been the victim of it at her previous school, where a dispute between two students in her classroom had ultimately resulted in aggrieved parents demanding compensation from her. Thus, while Catherine said that “the history of what happened in the past,” that is, the Tension, played heavily on her mind after the athletics carnival, it did so in the context of an understanding of violence and its repercussions that she deemed to be more widely applicable.

In fact, Catherine even drew a direct link between the athletics carnival and cultural practices from her home in another province. She noted that she had little knowledge of a major conflict in the history of her extended family because her grandmother had refused to talk about it. All she ever said to Catherine about it was that “it’s not something good to talk about.” Her grandmother’s refusal indicated to Catherine that elders were withholding information for the sake of good relationships in the community (see also Bonshek 2008 and Rachel’s story in chapter 4). When I

asked Catherine specifically if that was the same approach that teachers had taken to the incident at the athletics carnival, she replied “yes, that’s quite true.” Thus, the events after the athletics carnival were entirely familiar and comprehensible to teachers and students from a range of cultures in Solomon Islands.

Also recall from earlier in this chapter that Tenaru’s students considered the incident remarkably commonplace and thus had expectations, built on prior lived experience at school, about its resolution. Those expectations were built on the similarities they identified across a diversity of approaches to reconciliation. In earlier chapters I have been at pains to provide examples from all schools that illustrate how students and teachers identified those similarities as they resolved disputes with each other at school, which was a social activity that their elders and ancestors have been doing for generations (chapter 4; see also McDougall and Kere 2011). Consequently, both conflicts and their reconciliation could, in Bougainville and Solomon Islands, be interpreted as characteristics of broader identities.

At Tenaru’s athletics carnival that broader identity was a national one. Even Emmanuel, who above spoke in glowing terms about how students and teachers get to know each other at school, thought the conflict’s escalation happened in a typically Solomon Islands way. It was Paul who said it most plainly: “because we are Solomon Islanders, when other groups are at fault, they will call to their relatives... and they will come ask compensation and if not compensation they will come and kill¹⁵ you.” In fact, Paul’s perspective is similar to the messages Joyce and Anthony give when they teach about the Tension in social studies (chapter 5): recall that they assert that the Tension could have happened anywhere in Solomon Islands, which gives the Tension’s drivers a national character.

However, the students’ national interpretation of events should not imply that they took pride in what they saw, even though they had quite promptly restored relationships and peace between themselves. Darius’s perspective is particularly noteworthy. When he explained the athletics carnival incident he said:

that’s why God knew, and said “ok, you won’t develop. Just stay and don’t do anything. What I mean is that when you want to fight, you won’t use a gun or bow.” Because I think that if we had those things, and we were cross, we would use them. We’d use them on anybody we wanted to shoot or kill. So I think God knew and said “ok, you will

¹⁵ Although the student and I were using English at this point of the interview, I think it more likely that “kill” meant “attack” or “hit” in keeping with the meaning of the Pijin verb “kilim.” Indeed he used “kilim” in this latter context at other points of the interview.

just live simply. When you are cross you can use your hands or sticks.” That’s what I think. That’s the reason we cannot talk about fights, it’s not good to start arguments and start fights again. Because we... haven’t forgotten yet, the Tension. Because lots of Malaitans lost their uncles, lost their brothers and sisters, and people from Guadalcanal were the same. So they don’t want to talk about it, it would make arguments start again.

The first point to note in Darius’ perspective is that he considered refusals to discuss the violent past an element of national culture. He was explaining both his perspective on the athletics carnival incident and the Tension. He told me that the Tension escalated because of reciprocal retaliatory violence between Malaitans and people from Guadalcanal, which was what he saw happening after the athletics carnival. To prevent small conflicts from escalating into more widespread violence Solomon Islanders must refuse to talk about them.

The second point to note from Darius’ perspective is his demoralised view of Solomon Islanders and the Christian terms in which he couched that demoralisation, which is a stark contrast to how Emmanuel thought that Christianity helped the students become brothers and sisters. Emmanuel’s opinion here better matches the views of Melanesian scholars and many of my interviewees, but I also find echoes of Darius’ views elsewhere. Christianity has been widely regarded as a source of national unity in the Pacific (Douglas 2000, 4; Kelly 1995, 262; Tomlinson and McDougall 2012, 6). Teachers and students generally identified it as a unifying force across cultures; for instance, when I once asked an Avu’avu student where I would see the nation at the school she said it would be in “the moment we praise God.” Christianity was particularly important for students and teachers at schools far from home who had few *wantoks* to lean on. Shared Christianity was also a resource for resolving conflicts amongst students, particularly at evangelical Su’u, given that prayer has become an integral part of reconciliation processes in wider society (see chapter 4). On the other hand, Darius’ argument, that God had not allowed Solomon Islanders to develop because if they had powerful weapons they would use them to retaliate against each other, is reminiscent of Joel Robbins’ (1998) analysis of the “negative nationalism” among the Urapmin in PNG. According to Robbins “when the Urapmin express their negative feelings about Papua New Guinea they do so most often not in the language of political failure but rather in that of race. For the Urapmin, the national order of things is also a racial one in which black nations rank below white ones” (ibid., 111). Although their Christian beliefs enabled the Urapmin to perceive a path out of their inferiority to a heavenly Christian community in which they were equal with whites, they nevertheless couched their perceived inferiority in Christian terms. Darius made a similar point when he said God would only allow Solomon Islanders to fight with “hands or sticks.”

In this way, Darius' interpretation of the events at the athletics carnival was at odds with the way in which violence has been understood historically in Solomon Islands, Bougainville, and Melanesia more broadly. Darius could have interpreted the carnival in the context of how students and teachers strove to enter into relationships with each other and were able to resolve conflicts when they emerged. But instead he focused on the violence and, far from being a stereotypical property of Malaitanness, he argued that a propensity to violence and payback was a core part of Solomon Islanders' identity. His interpretation was also similar to the students' discourse about "real culture" insofar as it partitioned people into bounded units differing in fundamental traits, in this case based on ideas about race and nation.

A third significant point to draw out of Darius' perspective on the athletics carnival is that it reflects a long term process of nation-making in Solomon Islands similar to that which Golub (2014) has described for PNG (see also Cox 2021). For PNG, Golub (2014, 175–76) pointed out that the national imagination has not come to revolve around a specific national narrative or "adherence to any particular pattern of choices," but around "the fact that [Papua New Guineans] are confronted by these choices, instead of others, however ambivalent they are about them." For example, in contemporary PNG, citizens will evaluate the city positively against the village in some contexts but in others will reverse their judgement and valorise the village. Yet regardless of the judgement they make, they consider life in the city and in the village in relation to each other, and in oppositional terms. A similar ambivalence to village and town have been observed in Solomon Islands (Cox 2009), and it is important to note that the nation-making process that has produced it was in train long before either the Crisis or Tension began.

Darius exemplified the ambivalence between the city and village in his understanding of "development" in Solomon Islands; he valorised the village as the site of "real culture" and true connection to land on the one hand, but depicted it as suffering and underdeveloped on the other. He had this to say about cultural shows:

cultural night is mainly for us from the provinces, for those of us who came here, because some students come from rural areas, others from town. So all the students from town don't know about... rural life [and] *kastom*. So we do the cultural show so that all the students that don't have the chance to go home and hear stories from the old men... will see it. We will act it here and they will see and understand.

He thus clearly constructed a dichotomy between village and town in respect of cultural knowledge as per the students' discourse on "real culture" in which the village was the source of authentic

cultural knowledge. And he went on to say that this knowledge was critically important for town students to learn because Solomon Islanders must know about their land; knowing the history of connections and rights to land protects Solomon Islanders when somebody attempts to question their ownership of it. Yet his ambivalence about rural life shone through when he considered his aspirations for the future:

I want to be a leader in the country. I want to hold one of those positions. Is it hard to make our country, to make it become a developed country? We don't compare well to lots of countries. So at election time when I hear them say "vote for us, we'll bring change!" man, how many thousands of years have gone and what changes have they made? Nothing has happened yet. So I have this idea: if I was one of the leaders in government I would try to do something to help the people. Because I come from rural areas too. So I've seen life there and compared it to town life. Eh! People at home suffer! The way of life for people who have money is there. But all our governments still have not reached the village. Is it hard? That's what I'd like. I'll sit down in the position and see, is it hard or not?

So, just as he believed that rural areas were the location of real cultural knowledge and was critical of his peers from town who did not yet appreciate the fundamental importance of land to Solomon Islanders, he was also of the view that rural areas were underdeveloped relative to town and that it was the responsibility of national leaders to bring development to them (Cox 2021). Importantly also, as I mentioned in chapter 1, real and perceived unevenness in development were underlying drivers of the Tension; Malaitans felt that their island had missed out on development on Guadalcanal while people from Guadalcanal's Weather Coast felt that they had missed out on development on the northern side of the island (see Allen 2012).

While the heated exchanges between students from different cultural groups at and after the carnival stand in stark contrast to the enjoyment of differences at the Bazaar, they, like the Bazaar, evoked an image of the nation. The image of the nation Darius conjured was a pessimistic one, which even had a similar effect as the students' discourse on "real culture." Just as the discourse about "real culture" minimised the mobility and connectedness of rural villagers, so too did the perceived dichotomy between the village and town on which Darius' image of the nation rested; villagers were the custodians of "real culture" at home while urban educated citizens were mobile and responsible for bringing "development" back to them (see Cox 2009, 2021).

Equally, as Golub (2014) noted for PNG, the way citizens imagine the nation does not permit town-dwellers to recognise that their embrace of new ideas and new connections sits within a much longer history, in rural and urban areas, of openness to novelty. This was especially true for Darius, who had been as open to experimenting with new ideas and identities as much as anyone. Despite his

pressimistic view of the nation, he had participated in all the events that evoked positive, enjoyable images of the nation. Darius even had one parent from Guadalcanal and another from Malaita, and he only decided to join the Guadalcanal area group because the Guadalcanal students did not have a student leader at the time and he wanted to fill that void. He desired that leadership role because he knew that prominent Tenaru graduates regularly end up in senior government positions, and I have already illustrated that he sought such a position to bring development back to the village. The ease with which he had moved between area groups in the ultimate pursuit of development for his rural home got lost when he made sense of the athletics carnival as a national event.

Conclusion

Without dismissing the role of state-directed reforms to curricular material in the wake of civil violence, particularly attempts to implement human rights and citizenship education, I have argued that reforms in this nation-building vein occur within a longer term and open-ended social process of nation-making. Nation-making produces its own discourses about differences between people, which can map onto the factors at play during periods of conflict.

I have made this case by analysing what happened during an incident in which students could draw on both the “enemy” and “friend.” Preceding chapters showed how each was made. The “friend” was formed out of the cultural commensurability that teachers and students discovered in classroom teaching of the Tension (chapter 5), the pedagogy of everyday life (chapter 6), and in their experiences of gender relations (chapter 7). The “enemy” formed in a discourse of “real culture” that accorded with the development of an ideology of customary landownership and which hid histories of connection and openness to others and new ideas (chapter 8). Both “enemy” and “friend” were evidenced in the events and attitudes described in this chapter. Cultural differences gave way to other sources of unity between people: the nation and school. At the Bazaar alternative ways to cook cassava pudding were considered variations in kind instead of radical difference (Foster 1995, 20). Moreover, the students and teachers deliberately rejected an interpretation of the events at the athletics carnival based on ethnic differences in favour of their relationships to each other, even though they thought that people outside the school would interpret the incident in ethnic terms. Yet, the athletics carnival and Bazaar taught contradictory messages about the nation. After the carnival a negative nationalism with racial and Christian elements emphasised the conflict between students over the care for relationships the teachers and students had deployed to keep the peace amongst

themselves. Their efforts to look after their relationships were obscured by a pessimistic view of the nation at the very moment they had made those efforts, but, nevertheless, they had still made them.

The pessimistic view of the nation also contributed to a discursive division between the village and town that constructed villagers as backwards and awaiting development from urban educated kin. There is a logical consistency between, on the one hand, that discourse which constructs an opposition between the village and the town, and on the other hand, the widespread perceptions that some rural areas were being left out of Solomon Islands' Honiara-centric national development. The latter was an important driver of the Tension and the former would seem to reinforce it. Dynamics like these remain out of view without a longer historical lens on the nation-making process.

Chapter 10 Conclusion: Limits and Possibilities for Education in Transitional Justice

Being familiar enough with Solomon Islands to observe that the general silences about the Tension in everyday life were far from simply a matter of denial by political elites, I sought to investigate what sort of presence the violent past had in everyday life in Solomon Islands (and Bougainville) and what its effects were on the relationships between individuals. I then brought schooling into the frame because it has been increasingly prominent in the transitional justice “package” of approaches to post-conflict justice. Recall that I asked what the implications for schooling were of a place-based method for dealing with the violent past. Again, there seemed reason to think that, as case studies, Bougainville and Solomon Islands could contribute usefully to knowledge about education’s place in transitional justice and peace-building: long before transitional justice arrived in Bougainville and Solomon Islands, education had been enmeshed in the mechanisms through which people made themselves consequential to each other.

I have argued that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have made sense of their respective violent pasts through the relationships in which they are embedded. Typically, these relationships have required individuals to refuse to talk about the civil conflict with others. This was a relationship to the past that students and teachers had ample opportunity to enact in everyday life at school, because schools enabled students and teachers to form meaningful relationships with peers and colleagues from across Bougainville and Solomon Islands, respectively. That was the “friend” in George Gray’s notion of “enemy friends.” But as students and teachers first discovered and then negotiated their cultural differences, they also produced a discourse that could make them “enemies,” although it was a discourse that did a disservice to the connectedness of their elders and ancestors.

I have built the argument in this way. The silences I encountered during narrative interviews about the civil conflicts signalled I had reached the limit of what I, as an outsider researcher, could know about the violent past (chapter 3). Those refusals to speak to me were in part unique to my circumstances as an outsider, but it transpired that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders maintained silences with each other as well. Thus my research became about the social relations that produced those silences about conflict. I viewed them through my concern, from critical theory, with the reproduction of inequality, and was thus able to see that silences were often to the detriment of women, especially if they had been victims themselves. As I explained in chapter 4, I found that there

was a locally meaningful version of transitional justice in Bougainville and Solomon Islands, although nobody ever referred to their reconciliation processes in that way. Although they may not have used the language of transitional justice, by emphasising the importance of the relationships between disputing parties, re-establishing balance in those relationships during reconciliation ceremonies, and agreeing to refuse to talk about conflict thereafter, Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders set the terms for their transition from conflict to peace.

I demonstrated in chapter 5 that post-conflict textbook reform in Solomon Islands and Joyce's classroom teaching at Tenaru reflected an indigenous process of engaging with knowledge about the violent past: individuals evaluated what they shared through the prism of their relationships to others. Joyce was proud of her students for valuing the relationships gathered in the classroom enough to refuse to engage in conversation about the Tension. Joyce was an experienced teacher at an elite school. Her experience showed that the mainstream transitional justice model of disciplinary history should not be assumed to work in every classroom, notwithstanding that it would be wrong to consider her classroom typical of classrooms in Solomon Islands or Bougainville.

From chapter 6 onwards I deconstructed several other ways young people and their teachers learnt to value and enact their relationships to their peers and colleagues. In chapter 6 I described the model of educated personhood that teachers promoted and students (usually) adopted enthusiastically. This model went well beyond the disciplinary regime that emphasised academic success and formal sector employment because it included a concern for others couched in Christianity and *kastom*. For women, educated personhood encapsulated a significant measure of their domesticity (chapter 7). A secondary lesson from chapter 7 was that gender relations at the boarding schools was also a field in which teachers and students learnt to distinguish situations where their practices from home were subservient to the school's culture from situations where elements of their cultures from home (disentangling practices, for example) could work within the school context.

However, the place of cultural knowledge in the cosmopolitan surroundings of boarding school was the primary lesson from cultural programming activities, which I discussed in chapter 8. The students constructed a discourse about "real culture" in which it was located in the village, with their elders, and in the past. With this discourse the students made themselves into persons in waiting with respect to cultural knowledge, which enhanced their respect for the cultural knowledge of their elders. That was an important development given that in many villages respect for customary

authority figures had been degraded as a result of the Crisis and Tension. Additionally, as I showed with a detailed example from Mabiri, students learnt that they could resolve conflicts in a manner consistent with practices from home. Thus, when a Tension event broke out at Tenaru, it could be de-escalated successfully and understood as an element of a national culture about which teachers and students felt ambivalent (chapter 9). The findings offer some important lessons and potential new directions for transitional justice and education scholarship, which I attempt to draw out here.

Lessons for education and transitional justice

The evidence I have collated convinces me to join the chorus of scholars wary of the uncritical application of transitional justice mechanisms—with their norms about the importance of truth-telling, for example—to all contexts (Shaw and Waldorf 2010; Sharp 2015). While self-evident to a growing number of critical transitional justice scholars, it is nevertheless a conclusion novel to the study of education as a mechanism of transitional justice, which has been a prominent topic in the field's recent conceptual expansion (Ramirez-Barat and Duthie 2015; E. Cole 2007; Paulson 2009). As I have demonstrated, best practice in mainstream education and transitional justice advocates making students into young historians (Bellino and Williams 2017, 17; Keynes 2019). The argument goes that they will become a transitional justice version of enemy friends through their analysis of the violent past; their skills as historians will allow students to evaluate alternative perspectives on the violent past dispassionately and understand the constructed nature of historical knowledge. This, of course, assumes that every member of the classroom is allowed unconstrained access to knowledge about the past. However, the lens of ethnographic refusal (Simpson 2007; Tuck and Yang 2014a, 2014b) helped me see the silences I encountered in conversations about the past as deliberate attempts to limit the spread of certain kinds of knowledge about the Tension and Crisis. Making that connection brought the refusals Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders maintained with those around them starkly into view. It is a prompt for scholars of education in transitional justice to ask more about the limits on the knowledge that can circulate in classroom discourse (because individuals might not have the same access to knowledge about the violent past), which would in turn lead to an investigation into the social relations present in the classrooms and schools they study.

Perhaps, then, a useful starting point for scholars and practitioners in Melanesia, or any other context for that matter, could be to ask what they are allowed to know about the violent past. In chapter 3 I explained my commitment to producing research that is *“of and for the region* rather

than simply *about it*" (Wesley-Smith 2016, 156; original emphasis). It was situated in the "empowerment rationale" for Pacific Studies that requires that the practice of social science be grounded in experiences and ways of knowing indigenous to the Pacific (ibid., 159). This commitment was born in the realisation that much Pacific Studies research had been designed to produce knowledge for the interests of geo-strategists, social scientists and development practitioners (ibid., 156). Adopting the "*of and for*" stance should have led me to question the appropriateness of an enquiry into the violent past before I began fieldwork. Instead, it was not until I encountered the refusals of participants to share knowledge about the violent past with me that I began to ask why it was I wanted to know about the violent past at all. The Crisis and Tension were interesting within the conventional logics of transitional justice because the field has constructed silence as the absence or denial of the truth of what happened and thus an impediment to healing. However, if I had not come to understand the silences I encountered as attempts to impose boundaries on what I, and transitional justice scholarship, could know about the violent past, then I would still be trying to extract stories about the Crisis and Tension and undoubtedly frustrated by a lack of success. Moreover, I would have been doing an injustice to Bougainville and Solomon Islands by attempting research about rather than *of and for* them.

Starting with the assumption that neither transitional justice scholarship nor practice have unconstrained access to knowledge about the violent past would not only make scholars and practitioners sceptical of the tools they use to understand a post-conflict context. They might also become more open to alternative possibilities. Even while riddled with refusals and silences, the historicity of coconut trees and stones planted after reconciliation ceremonies, the shell money exchanged and subsequently displayed in homes, or the graves of family and kin, arguably say more than a truth commission report ever can because they situate the history in the land and relationships. They even explain the state of those relationships and thus oblige people to talk about the violent past in a certain way: as the story of a relationship restored, or a reconciliation still pending. Either case imposes limits on what people say and to whom they say it. Thus this starting point could be a step on the way to "decentring" (Hanlon 2003, 28) transitional justice, which would mean moving away from practices that originate in foreign understandings of the past and how to relate to it, towards an investigation of alternative expressions of consciousness of the past—different historicities.

Such an investigation would also lead to analyses of power imbalances embedded in alternative forms of historicity, the experience of women at the Solomon Islands TRC being a notable example.

In chapter 4 I showed that reconciliations have often marginalised women; while refusals to speak were for the good of relationships between disputing parties, the best interests of women have often been decided for them by the men running the process. Although a key feature of reconciliation ceremonies was the public sharing of the agreed version of the violent past and the wrongs committed, they nevertheless neglected the violence women experienced and remained at risk of in the patriarchal social orders of Bougainville and Solomon Islands. The truth commission's format for investigating violence against women did little to overcome this; prohibitions against publicly discussing sexual violence applied as much to TRC hearings and statement-taking as they did to reconciliation processes (Vella 2015, 226–40; Cronin 2019, 129). Yet a project co-ordinated by the International Centre for Transitional Justice (Fangalasuu et al. 2011) gave women a forum through which they could share their experiences of the conflict. Participant women from different communities achieved a measure of interpersonal reconciliation in small closed “stori” circles. These were opportunities for women from opposing sides to become consequential to one another, skills which my research suggests they may well have developed at school. Through this process they could assert political agency (Cronin 2019, 130). The report the women produced (Fangalasuu et al. 2011) made an important contribution to the TRC's investigations into women's experiences during the Tension (Cronin 2019, 129–31) and it owes its success, not to the pursuit of public testimony, but to the way it was sought in a manner that respected the social lives of women.

Moreover, to ask what we, as transitional justice scholars and practitioners, are allowed to know leads us to a more reflexive and critical view of the violent past in question and our positionality in attempts to address it. Ethnographic refusal originates in research from indigenous scholars in settler colonial contexts, and colonisation is of course an on-going injustice far longer than the periods of mass violence transitional justice typically investigates. However, the mass violence of the Crisis and Tension have their roots in the economic and national development trajectories that colonial administrations set in motion. Moreover, formal education in both Bougainville and Solomon Islands was an important part of the injustice of colonisation. In Solomon Islands, for example, formal education became concentrated on Guadalcanal, specifically around Honiara, and thus fed into the inequalities around which the island-based identities that characterised the early fighting first emerged. The longer-term view of justice that includes colonisation can help shine a light on the complicity of foreign actors in the nature of formal education's conflict-promoting “negative face” (Bush and Saltarelli 2000). This is particularly the case in Solomon Islands and Bougainville for two reasons. The first is that previous engagements with foreigners in a variety of forms (missionaries,

researchers, governance institutions, international NGOs) constitute the historical legacy for transitional justice, whether transitional justice actors have any formal connection to them or not. Smith (2012) makes this point abundantly clear for researchers hoping to conduct research with indigenous communities. The second is that in Bougainville and Solomon Islands the cultural logics of culpability for wrongs committed do not attribute blame to individuals but to whole social groups (chapter 4).

The question of historical legacies is fundamental to a conceptualisation of education as a mechanism of transitional justice because, unlike a truth commission, formal schooling is highly familiar to people in post-conflict contexts. Indeed formal, western models of schooling have “been a part of the local social scene” (Levinson and Holland 1996, 20) throughout the non-western world for a considerable time. In Bougainville and Solomon Islands one of the first things the missions did when they arrived in new villages was construct a school, and once established they set about converting indigenous peoples to Christianity—effectively trying to replace indigenous knowledge systems with a foreign one. Colonial administrations subsequently, albeit unenthusiastically, took control of mission education systems, but western secular knowledge and its mode of transmission were no less foreign to locals. Although Pacific Islanders were active agents in the uptake of education and often sought to do so on their own terms, they nevertheless exercised their agency in the context of the rapid and unrelenting change brought by colonisation (Jolly and Macintyre 1989, 11). As Pacific Islander scholars have attested, formal education was disempowering for students, who left school feeling alienated from their cultures, knowledges and languages (Thaman 1995; Bugotu 1975). In this context, education itself resembles not so much a mechanism of transitional justice as it does a particular set of norms and values. Teaching history as a western academic discipline in Bougainville and Solomon Islands would likely reinforce the alienation produced through schooling rather than wind it back.

A related limitation for education in transitional justice in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, and perhaps other former colonial possessions, is the field’s focus on post-conflict “transitions” themselves, which is an insight from critical ethnographies of schooling. This emerged particularly in chapters 8 and 9, where the data therein demonstrated a phenomenon to which critical ethnographies of schooling have long been drawing attention: the students’ and teachers’ cultural production effectively reproduced a part of the social order that led to social inequality (Willis 1977; Collins 2009; Forsey 2000, 206). As mentioned above, in chapter 8 the students produced a discourse on “real culture” that reaffirmed the authority of elders but to the expense of the expansive connections and

cosmopolitanism of their ancestors. In chapter 9 I argued that while the conflict at Tenaru's athletics carnival brought out a unifying national identity for students and teachers that helped them resolve the incident, the vision of the nation they brought forth has a longer history. It was the product of a nation-making process, which went beyond the boundaries of what "transition" usually means in transitional justice, and which has created social distinctions between "villagers" and "town-dwellers" that Papua New Guineans and Solomon Islanders feel constrain them (Golub 2014, 170–76).

Consequently, a critical awareness amongst transitional justice scholars about the limitations I have identified (that transitional justice should not have access to all there is to know about a violent past and that typically "transition" is narrowly defined) may well open alternative possibilities. In fact, there are also resonances between the empowerment rationale for Pacific Studies and the place-based forms of transitional justice Shaw and Waldorf (2010) proposed as a framework for the field. Just as Shaw and Waldorf wrote that place-based transitional justice includes both indigenous and global influences on local meanings of justice, the late Teresia Teaiwa, a pioneer of Pacific Studies pedagogy (2005, 2011, 2017) said:

...the paradox of colonialism is that it offers us tools for our liberation even as it attempts to dominate us.... I value my 'colonial' or 'Western' education, even as I attempt to use it to help myself and others discover more about our pre-colonial heritage, and fashion futures for ourselves that are liberating. (Teaiwa 2005, 39)

As I have shown, while colonial and independence era pedagogy did a lot to alienate young people from their indigenous knowledges, historical circumstances also existed that allowed people to cordon off the knowledge they learnt in the classroom and view it as just what they needed to pass examinations. This understanding of classroom knowledge meant that information learnt in the classroom lacked social relevance beyond facilitating entry into the formal economy, and, in this way, information about the Tension from the textbook could be understood as "just like history" (chapter 5). Although many of my participants viewed classroom knowledge this way, curriculum developers during the reform process that commenced in Solomon Islands in 2004 attempted to insert more indigenous modes of relating to the past into the curriculum and classroom. When new social studies textbooks in Solomon Islands discuss the Tension they reflect indigenous modes of knowledge transmission about controversial topics because they were written by people cognisant of the relationships likely to be in the classroom. And as mentioned, even the students in Joyce's classroom understood the need to value their relationships with their peers while they were at school living with them. There was scope to deal with one legacy of colonisation by approaching a period of mass

violence with a locally meaningful version of social studies education. That is surely a lesson for history textbook reform in Bougainville, and perhaps in other post-conflict contexts too.

From “reproduction” and “cultural production” to transformative schooling

Transitional justice scholars share with critical ethnographers of schooling an analytical interest in social inequality, which makes it possible for transitional justice scholarship to speak back to the body of literature around which I have organised my analysis of the boarding schools: critical ethnographies of schooling. For scholars in this latter field the concepts I have deployed in this thesis, “reproduction” and “cultural production,” have been and remain relevant analytical tools (Foley 2010). They have been used to show, first, how “schools wilfully and inadvertently reproduce class, race, and gender inequalities,” and second, “how groups and individuals consciously and strategically produce autonomy from institutional constraints” (ibid., 223). The result has been ever more nuanced analyses of schools as the sites of domination and resistance. Typically, it has been the state’s tools for controlling its citizens that critical ethnographies of schooling have put under scrutiny (Cheney 2007, 253–63; Coe 2005; Foley 2010, 221). This has led to concern that critical ethnographies of schooling risk prioritising critique over ethnographic detail, specifically the accusation that the emphasis on critique tends to paint flat, unsophisticated impressions of teachers as agents of the state (Forsey 2000).

While “reproduction” and “cultural production” should certainly prompt transitional justice scholars to a greater appreciation of injustices that transcend so called post-conflict “transitions,” the idea of “transition” itself is attuned to social change in a way that can challenge the heavy emphasis on critique characteristic of critical ethnographies of schooling. The reproductionist dimensions to my findings are certainly difficult to reduce to a story about domination and resistance to the state. In Solomon Islands, the independence era has seen the state progressively withdraw from the justice sector at the village level (Allen and Dinnen 2015, 385–88). Similarly, justice in Bougainville relies on respect for the customary institutions that operate at the village level. Teachers and students in Solomon Islands and Bougainville colluded in the cultural production of educated persons who were not only academic successes but knowledgeable enough of their social relations to refuse to talk about the violent past with others. That expansive vision of the educated person underlined the discourse about “real culture” that restored a measure of respect for customary justice institutions and the individuals responsible for them. It also helped teachers and students discover a raft of similarities across their cultural differences and develop means to relate to each other—the

groundwork for enemy friendships. The “real culture” discourse risks the reproduction of the ideology of customary land ownership that was a driver of both civil conflicts (Allen 2018). However, it remains that the same process that reproduced the ideology of customary landownership also reproduced a respect for customary authority that was likely beneficial for peace-building.

The data on gender relations was also a poor fit with social reproduction. Firstly, given that teachers and students learnt much about cross-cultural enemy friendships in relations between men and women (chapter 7), it is hardly surprising that the contributors to the women’s submission to the SITRC were able to find common ground from which to build interpersonal reconciliation. As representatives of their islands and provinces, outside the social contexts that typically silence them, they could even share their experiences of violence. The women’s submission appears to have been an example of how a recently arrived transitional justice institution could contribute meaningfully to resolving injustices from the violent past that have deeper roots in the changes wrought by colonisation.

A second way that data on gender relations fit poorly with the logic of social reproduction was the paradoxical situation that left female students and teachers with far greater responsibility for domestic tasks within the school’s private sphere at the same time as educated personhood offered them scope to expand their influence in school decision-making. More Bougainvillean and Solomon Islander women and girls are participating in schooling than at any point in the past, and my findings gave some indications about the changes that might result. Despite pressures that pushed women’s professionalism towards a long-standing discourse of women’s domesticity, female teachers used other elements of their professionalism to subvert the discourse of domesticity and assert themselves in their school’s decision-making processes. Women had the most agency as professionals when staff meetings resembled disentangling events. On these occasions male and female teachers shared an understanding that open dialogue was possible and that all staff members were empowered by their official duties to participate. The cultural production of educated women at the secondary boarding schools thus configured a different version of gender relations from that which emphasised their role as “mothers of the land” (Sirivi and Havini 2004) and made women into peace-makers, but it made them professionals. As Hannah said, although it was a woman’s role to intervene to stop a conflict, professionals should not intervene when a principal was there to do it; authority lay with the position. In this way, female teachers modelled professionalism for their students. And for their part, female students found some measure of agency in the official positions

school administrations granted them. Moreover, male and female students' analyses of the corporal punishment at the athletics carnival closely mirrored Hannah's decision to behave as a professional and stay out of the principal's way. They were not reproducing the social order, or even resisting state domination, but actively negotiating change in relations between men and women.

Consequently, societies undergoing "moments of political transition" (Bellino and Williams 2017, 17), and the field of transitional justice itself, could offer insightful case studies for critical ethnographies of schooling. Transitional justice discourse and the cases to which it is applied are more attuned to social change than critical ethnographies of schooling that emphasise how the social order is maintained. For instance, although it was certainly ironic that a few students used violence as a form of protest against a teacher's use of corporal punishment at the athletics carnival, it is worth noting again that the corporal punishment was universally derided by students and teachers. Until recently it might not have been so. Indeed Cox (2017) observed that corporal punishment maintained considerable popular legitimacy in Solomon Islands in 2014 and I have described elsewhere how difficult it has been for teachers and students at Tenaru to challenge it (Oakeshott 2019). However, while the debate about "child rights" at Tenaru (Oakeshott 2019) had echoed popular debate about the applicability of human rights in Melanesian contexts (Hermkens 2013; Evans 2016; Cronin 2019), it gave students a discourse and vocabulary around which they could conceive of and contest injustices at school. More research into the links between the models of educated personhood that teachers and young women form at school, their notions of professionalism, and the experiences of women in the careers they pursue after school could shine even greater light onto schooling's contribution to rectifying the power imbalances between men and women.

I argued in chapter 2 that the lens of cultural production was a useful way to avoid imposing myself on indigenous knowledges and the creative attempts of Pacific Islander educators to re-claim a place for those knowledges in formal schooling. In the latter field attempts to create transformative forms of education are underway. There are, for example, several indigenous education initiatives in the Pacific (Thaman 2003), as well as conceptualisations of classrooms as canoes (Teaiwa 2005), and schools as oceans (Bonus 2020), which have had a profound effect on Pacific Islander teachers and students. In Solomon Islands specifically, an indigenous language education program has appropriated the physical infrastructure and instructional apparatus of formal education, even producing its own textbooks (McDougall and Zobule 2021). Likewise, Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2013) have described how the massive return of migrants to homes on North Malaita during the Tension precipitated an impressive resurgence of educational initiatives directed at indigenous

knowledge and culture. These are developments that go some way towards re-claiming schooling from the enduring injustices, like alienation from indigenous languages and knowledges, for which formal schooling is responsible. With cultural production I could focus on the cultural forms teachers and students produced in daily life that might inform the work of Pacific Islander educators trying to re-claim schools and classrooms as their spaces.

Critical ethnographies of schooling helped reveal the discourse of “real culture” and its potential to contribute to the drivers of violence, but transitional justice scholarship helped show that students have also made themselves susceptible to the politics underlying transformative kinds of education. The double-sided nature of “enemy friends” captures the fact that both can be present simultaneously, even in moments of dispute and conflict. The skill with which my participants formed meaningful relationships to each other has left me wondering what could be possible if they understood those new connections in their historical context—as of a piece with how their elders and ancestors have engaged with strangers (McDougall 2016; Golub 2014, 191–94).

Finally, I would like to suggest that the way teachers and students have upscaled the principles of reconciliation underlines the point about the potential to connect everyday life at school to emerging visions of transformative schooling in the Pacific, Bougainville and Solomon Islands.

Upscaling locally meaningful transitional justice

My thesis has shed light on ways locally meaningful forms of transitional justice, realised through the reconciliation process, could be scaled-up to higher levels of social life (Boege 2019a, 2019b). Such scaling-up is a critically important issue for place-based transitional justice in Bougainville, where a sweeping amnesty for former combatants increased the reliance on reconciliation processes, which have themselves been forced into new circumstances in the post-conflict environment. For instance, the brutality of the conflicts reached levels Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders had rarely (if ever) seen before, such that there were so many conflicts that lack of progress in one reconciliation could inhibit progress in others, which made the webs of relationships involved in conflicts even more complex. Despite this, reconciliation has been remarkably successful in Bougainville and Solomon Islands within and between families and villages, unless money has been involved (chapter 4). With good reason Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have become cynical of reconciliations in which they perceive protagonists have sought financial gain from the process (Boege 2019b, 193). The risk of this has been greatest at the elite level of politics, and thus there is cause for some scepticism

about the practicality of reconciliation at inter-governmental levels, or between Bougainville and the company that owned the Panguna mine. For reconciliation to be possible at higher scales, Boege (2019a, 152) has suggested, relationships between competing parties must be based on common ground rather than distinctions between “us” and “them.”

While there might be practical challenges in scaling-up reconciliation, the data has convinced me that Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders see little conceptual difficulty in applying reconciliation to new contexts. The cross-country and multi-sited approach I adopted drew attention to the many ways students and teachers from across the archipelago seek to become consequential to one another. In fact, as I showed in chapter 1, Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have long histories of engagement across cultural differences. As much as colonial histories in Bougainville and Solomon Islands were stories of the construction of new differences and the conditions that became the seeds for violence, they were also periods in which connections and relationships could form through new networks, as they were across the Pacific (Banivanua-Mar 2016). These were new arenas and relationships for the “ethics of hospitality” (McDougall 2016, 238) that originate in the sovereignty of local peoples over the lands they inhabit; as McDougall (2016, 219) wrote, “[w]elcoming strangers ashore is a powerful assertion of sovereignty over land.” In granting that welcome, locals demonstrate their right to decide who can enter ancestral ground. The original Malaitan (and other) settlers on Guadalcanal recognised the rights of their hosts, just as the original hosts understood their obligations to their new guests. Even when the Tension was upon them, subsequent generations understood the rights of landowners, and thus the evictions from Guadalcanal during the Tension were, in the main, remarkably orderly (Stritecky 2001, 105–106). Even some militants during the Tension did not see their opponents in terms of incommensurable differences (Allen 2013). Instead, as former militant from Guadalcanal, George Gray, said, they were enemy friends (Tanis and Gray 2002). As I showed in chapter 4, Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders from a diversity of cultural and linguistic backgrounds distinguished reconciliations deemed to be “from the heart” from the less meaningful, and certainly not enduring, reconciliations reliant on money. In doing so they agreed on the terms for real reconciliation beyond the family and village, and thus also on a basis for enemy friendship.

If there is substance to the idea of an enemy friend, as scholarship about the Tension and my analysis of the reconciliation process indicates there is, there is also substance to the idea that enemy friendships form at school. School was certainly where George Gray formed his enemy friendships. The enemy friendships that formed among students and teachers in my research were not the

products of anything inherent to the model of formal education the missions and colonial administrations imposed. Rather, it was the conscious efforts of curriculum developers, teachers and students to fill schooling with ways to become consequential to others that made enemy friends and helped people find the common ground from which they could scale up reconciliation. In everyday life outside the classroom, the individualising elements of a school's program sat uncomfortably next to a strong emphasis on the relationships in which students and teachers were embedded. Several aspects of the daily routine at all the secondary boarding schools I studied encouraged young people and teachers to see themselves as individuals responsible for their own academic success. Yet religious programs exhorted a relational ethos, as did the regular references to *kastom* in everyday life. Moreover, the flexibility that students and teachers had to adopt within their school timetables ultimately amplified the relational aspects of their model of educated personhood. Deviations from the routine were so regular, and the demands on students' and teachers' time so overwhelming, that coping required them to lean even further on their relationships.

In fact, successive chapters have demonstrated that students and teachers could disentangle broken relationships at ever higher scales. New textbooks seek to ground students in a methodology for reconciling focused on mending relationships (chapter 5). In chapter 6 I showed students resolving relatively minor arguments amongst themselves with the logic of disentangling. By chapter 8 the same techniques were in use by senior teachers and Mabiri's area group chiefs to solve disputes between different area groups. If Mabiri's area group chiefs achieved reconciliations across cultural differences within Bougainville, Tenaru's students and teachers achieved them across islands. In chapter 9, a serious incident at Tenaru's athletics carnival, which mapped onto tensions between Malaita and Guadalcanal, was resolved with an informal reconciliation process. When students considered how to involve themselves in the situation and its aftermath they weighed their affiliations with island based identities against the new relationships they had formed at school. That incident even had a national character for some students and teachers. In all cases, there were alternative frames, and pillars of educated personhood, that students and teachers could draw on to find a way to use a place-based form of transitional justice with their enemy friends.

It follows from the research I have undertaken that insightful new knowledge about the contribution of schooling and formal education to transitional justice and peace-building could be generated from a thorough investigation of the life histories of individuals who formed enemy friendships at school. It would seem particularly important to understand the occasions when the relationships formed at

school re-emerge over the course of individual lives, the obligations that come with them, and the means for fulfilling them. The relationships certainly re-emerged during the conflicts; one former BRA commander told me that

one funny thing is that some of the PNG Defence Force intelligence officers were actually my friends that I met earlier on in PNG when we were in schooling in [Port] Moresby.... They were telling me “this is what the government is planning to do against you Bougainvilleans.”

In this former militant’s account it was the networks formed at school through which dialogue and understanding could travel, first helping PNGDF officers to understand Bougainville’s fight as a fight for their land, then eventually, according to the commander, to find sympathy for and assist the cause. Investigating the ideas and connections that flow through enemy friendships could, in keeping with the project of the late Tracey Banivanua-Mar (2016), also trace the development and spread of ideas about decolonisation. Any such undertaking must necessarily involve the perspectives of elites and ordinary citizens and might even show to what extent ideas relevant to transitional justice and transformative education, such as gender equality and techniques for overcoming alienation through schooling, have traction in village contexts which Papua New Guineans, Bougainvilleans, and Solomon Islanders often consider backwards and in need of development (Cox 2021; Golub 2014, 170–76).

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