

# *Expanding Horizons of Restorative Justice and Restorative Peacemaking Research*

**John Braithwaite**  
**2024 Balzan Prize for Restorative Justice**

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**Duration:** 2025-2029

John Braithwaite is Professor Emeritus at Australian National University. With Valerie Braithwaite, he founded the School of Regulation and Global Governance (RegNet) at ANU.

## **Aims of the Project**

- Renew and expand the social movement for restorative justice by deepening restorative research capability among young scholars in Africa, China, and worldwide by connecting them to collaborations with scholars from Europe and across the Global North, China, and Australia.
- Complete initial fieldwork for *Peacebuilding Compared* in Africa, Ukraine, Chechnya, and start work in Haiti, Yemen, and Syria.
- Publish two books: *Thinking Holistically About Restorative Justice* and *A Theory of Organizational Crime Prevention*.
- Encourage and support recipients of Balzan PhD Fellowships to lead with editing and publishing collections of articles (hopefully many co-authored with John Braithwaite) with titles like *Indigenous Justice, Restorative Justice and Peacemaking in Africa* or *Restorative Justice and Peacemaking in Africa*. Publish within China and internationally on the two Chinese restorative justice sub-projects.
- Chinese University of Hong Kong will collaborate with the project and would deliver and fund sub-projects on restorative justice and peacemaking. CUHK will fund two or three PhD scholarships on Environmental Restorative Justice. John Braithwaite will support those PhD students with mentoring and fieldwork travel funding. He will pursue occasional co-authorships with this group of Chinese restorative justice scholars and Deputy Director Yan Zhang.

## **The African Focus**

This project aims to expand the horizons of restorative justice research in all regions of the planet, including Europe, the Americas, the Middle East, Oceania, and right across Asia. Yet the main geographic focus and spending focus will be on Africa with the production of many

papers by dozens of young African scholars funded by Braithwaite's Balzan Prize. They will work on restorative peacemaking and research fieldwork, often co-authoring with John Braithwaite, in 20 or more specific war-afflicted African countries.

One reason for the African focus is that John Braithwaite will complete most of the initial fieldwork component for the *Peacebuilding Compared* project in Africa during the next five years. To date, he has achieved that for only five war-torn African countries. He has already been collecting data for 20 years on *Peacebuilding Compared*. Initial fieldwork is complete across Asia and Oceania, the Americas, Europe except for Ukraine and Chechnya (which are also possible fieldwork foci for the Balzan project), and most of the Middle East (except Syria and Yemen).

Braithwaite started this work with a visit to Ethiopia to collect fieldwork data on Ethiopian wars in November 2024. Since the African Union headquarters is in Addis Ababa, the second objective is to engage African Union peacekeeping leaders with the value of an African Balzan Project. Overall, the African Balzan Project will increase the number of coded *Peacebuilding Compared* wars from the current count of 76 to over 110 for quantitative analysis (because many countries have more than one war to code). Braithwaite (2022, 2024) discusses how this future quantitative work might be tackled with a new generation of quantitative scholars in the forefront, perhaps working with new AI options for interrogating the changing character of contemporary war and peace. Many reconciliation, transitional justice, and peacemaking variables are coded in the dataset.

## **The Chinese Focus**

A secondary geographical focus will be China, with a much more limited and focussed investment than in Africa. Braithwaite proposes to work with co-authors in China who would be appointed as ANU Visiting Fellows. One will be Deputy Director Dr. Yan Zhang. His priority will be to complete a book based on the PhD he completed at the Australian National University under the supervision of John Braithwaite entitled *China: A Powerhouse and Resistor of Restorative Justice*. He will continue to publish with John Braithwaite.

Another Chinese project will be an all-of-China project on *Restorative Environmental Justice in China*, though it will have an empirical focus on the North-East urban hinterland of large cities behind Shanghai where the major part of Chinese manufacturing occurs, and the rural South-West, where there are important examples of surviving Indigenous restorative justice in China. This project will be headed by Dr. Jin Sun of the Chinese University in Hong Kong and by Balzan Deputy Director Zhang, as well as two or three PhD students at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

A further project will be led by Dr. Sun with participation and co-authorship with Professor Braithwaite. Its focus will be *Chinese Peacemaking Diplomacy in Comparative Perspective*. It will seek to delineate the ways Chinese peacemaking is and is not restorative. It will juxtapose these empirical findings with what is known from the literature and from interviews (particularly with French, EU, and US peacemakers) about how other major powers have conducted peacemaking mediation. The first specific focus will be on the current Chinese initiative to open pathways to peace through collaborative dialogues among Chinese, Ukrainian, and Russian diplomats. Dr. Sun has had the opportunity to attend some of these dialogues and participate in a small way on their periphery.

After peace is secured in Ukraine, the focus on this project with Dr. Sun would shift to Chinese peacemaking initiatives in Africa. Braithwaite Balzan Prize funds would enable Dr. Sun to attend some of these in Africa during the next five years, with Professor Braithwaite also doing

African fieldwork with young African scholars with local language skills in that country at the same time.

### **Monograph on *A Theory of Organizational Crime Prevention***

This monograph will be completed during the Balzan Prize Project by John Braithwaite. It will discuss how restorative justice can and cannot contribute to the control of organized crime groups, corporate crime, and war crimes. This theory development will draw inductively on data from the Balzan Project data collection on these forms of organizational crime prevention.

### **Monograph on *Thinking Holistically About Restorative Justice***

This will also draw on the Balzan Project data. It will conceive restorative diplomacy, Indigenous peacemaking, restorative peacemaking, and a restorative way of living as all central to restorative justice ideals.

### **Balzan Support for PhD Candidates to Collect Data in Africa (plus 4 other countries)**

- At least 20 (and perhaps approaching 30) Balzan Restorative Justice and Peacemaking PhD Fellowships will be offered to PhD students mostly enrolled in African universities studying restorative justice and/or peacemaking in that same country. That, by design, is the priority. Non-African applicants from non-African universities would also be welcomed. Some will be supported.
- Applicants must already be accepted and enrolled in a recognised PhD program to be eligible. The Fellowship will be US\$10,000: \$5000 to support their in-country fieldwork after they have provided a persuasive fieldwork plan with signed approval of it by their principal PhD Supervisor. Their PhD Supervisor has total responsibility for the direction, theoretical framework, and methodology of their PhD. But John Braithwaite will not authorize disbursement of the \$5000 unless it meets the Balzan Project excellence standards. A year later, once a satisfactory draft chapter or paper has been and presented at one of the 25 half-day Braithwaite Balzan zoom symposiums of all Fellows, again with the agreement of their university, they will be awarded a second \$5000 for further fieldwork, purchase of books, and the like, to assist in completing their PhD.
- Applicants may only apply for a Restorative Justice and Peacemaking Balzan PhD Fellowship if their data collection will be in one of the following countries that John Braithwaite will be able to visit during the period 2025-29. They can apply any time between 1 March 2025 and 31 December 2027 for \$10,000 towards Balzan-funded research in any of the following countries:
  - *African Countries*  
Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire, Algeria, Western Sahara, Morocco, Egypt (Peacebuilding Compared will code the Sinai insurgency 2011-2023), Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Uganda, Burundi, Mozambique, Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burkina Faso
  - *Non-African Countries*  
Ukraine, Chechnya, Syria, Yemen

- Balzan Restorative Justice and Peacemaking Fellows would be encouraged to attend most of the 25 half-day Zoom meetings of all Fellows with John Braithwaite to discuss their progress. They would be expected to circulate two draft chapters/papers on their findings at two of these zoom meetings. John Braithwaite will provide Fellows with feedback on the two papers, as would other Fellows, and their supervisors, who we also want to participate in the part of those meetings that is on presentations of their PhD student.
- In 2028 and 2029, there will be zoom meetings dedicated to how to search for postdoctoral fellowship opportunities worldwide.
- A disadvantage African students face promoting competitive research to the global academy is the weak access they have to the intellectual commons from university libraries in developing countries devastated by war. The Australian National University will grant access to Australian National University Library resources for all Braithwaite Balzan Fellows.
- It is expected that most of the countries on the above list will get one and only one Fellowship, so it will be highly competitive. Some countries may get none because no applicant from that country is competitive with those from other countries. Countries will be particularly likely to get more than one Fellowship if a non-African gets an African fellowship. Then another African from the country is quite likely to get a fellowship. John Braithwaite has listened and heard the message that so many special funding opportunities for research in Africa go to non-Africans. This will not happen with this Balzan Project because, as becomes clear in the next paragraph, he will work mainly with locals who have local language and cultural skills.
- Balzan Restorative Justice and Peacemaking Fellows will hopefully be offered the opportunity to do some joint fieldwork with John Braithwaite for his Peacebuilding Compared project. In this, Fellows will be encouraged to ‘use’ him to get research access to persons for their PhD research that they might not be able to get. This Peacebuilding Compared Research is, however, for the most part quite separate from Fellows’ PhD research that Fellows control in their own way with their local PhD supervisor. Therefore, the payment for all expenses associated with Peacebuilding Compared research will not be paid from Fellows’ \$10,000, which is wholly and only for their PhD data collection. Fellows are free not to become a co-fieldworker and/or possibly a co-author in Peacebuilding Compared. Fellows might be overwhelmed with other commitments at the time Braithwaite arrives to do Peacebuilding Compared fieldwork in their country. That’s fine. This is just another opportunity for Fellows as a result of being supported by the Balzan Foundation. Fellows can take or leave it as they please. It is not an obligation. If Fellows do participate, they will receive modest payment for their time, their travel, accommodation, and any other fieldwork expenses incurred for Peacebuilding Compared.
- During Braithwaite’s fieldwork, Balzan Fellows will be encouraged to organize an event (a mini-conference or a sharing circle) for local restorative justice researchers and practitioners to share their work and learn about the Balzan Project work. In addition, Fellows will be encouraged to participate in a larger and more specialized conference in Africa on “Indigenous and Restorative Justice and Peacemaking”

## References

Braithwaite, John 2022. *Macrocriminology and Freedom*. Canberra: ANU Press.

Braithwaite, John 2024. *Simple Solutions to Complex Catastrophes: Dialectics of Peace, Climate, Finance and Health*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Zhang, Yan Zhang and Yiwei Xia. 2021. "Can restorative justice reduce incarceration? A story from China." *Justice Quarterly* 38: 1471-1491.