

“A Few Fragile Shards of Hope:”
The Role of Social Agents and the Military in Implementing Effective Peace Policy

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Abstract

As conflict and its inevitable consequences become more prevalent, anthropology's focus on the humanity and the human condition positions it to provide meaningful input into the practical process of peacemaking. Anthropologists are no strangers to studying both conflict and peace. Unlike political scientists and historians who study larger processes such as national interactions, anthropologists focus on sociocultural concepts. In the case of peacemaking, there are several important questions worth examining. What social agents can be addressed that create a lasting peace? Are there deeper social constructs (structural manifestations of violence for example) that influence peacemaking? Are there approaches that offer a better chance of building a sustained peace? Most important, however, is how these answers can contribute to the development of more effective peacemaking policy.

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Introduction

In her poem's opening line Olivia Garard (2018) says, "Good kill. The words disoriented me. Logic and morality clashed."¹ This line speaks to the complex mental and emotional strain that accompanies the armed combat experience. Violence and warfare extend deep into humanity's history and, even today, scholars continue to explore the combat experience which will most likely impact more people as the 21st century moves forward. The intimate connection between humanity and violence places anthropological theory in a unique position to yield insight into role that endemic violence plays in current global society. The US military, an organization deeply involved in the global violence of the past two centuries, is often the organization charged with the pragmatic management of conflicts worldwide. While in the United States the ethics of cooperation between the military and anthropology has been fiercely debated, there are areas where cooperation can flourish and allow both organizations to maintain their ethical stances. One such area is creating a lasting peace.² Perhaps the application of anthropological theory to

¹ The title of this thesis comes the following book. Margarita Engle, *Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2009: 86. Oliva Garard is an author writing on defense issues and serves in the United States Marine Corps as an officer. See <https://thestrategybridge.org/editorial-team/2016/8/16/olivia-a-garard> and https://www.realcleardefense.com/authors/olivia_garard/; <https://warontherocks.com/author/olivia-garard/> for an overview of her background.

² The relationship between the military and anthropology have been continuous following World War II but especially sense Vietnam. How much anthropology should support the military is hotly debated with scholars falling on both sides of the debate. Joel C. Evans, 2018a. "Finding Common Ground: The Ethics of Anthropology and Military Cooperation" In *The Impact of Diverse Worldviews on Military Conflict*, Elizabeth Ditsch ed. (Leavenworth: CGSC Foundation, 2018), 19-28; Jenna Lark Clawson. "Ethical Landscapes of the Human Terrain System" (M.A. Thesis, North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science, 2014), ProQuest (UMI 1572149); Bartholomew Dean, Charles K. Bartles, and Timothy B. Berger. "Civil-Affairs Confronts the "Weapon of the Weak": Improvised Explosive Devices in Iraq," *Small Wars Journal* In The Compilation Professors in the Trenches: Deployed Soldiers and Social Science Academics, Rob W. Kurz (2009) pdf. Maximilian C. Forte, "The Human Terrain System and Anthropology: A Review of Ongoing Public Debates," *American Anthropologist* 113, no.1 (March, 2011): 149-53, <http://dx.doi.org/www2.lib.ku.edu/10.1111/j.1548-1433.2010.01315.x>. George R. Lucas, Jr., *Anthropologists in Arms: The Ethics of Military Anthropology* (Plymouth: AltaMira Press, 2009); Montgomery McFate, "Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The Strange Story of their Curious Relationship," *Military Review* 85, 1 (March-April 2005), 24-38, www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/milreview/mcfate.pdf. Network of Concerned Anthropologists, *The Counter-Counterinsurgency Manual: Or, Notes on Demilitarizing American Society* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2009); Robert A. Rubinstein, Kerry Fosher, and Clementine Fujimura, eds. *Practicing Military Anthropology: Beyond Expectations and Traditional Boundaries* (Sterling: Kumarian Press, 2013).

practical military issues can shift Garard’s clash of morality and logic to a place where logic and morality work in tandem to mend the remaining shards of hope in areas that have known considerable systemic violence.

While there are groups such as arms merchants that benefit from war, for the US Armed Forces, peace remains the end-goal of any armed conflict. What this means, how is it accomplished, and who is charged with developing peace remain some of the more important questions. These questions form the core of this study. To find answers requires an interdisciplinary methodology, one well-suited to the anthropological “tool-kit”. Data analysis regarding various conflicts and geographical zones of contestation appear in historical monographs, political science works, and anthropological literature. Each of these disciplines differs somewhat in terms of their primary sources, methodological approaches, and theories on peace and conflict.³ For this thesis, the fields of history and political science primarily provide case studies on the approaches and outcomes of peacebuilding in different areas. The bulk of the conceptualizations of social agents and interpretative theories are based on anthropological insights. My mixed approach, combining political science, history and anthropological theory,

³ I explored the unique value of each of these disciplines in a previous, unpublished paper. This is an excerpt from those papers. “As discipline, political science is primarily interested in power relations between those within certain groups. Furthermore, in political science, the comparative analysis of identified cases is an important research methodology (Wuthrich October 1, 2018).” (p.8)

“Historians emphasize processes and how they take shape over time. Conflict and peace are an example. These processes are bound by certain parameters with the purpose of identifying the various factors that shape these processes. To put it succinctly, history searches for explanations to complex issues in relation to points in time (Wuthrich November 12, 2018).” (p.8).

“Anthropology focuses broadly on culture. This can take many forms and cover a range of sub-disciplines. However, a detailed and nuanced understanding of social factors is a core part of the majority anthropological research. In the case of the Korean and Iraq Wars, anthropology can contextualize the social factors of the nations involved. It can provide definitions for and ascribe cultural value to each social factor. This helps with determining which factors are relevant to the study. Of lesser importance, anthropology can provide additional interpretative theories and data for this research.” (pp. 8-9).

Joel C. Evans, 2018b. “Social Factors and Democratic Peace Theory.” Submitted as part of GIST 701: Approaches to International Studies. Mike Wuthrich, “Political Science & *Nations Under God*- Part 1,” (Presented at Global and International Studies Class, Lawrence, KS October 1, 2018); Mike Wuthrich, “The Idea of the Historical World,” (Presented at Global and International Studies Class, Lawrence, KS. November 12, 2018).

provides a novel framework for developing more comprehensive peace policies designed to provide lasting peace in key areas of conflict.

To organize my framework, this study has three sections. The first discussion provides the thesis by highlighting existing research and key theoretical frameworks. Building on this context, I explore three important social agents that influence peace, highlighting the value of sociocultural context for its role in the development of peace. Finally, I analyze the findings and provide recommendations to improve peace policy. Taken together, these sections highlight the value of social agents to peacebuilding. First, however, one must understand the broader context of peacebuilding.

Approaches to peace vary among countries and organizations. However, a community of international peacemakers exists that is marked by its own unique sociocultural characteristics (Autesserre 2014). Since the United States armed forces plays a significant role in the international spectrum of peace and conflict resolution, close examination and critique of its approach is informative to the broader concept of peace policy development. A review of the United States' contemporary conceptualizations of peace reveal several important trends and provides important contextual information for this study.

A key consideration in United States-backed peacebuilding efforts is devoted to the creation of viable governmental structures. While the government is ostensibly designed to be a democracy, the bureaucratic make up is fundamentally hierarchical. Put simply, policy development issues, such as conflict and peacebuilding initiatives or policy making occurs at the higher levels of government, rather than at the grass-roots or community level. This highlights that US policy formulation and implementation of strategy follows a top down approach, and as a result, policy flows to the lower levels of government for execution at the local level where

consultation has often been limited, or even absent. As a consequence, the implementation of top-down policies may account for failure at the local, regional and national levels. While policy may be informed by local perspectives in this system, the structure limits the flow of information up to policymakers.

Like any organization, the US government is marked by a distinct set of institutional cultures. Buried within these bureaucratic cultures are deeply ingrained modes of thinking that shape that shape policy development, including the formulation of peacebuilding processes. Two important ideologies stand out in this regard. The first is democratic peace theory (Evans, 2018b; Rosato 2003; Hobson 2011). This dominant political science theory in the US academy is built on the observation that countries with democratic governments rarely go to war with each other. While many reasons are put forth as to why this happens and numerous critiques of the concept have been made, it is most important to recognize the impact it has in US foreign policy. US policy goals for most of the twentieth century were to establish global democracies, a trend that has continued into today. The influence of this is readily apparent in today's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan where hallmarks of democracy, such as free elections and gender equality are critical policy objectives. When it comes to peace and conflict, US foreign policy emphasizes the creation of democratic institutions (Hobson 2011; Smith 2011; Müllerson 2013).

Another characteristic of the United States' perception of warfare and peace as a binary conceptualization. This is acknowledged (p.28) and perpetuated throughout the most recent National Security Strategy (2017). This binary perception of both are prevalent in military doctrine as well where war and peace are described as polar opposites (JP 3-0 2018; JP 5-0 2017). This, however, is an oversimplification of a complex and dynamic process. Johan Gatlung

(1967) makes a similar point. He outlines the interconnectedness of war and peace.⁴ The implication of his work is that peace and conflict are more of a spectrum than poles, that elements of each will always be present. This conceptualization offers a different perspective of what peace means and can drastically change American peace policy.

The above characteristics represent some of the main intellectual approaches that shape the intellectual frameworks for peacebuilding. However, creating lasting peace requires more than a policy vision. Once the outline for peace is developed, the next step is to turn that conceptualization into an actionable plan. This happens through the interpretive process of strategy. As will be discussed later, the military is the organization that carries out this interpretive process and bears much of the burden for managing the pragmatic peacebuilding procedures.

In the broader application of peacebuilding, the trend has been to rely on the military for much of the work which any cursory review of the military's purpose illustrates that it is geared toward carrying out violence and highlights the disconnect in the logic of this organization's responsibility for managing peace.⁵ For this same reason, an argument will be made that the military is a natural choice to fill this role. This has profound implications for the United States Army which is the primary organization charged with land warfare and managing the subsequent peace. The Army must understand both its limitations in peacebuilding and prepare to successfully fill the role of peacebuilder in the future.

⁴ See the following works for more insight into Galtung's ideas: Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization* (Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, 1996), Ebook; Johan Galtung, *Transcend and Transform: An Introduction to Conflict* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), Ebook.

⁵ Séverine Autesserre, *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 21. She provides a good working definition of peacebuilding. She defines it as "actions aimed at creating, strengthening, and solidifying peace" and includes "security, socioeconomic, and political dimensions."

The purpose of the US military is to carry out state sanctioned violence which makes it difficult to be effective peacebuilders. Like policymakers in the United States, the Army has institutional characteristics that influence its approach to peace. Perhaps its defining characteristic is rigidity built into its structure. The US Army is also a hierarchical organization which takes a top down approach to planning and operations. Furthermore, the Army planning process, the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP) is very prescriptive and allows for little flexibility. However, at the strategic level, military staffs consist of members of all the services and employ a different process. The Joint Operations Planning Process (JOPP) is a much more flexible process, but still remains a somewhat regimented, linear way of approaching problems. The emphasis on structure pushes military thinkers to approach challenges in a very rigid, formulaic manner, which can constrain innovative, critical non-linear thinking.

The hierarchical and regimented nature of the Army is something readily acknowledged. However, there is another structural tendency in the Army that is understated, one that significantly influences the way thinkers approach problems. History is the central intellectual discipline within Army academics. For example, at the US Command and Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, there are four Departments: Tactics, Joint Interagency Multination Operations, Logistics, and Military History. In my own experience, many Army courses have a military history component. However, there are no specific courses in other disciplines, although ideas from other fields may be scattered throughout various blocks of the curriculum and classroom instruction. This is not to say history as discipline is without merit or there is any negative intent in the Army's emphasis on the subject. Furthermore, the reasons for this are not import to the objective of this thesis. Rather, the point of highlighting this issue is to underscore the impact of

emphasizing one scholarly discipline on Army thinking, and how this relates to the formulation and implementation of US-backed peacebuilding efforts.

As a discipline, history has its own unique scholarly culture. Except for certain methodologies, historians use written sources which favor societies that have writing. This emphasizes those societies' perspectives and biases. History is also a way to structure memory and support narratives for groups in power.⁶ In a military context, historical studies often overly emphasize battles and campaigns for drawing contemporary lessons which can leave out broader social contexts. Most historians recognize these issues within the discipline. However, soldiers with training as historians may not understand these issues and draw inaccurate lessons. This can create faulty interpretations of policy with significant ramifications.⁷

This is the institutional culture within the United States Armed Forces' scholarly approach to the development and implementation of peace policies. A critical look at the key concepts underpinning this school of thought reveals a paradigm that makes creating "lasting peace" in any context, a difficult if not impossible outcome. First, the perception of what constitutes peace in this overly-historical approach is extremely narrow. In what I deem the binary model that informs the historical approach, the absence of war equates to peace and vice versa. However, the spectrum of peace and conflict is always much more complicated, with elements of each existing simultaneously, at varying degrees, and in different social or cultural sectors and fields.⁸

⁶ Abdelmajid Hannoum, "The Historiographic State: How Algeria Once Became French" *History and Anthropology* 19, no. 2 (June 2008): 91-115, DOI: 10.1080/02757200802320876; Bernard S. Cohn, *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays* (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1987); Also discussed these issues in Anthropology 704 on November 6, 2017.

⁷ There is support for anthropological work by the military. For examples see Montgomery McFate 2018. *Military Anthropology: Soldiers, Scholars and Subjects at the Margins of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Robert A. Rubinstein, Kerry Foshier, and Clementine Fujimura, eds. *Practicing Military Anthropology: Beyond Expectations and Traditional Boundaries* (Sterling: Kumarian Press, 2013); Dean Bartholomew, "The Ethics of Spying: Responses to F. Moos, R. Fardon and H. Gusterson (AT21[3])" 21, no. 4 (August 2005): 20-21, DOI: 10.1111/j.0268-540X.2005.00370.x.

⁸ Gatlung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research."

Although a country or region of conflict may not be in an active state of war, that does not mean the nation is necessarily at peace. There may be structural violence internally.⁹ Solutions cannot be fully reached unless the problems are accurately articulated, defined, and assessed. Current United States Army policy mechanisms limit solutions to complex issues by subscribing to a narrow idea of peace.

An accurate conceptualization of peace is a critical part of the process of long-term peacebuilding. Equally important is the methodological framework used to establish a lasting peace. For the United States, democratic peace theory forms the core of how peace is thought to be created and maintained (White House 2017; Hobson 2011; Smith 2011; Müllerson 2013). The theory goes that if there are more democracies involved in the conflict, then there will be an eventual reduction in warfare among states (Rosato 2003, 585; Hobson 2011, 147). Clearly, this does not account for non-state actors such as terrorist organizations or transnational criminal networks. Columbia and Northern Ireland are examples where the conflict was with non-state actors. This perception is extremely limiting and creates flawed policies that hinder effective peacebuilding. Government structures must be linked to the groups' sociocultural ideologies or imposed through violence. Democracy will not fit all societies and must not be the go-to answer for creating peace. Plattner (2010, 83-84) argues that what is considered democracy is in actuality "liberal democracy" which he describes as government with control ceded to the people that accounts for "individual rights and majority rule." He points out that some of the key characteristics of these democracies are written a governmental guiding document, open

⁹ Gatlung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," 171. Structural violence is that which is violence that exists with a societies institution and involves one group being exploited by another. Building on Gatlung's work, Paul Farmer argues for 'structural violence' in the context of human rights, pointing out that it encompasses issues such as gender and race. Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 8.

elections, and formalized rules that limit the government's power. However, this type of structure may not account for local conceptualizations of government. The most important should be ideologies of rule that incorporate existing sociocultural perceptions of issues like authority and leadership.

Once a policy is determined and plan created to implement the policy, it is then executed by the government's proxy. In the case of the United States, foreign policy implementation involves any number of organizations. For the policy involving conflict and peace, the two key agencies are the Department of State and the Department of Defense. Put simply, diplomacy or violence. Which agency is favored depends on the situation, however, the military is primarily responsible for developing long-term peace in areas actively involved in or recently removed from war.¹¹ Reasons vary from the danger involved to the military's sheer logistical capability. Thus, the United States tends to look for the military to as the organization, particularly the Army, as best suited for implementing peace policy. This creates the situation where an organization intended for one purpose is used for another, namely designed for war but charged with establishing and maintaining peace. When focused at one extreme of the conflict-peace spectrum, it is difficult to shift to the opposite end. The systematic application of violence is ingrained in all aspects of the institution of the US Army. The organization's material culture, symbols, and organizational

¹¹ A good definition of war is "lethal violence carried on by one community against another" Douglas P. Fry, "Worlds Without War: An Idea For the Greater Good," Greater Good Magazine, The Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley Website, March 01, 2018, Accessed on April 06, 2019, https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/worlds_without_war.

structures point to this.¹² Even with this institutional mandate, the Army is a primary organization that often finds itself carrying out peace policy for the US government.

The US Armed Forces organizational structure, coupled with its leaders' limited conceptualizations of peace and the institution's rigid structures for implementation, create a situation where sociocultural context can be lost or intentionally not accounted for. Solutions for peacebuilding derived from the highest levels of government or from those not associated with the area or people where peace is being developed tend to discount local considerations. This is readily evident in the influence of democratic peace theory in US policy circles (White House 2017; Hobson 2011; Smith 2011; Müllerson 2013), as well as the dominant binary perspective of conflict and peace that is regnant in the modern US Armed Forces. The Army, as the key executor of peace policies, is not always adept at accounting for sociocultural context. It is limited by inflexible models, and a bias in academic disciplines that prioritize history at the expense of other social science approaches, namely anthropology. The recent counterinsurgency conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have influenced US Army thought and placed greater emphasis on the role of culture and society as a basic consideration of war and peace. A cursory review of *FM 3-24* (2014), the Army and Marine Corps' counterinsurgency manual makes this readily apparent. Sociocultural context, while something that is considered, I would argue is not an

¹² This characterization is based on my eighteen years of active duty in the Army. Unit symbols and histories emphasize combat prowess and violence. The Army's recent focus on large scale combat operations and discussions of closing the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute. See the following for some of the discussions: Tammy S. Schultz, "Tool of Peace and War: Save the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute," Council on Foreign Relations (blog), July 31, 2018. Accessed on April 1, 2019. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/tool-peace-and-war-save-peacekeeping-and-stability-operations-institute>. Howard R. Lind, "On the Recommendation to Shut Down the Army's Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute." *Small Wars Journal* (website) November 29, 2018, Accessed on May 9, 2019, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/recommendation-shut-down-armys-peacekeeping-and-stability-operations-institute>; Michael D. Lundy, "Meeting the Challenge of Large-Scale Combat Operations Today and Tomorrow," *Military Review Special Edition* 98, no. 5 (September-October 2018):111-118, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/SO-18/Lundy-LSCO.pdf>.

overly important or well-understood concept. This highlights the need for a deeper look into the US Army's role in the process of peacebuilding.

Academic Context

Peacebuilding, the military's role within this process, and anthropological theory are all well researched subjects. Intersections among these three fields of inquiry occur quite regularly and several core issues and concepts are apparent. However, most studies examine these subject areas separately or in pairs. What is more difficult to find, however, is a study of the intersection of peacebuilding, the military's place with peace processes, and anthropological theory. This thesis examines the intersection of these three disparate fields in order to highlight the US Army's role as peacebuilders, and to identify approaches to better inform the development of peacebuilding policies and implementation strategies. The literature from each field of study brings to light the need for a comprehensive, intersectional approach to the study of peacebuilding. This is perhaps best illustrated through a discussion of how these disparate approaches understand each other's contributions to the debate of peace and conflict.

There are several studies that apply anthropological methods to understanding peace and conflict. A comparison highlights several critical concepts as well as important gaps. A central work in peace theory is Johan Galtung's "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" (1969). The article offers an important outline for understanding peace. Galtung starts with a discussion of peace which leads to the concept's definition and some of the common understandings of the term. Particularly useful is his description of the interconnectedness of peace and violence where he points out that to understand one you must understand the other. As discussed earlier, Galtung implies that peace and conflict are best understood as part of a spectrum or sliding scale, where elements of each are always present. He also presents a very pointed discussion on the nuances

between personal and structural violence. Overall, this article highlights the complexity of peace and conflict.¹⁴

The next two works highlight one of the most important lessons of this study and for taking anthropology seriously in the realm of policy. It gives voice to local sociocultural agents and thus requires peacebuilders to incorporate local consultations at all stages of the peacebuilding process. Another key anthropological work is represented by Angela J. Lederach's (2017) essay, 'The Campesino Was Born for the Campo' A Multispecies Approach to Territorial Peace in Colombia." In this article, Lederach examines the local peacemaking process in Colombia and the final stages of the 2016 peace agreement signed between the FARC and the Colombian government. Throughout this work, Lederach makes several important arguments. However, two stand out. Her first argument is that effective peacemaking occurs at the local level and must be understood within the local context. Second, she points out the value of a multispecies approach to understanding local peacemaking. This work forms a basis for understanding US policies and strategic approaches to peacemaking. It juxtaposes the top-down approach valued by the United States with that of emphasizing local perspectives when developing peace.

S verine Autesserre's *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention* is a recent work that is central to understanding peace processes. This book, based on ethnographic fieldwork, examines concepts that influence how peacemaking is carried out by foreign groups. She argues that common components of a specific area are those that are often used as a basis for developing strategies. Autesserre examines these different practices. She points out that, while these concepts may help those on the ground working for peace, that may inhibit the peacemaking process. The author looks at approaches to peace that do

¹⁴ Gatlung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," 1969.

not follow this model and offers other ways to approach developing peace that, like Lederach, argues for local considerations to be a key component peacemaking.

Each of these works discuss important themes in the development of peace. However, none examine meaningfully the military as the key actor in this process. The military has its own approach to understanding peace that is best illustrated through doctrine. Joint Publication 3-07.3 *Peace Operations* (JP 3-07.1 2018) is the overarching Department of Defense (DOD) manual that outlines the military's approach to peace. The work highlights key definitions and nuances in peace operations. There are two key points in this manual. First, DOD recognizes its role as a key actor in peace processes and acknowledges the growth in demand for such military action. Second, the work recognizes the complexity of creating peace and the importance of considering sociocultural agents. However, there is no detailed discussion of how to address or incorporate these agents into the planning process (JP 3-07.1 2018).

To understand the military's approach to carrying out peace operations the organization's manuals that outlining its planning processes are most informative. For joint doctrine (doctrine that applies to all services) *Joint Publication 3.0, Operations* (JP 3.0 2018) and *Joint Publication 5.0, Joint Planning* (JP 5.0 2017) are the most important. *JP 3.0* outlines the types of operations and the broad ways in which to carry them out. This includes a limited discussion on peace operations. Peace itself is mentioned as part of the conflict continuum but in the same binary manner as discussed earlier. The manuals present peace as definitive all or nothing state nothing state. *JP 5.0* mentions peace in the same manner but the manual focus primarily on the linear planning process meant to organize and synchronize operations.

Army specific doctrine follow's a similar pattern. *Field Manual 3-0, Operations* (FM 3-0 2017), like its joint counterpart, focuses on the variety of operations the Army may encounter. It

also approaches peace in the same ideological manner, placing it at the far end of a continuum but maintaining a binary conceptualization. However, the manual's focus is on large scale conventional operations which points to the Army's emphasis on the conflict end of the spectrum. *Army Doctrine Publication 5-0, The Operations Process* (ADP 5-0 2012) and *Army Doctrine Reference Publication 5-0*, (ADRP 5-0 2012) is similar to *JP 5-0* in that it outlines Army planning processes. It differs, however, in that peace is not mentioned. Two themes are apparent in the operations and planning manuals. First, peacebuilding is not viewed as a key mission. Instead, the military emphasis is on combat operations. Second, the military's planning processes are very systematic and structured with little flexibility.

While the US military has a range of manuals and publications, those mentioned in the paragraphs above provide insight into how the organization approaches peacebuilding. Out of an examination of these manuals we see a focus on the "how" rather than the "what" regarding conflict and peace. A final area of examination is the military and anthropology relationship. There are some anthropological studies of the military, but they are few (For example Price 2016; Simons 1997; Frese and Harrell; Lutz 2010; Lutz 2005; Gonzalez, Roberto J.). Previous research reveals that the two organizations have an almost adversarial relationship. Anthropology tends to view working with the military as ethically unsound while the military tends to be dismissive of groups that have less pragmatic outlooks on social issues. However, there is considerable crossover in their ethical structures and several areas where cooperation between the two can occur, one of which is building peace.¹⁶

¹⁶ Evans, Finding Common Ground: The Ethics of Anthropology and Military Cooperation," 2018a; Rubinstein et al., ed., *Practicing Military Anthropology* 2013; Network of Concerned Anthropologists.. *The Counter-Counterinsurgency Manual*, 2009.

Social Agents and Their Importance

The complexity of peace and conflict cannot be understated.¹⁷ Like any society, the United States' cultural perceptions shapes the policies used to build peace. This is apparent from its intellectual framework to the organization charged with implementing the nation's peace policy. Measuring the effectiveness of policy can be difficult but with the current conflicts stretching over two decades, a reexamination of the United States' has some pragmatic value for both policymakers and the policy executors. A first step in this process is focusing on social agents as the vehicle for creating stable peace.

This is the context in which peace policy is developed within the United States. Preexisting frameworks shape policymakers understanding and transmission of approaches to building peace. In a similar manner, in its role as the interpreters of policy, the military uses very specific understanding to implement peace policy. While there are issues with the approaches in the United States, a close examination of social agents and their value to peacebuilding creates a starting point for a refined approach to peace policy.

The complexity of peace makes it a difficult concept to define. Conceptualizations of peace vary based on ideas such as time, location, and society. For this study, the ideal policy objective is creating a stable peace and, given peace means different things, stable peace must defined within the parameters of this this research. This is very much dependent on context. An excellent starting point is Gatlung's construction of peace. He accepts that peace equates to an "absence of violence." While this seems simplistic, he explains several important nuances in understanding violence. For example, there is a difference between physical and psychological violence or

¹⁷ Neil L. Whitehead, "Violence & the cultural order" *Daedalus* 136, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 40-1; 45-6, <https://doi-org.www2.lib.ku.edu/10.1162/daed.2007.136.1.40>. Whitehead highlights the complexity of war and peace in these article. He argues that violence is a discursive practice and is regular form of cultural expression.

personal and structural. Most important in this study is the concept of negative and positive peace. Positive peace is the reduction in violence between actors in a system. Actors include both nations and other groups. In addition, violence can be direct or indirect.¹⁸ For this thesis, I define stable peace as the reduction of structural violence between two or more actors that allows for the development or reinstatement of functional societal processes. Accomplishing this, however, requires a nuanced understanding of each case's context. Out of the policy discussion must come an idea what is an acceptable balance between conflict and peace. Only then can a viable strategy be developed.

Developing strategy is a time consuming and fluid endeavor designed to create a plan to address very complex situations. However, the US military relies on codified processes to aid in strategy development. These processes, however, are lacking in the crucial area of peace development. A good starting point for developing peace is understanding and using social agents as the basis for an effective peace strategy. Peace and conflict are human constructions which implies that what they mean vary between social groups. Clifford Geertz accepted Max Weber's view "that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun," He goes on to say that he thinks, "culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning." The webs of cultural signification Geertz refers to are the socially constructed agents that connect those within each society. They frame the way groups view and interact with the world. Although less explicitly, Galtung provides a similar perspective in terms of the processes of peace and conflict. In his categorization of social structures in order to understand structural violence, Galtung highlights five different concepts: "*actor, system, structure, rank, and level.*"

¹⁸ Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," 167; 169-71;175; 183.

All of these societal concepts interact with each other in complex ways.¹⁹ Each of these links are akin to Geertz's webs which I argue are a group's constitutive social agents. Understanding this makes social agents at the local level the most important concepts to address in the peacebuilding process.

In the anthropological literature, social agents comprise an extremely broad category, representing a wide range of sociocultural concepts. They include ideas such as forms of government, kinship, and religious practices. Because of the number and diverse characterizations of social agents, this study will look at three key agents as examples of their importance and their crucial value in the peacebuilding process. The conceptualization of each is explored to identify their value and function within societal structures. Then the conceptual underpinnings of each will be explored by looking at case studies where these agents were leveraged in peacebuilding efforts. From this discussion, a better picture of each of these social factor's role in the peacebuilding process emerges.

Value of Place

A key social factor to consider is place. This is a concept that has an important position in anthropological research. Broadly, place is more than just defining or identifying physical space or geographical areas that have cultural significance. The study of place represents the interactions between a society with different physical spaces. These interactions are limitless and, as discussed below, range from semiotic meanings given to certain areas and to shifting use of language to define urban space between ethnic groups. Perhaps one of the most important examinations of place is Keith Basso's *Wisdom Sits in Places*. He discusses the connection

¹⁹ Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," In *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 2008[1973]), 5; Gatlung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," 1969: 175-77.

between place names and Apache sociocultural understandings of the world. Apache place names were more than simply a way to distinguish one location from another. Place names represented stories that not only occurred in the area but conveyed a moral lesson and Apache values. These places, through Western Apache linguistic practices, give the group sense of place by linking cultural values to physical space. Jane H. Hill takes a similar approach in “Language, Race, and White Public Space.” She looks at the role of language to define racial boundaries in New York. Hill points out that the those of Puerto Rican descent use Spanish at home but attempted to mask their accents when in public spaces that are deemed white.²⁰ Place is a concept that allows one to access deep sociocultural meaning that might otherwise be overlooked. These nuanced connections between space and culture play a significant role in understanding and developing approaches to peace and conflict.

I participated in the process creating place in both peace and conflict. Early in my Army career I participated in Operation Desert Focus/Thunder under the direction of US Central Command. These operations were part of series of military efforts to protect United States troops and enforce United Nations Security Resolutions against the Hussein regime in Iraq following Desert Storm. In 1998, I participated in a mission guarding a patriot missile site in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. By military doctrine, this is a peace enforcement operation.²¹ As the only Army infantry platoon on an Air Force Base, our leadership marked their tent with a sign and flag

²⁰ Jane H. Hill, “Language, Race, and White Public Space.” *American Anthropologist* 100, no. 3: (September 1998): 681, 684-5, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/682046>; Keith H, Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), Kindle.

²¹ For a brief description of Operations Desert Focus and Thunder see United States Central Command. n.d. “U.S. Central Command History,” U.S. Central Command website, n.d., Accessed on April 2, 2019, <http://www.centcom.mil/ABOUT-US/HISTORY/>; U.S. Department of Defense, *Peace Operations*, Joint Publication 3-07.3 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 2018), vii-viii. This publication was released from a freedom of information act request and is not available online. However, the author can provide a copy.

reminding everyone that paratroopers owned that space. Years later, I found myself in Kirkuk, Iraq as part of larger Operation Iraqi Freedom war effort. I became the platoon leader in one of three companies working within the city. Our company lived and worked out of a small base within the city, away from the larger US military presence at the air base. At the entrance to our outpost, a painted barrier saying, “Welcome to the Swamp,” a reference to the company’s symbol the gator (figure 1). Amid war and a foreign city, we had designated our space with semiotic references.



Figure 1 (Author’s Collection)

These experiences illustrate one way that place is created at both ends of the peace and conflict spectrum. It is quite possible that our base in Kirkuk, Iraq was counterproductive to peace. Our painted barrier was behind our guarded gate and was not readily visible to Iraqis passing by. However, Iraqis coming in and out would have seen it and word spread of the imagery. Meant to be a source of pride and marker of our company’s space, it would have been a reminder to the Iraqis of an outside force present and living in what had been Iraqi houses. Both experiences highlight the connection between physical space and culture to create a sense of place. This example, however, points to those working to manage peace and conflict rather than

those whose area is directly affected by conflict. Recent research on Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) points out the value of place in the peace process. Angela Lederach argues that developing peace based on local considerations is a more effect approach. One of the concepts she examines is the relationship small farmers have with the countryside. Building on Basso's work, she highlights that Colombia's small farmers use process like the Apache to imbue physical places with social meaning. Because these farmers move by foot to other areas, they are constantly moving through socioculturally charged landscapes. This process rebuilds their sense of place post-conflict and trust between different communities which is a key component of peace.²² Understanding the value of place within differing communities is one that must be considered when planning for peace. Understanding the local perceptions of place in the areas I worked in Iraq as well as among the groups I advised would have allowed us to better link larger policy goals to our actions on the ground. Understanding place has an important role in peacebuilding.

Influence of Social Structures

Place and its construction are an important way people and societies understand the world. It is, however, only one of many concepts that characterize different societies. Another concept to consider that highlights the value of key social agents is social structures. Levi-Strauss (1963) points out, the concept of social structures is very broad and complex making difficult it for a specific definition.²³ Nevertheless, Levi-Strauss lays out a general description of some of the key characteristics of social structure. In general terms, they are the recognized components of a

²² Angela J. Lederach, "The Campesino Was Born for the Campo' A Multispecies Approach to Territorial Peace in Colombia," *American Anthropologist* 119 no. 4 (December 2017): 589-602, DOI: 10.1111/aman.12925, 1-2, 10-11.

²³ While Levi-Strauss' work is somewhat dated, it is a key work for understanding structuralism. It points out the basic of idea that society is made up differing systems that impact how those making up a society understand the world.

trend within a society. The elements of a social structure also function as system with each connected in such a way that a changes to any of these aspects impacts the others. He points out that structures are systems, understood through models, and are made up of interconnected norms. Levi-Strauss adds further detail by outlining several characteristics of explanatory models. For this study, the key characteristic of a structural model is it exists as either conscious and unconscious. Conscious models are those that surround an acknowledged structure. They are usually intended to further the structure rather provide an understanding. Unconscious models, however, are those that help explain social structures that occur in a society but the group has not developed its own framework for explaining it. Put simply, conscious structures are systems that are acknowledged, and unconscious models are those that are unacknowledged. Making these distinctions and understanding the complexities of a society's social structures are important in creating lasting peace.

Levi-Strauss (1963) highlights that governmental institutions are important social structures within more recent history. Governments easily fit the definition of a conscious model of social structures since they are systems that are, whether supported or not, that are acknowledged by the society. The most recent war in Iraq illustrates the importance of recognizing the role governmental institutions play in a group's social make up. It is argued that the lack of recognition, was a key driver in the failed peace process. Following the initial invasion of Iraq in 2003, the United States adopted a policy of de-Baathification. The Baath party represented the ruling elite of Iraq's totalitarian government. Using the de-Nazification process after World War II as a model (Zeren 2017; Terrell 2012), US policymakers began of removing Baathists from the institutional structures of the Iraqi government without a contextual understanding of the central role of the Baathists party. The removal included people from all levels of government,

professionals such as professors, and the military creating a gap in basic governance. This caused a host of social issues to include intensifying divisions in a country already divided along several sociocultural fault lines. It further created deeper security problems within the country. (Zeren 2017; Terrell 2012).

Levi-Strauss (1967) points out that conscious models often hide a deeply embedded, more important structure. This is not intended to imply a binary, either-or relationship. Levi-Strauss' ideas are meant to remind the policymaker that ideologies are entrenched within a society and whose nuances must be teased out to develop effective policy. This was born out in my experience five years after de-Baathification had begun, enough time to reach the intended policy goals. Saddam Hussain's form of Baathism was dictatorial and authoritarian. Growing out of this was a system of patronage where loyalty was rewarded above all else. This included those in military leadership. Though well into de-Baathification, the concept of loyalty and patronage continued to mark the Iraqi Army structure. In 2008, I found myself dealing with the results of the de-Baathification process, rebuilding the Iraqi Army that had been gutted by the de-Baathification (Zeren 2017; Terrell 2012). I arrived in Iraq at the end of some of the most violent years of the war. I was part of a twelve-person Military Transition Team charged with advising a newly formed infantry battalion. While I should have found a more egalitarian Army, the deeply authoritarian and patronage structure remained. Officers were given assignments based on Hussein era backgrounds. Needed equipment was often hoarded rather than distributed. Commander's had free range to treat soldiers as they wished, treatment that was harsh by

American standards. Both Terrell (2012) and Zeren (2017) point out issues and hint that de-Baathification was an important cause of the violence in Iraq.²⁴

Conscious structures represent the more obvious societal structures that require a deeper examination to fully understanding how they fit into a society. Equally, or perhaps more important, are the unconscious structures which may be recognized by the society but do not have a model to inform a full understanding of its meaning (Levi-Straus 1967). This can include conceptualizations of structures like class. One such social structure that spans all societies is gender. Gender is a broad term and covers many different concepts. It is best explained as the intersection between biological sex and cultural ideologies of men and women. In academics it can be defined as “socially defined relationships between women and men (Stolcke 1993, 20). For example, the influence of masculine ideologies on science, climate, and the military (Nagel, 2016b). Gender is also informative in conceptualizations of language. In some societies, certain objects are assigned a gender by using masculine or feminine language structures which signifies their masculine or feminine qualities (Boroditsky, et al. 2003). While this is a broad term and encompasses many different peoples, this study emphasizes women as illustrative of sociocultural constructions of gender and its relevance in the peacebuilding process.

In my career, gender is a topic that is often discussed as an important sociocultural concept in the US Army. However, my own experience working with another country prove illustrative on the importance of gender in policymaking. Located across the Baltic Sea from Finland and sharing a border with Russia, Estonia offers an interesting perspective on gender structure, its

²⁴ Although outside the scope of this study, an examination of Baathism through conceptualizations of patronage, warlords, or clientelism would be informative as well. An example of this type of work is Carolyn Nordstrom, “Casting Long Shadows: War, Peace, and Extra-Legal Economies” in *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Peace Processes and Post-War Reconstruction*, 2nd Edition, ed. John Darbt and Roger Mac Ginty (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), https://www3.nd.edu/~cnordstr/Academic_Articles_files/castinglongshadows.pdf.

temporal development, and its influence. A critical examination of social structures cannot be ignored when building peace policy. Estonia has a history of change and negotiation on the role of women as it concerns ideologies of nationalism. Early conceptualizations of women varied between the domestic farm wife or a leader in the development of Estonian perceptions of nationalism. During Soviet times, women balanced Soviet ideologies of gender equality and the expectation of maintaining their domestic roles. With independence from the Soviet Union, Estonian's again reexamined women's roles. This time, however, it was through the lens of western patriarchal notions of society. Women were pushed into lower wage jobs, sexualized, and expected to remain in the background, supporting her husband's success. By 2003, it was believed that Estonia's entrance into the European Union, which emphasized gender equality, brought about a new discussion on gender within the country (Kaskla 2003). The results of this discussion were apparent by 2008 where 33 percent of cabinet positions were women. Furthermore, women have ran some of the more prestigious government organizations (Bego 2014) Estonia illustrates the importance of gender in defining social identity.

Several years later, the Estonian discourse on gender intersected by work in US national defense. I worked on the US European Command staff and worked with members of the Estonian Ministry of Defense (MOD) and military on several occasions. During events with Estonian members, their delegation consisted of not only military personnel but a policy representative from their MOD. Estonia empowered these representatives to make immediate policy decisions. This was markedly different than most other countries who mostly had military representatives and could not make immediate policy decisions. A key observation from this work was that most Estonian MOD representatives were women. Gender ideologies have shaped the makeup of the interworkings of Estonian policymaking circles and have likely shaped

defense policy. Nagel (2014a) points out the impact women have on other areas of policy. She highlights the influence masculinized views of science have on climate change and calls for the inclusion of more women as a way to rectify this. There is no doubt that the inclusion of women in the Estonian MOD influences defense policy across the peace and conflict spectrum.

Several recent popular media articles highlight the discussion of women in the peace and conflict spectrum. One article is a review of Garth Ennis and Russ Braun's *The Night Witches*. Ennis reveals that his inspiration for the book came from noted historian Jeremy Black's implication that women had contributed little to warfare (Lehoczky 2019). Another frames the discussion of how to treat female members of the Islamic State (Darden 2019). A final article argues that peacekeeping operations would be more effective if more women were a part of them (Bigio and Vogelstein 2018). Gender is a key part of the ongoing discussion of peace and conflict. Considering gender when building peace policy is critical for success.

The Role of Social Paradigms

Social structures are a key component of any society and they vary from group to group. As such, they play an important role in the peacebuilding process. However, there are other social agents to consider. An important one is social paradigms or dominant worldviews. While societal generalizations may not be held by all members, there are certain worldviews and perspectives that are common enough to be considered shared. These paradigms can be understood as norms which are "the informal rules that govern behavior in groups and societies" (Bicchieri et al. 2018). Norms are further linked to Levi Strauss' (1963) ideas of structure. He saw norms as synonymous with conscious models used to conceptualize social structures. Beliefs also shape worldviews. This is a complicated concept whose definition is fluid. However, a good working definition is "ideological superstructures expressing underlying power relations, or windows into

the secret tensions of social organization, or even, for structuralists, revelations of the hidden workings of the mind itself” (Lindholm 2012, 342). Charles Lindholm (2012) also points out that the strength of beliefs can vary as well as how well they are understood and the influence they hold within a society. Both norms and beliefs contribute to a society’s worldview. These paradigms can relate to many different concepts such as ideas of morality and ethics, perceptions of hospitality, how to wage war, or, as will be seen, creating peace.

A defining characteristic of post-Colonial Africa is persistent cycles of war and peace. Carolyn Nordstrom (1997), for example, studied Mozambique and its experience of sixteen years of conflict. Those who were a part of this war experienced or witnessed the extreme violence that characterized the conflict. Both the country’s infrastructure and economy were decimated. Nordstrom worked in the country for most of that period where she made several key observations. She noted that war does not cause a loss of morality or the general collapse of society leading people to both rebuild from and resist violence. Nordstrom noted that successful approaches to combating violence and its impacts occur at the local level. Most importantly, however, was the broader paradigm of medicine embraced by the people of Mozambique. This perspective represents a theme common in Africa where medicine merges resources that are personally owned and shared. It is characterized by staying power and the ability to adjust to changing conditions. This she links to the successful development of peace processes. Social paradigms or dominant worldviews are influential in creating peace and should be considered in policy making.

Another example of a potent social paradigm for US foreign policy makers is the state of Israel and its approach to defense. The creation of Israel following World War II led to, perhaps, one of the most important peace processes in recent history. Israel remains a key ally of

the United States and the prospect of peace between Israel and its neighbors remains an important topic in the news cycle. A deeper look at Israel and the history of the Jewish people illustrates the connection between worldview and national defense policy. One theme running through the Israeli national narrative is the strong sense of place tied to Hebrew territory outlined in Jewish religious texts. This territory was ostensibly granted by God and hence belongs to the Jewish people. Even with large Jewish diasporas spanning history, this territory and its ownership is central to Jewish identity. The second theme of ideological import is that of a people who have been under siege and persecuted throughout history, culminating in creating a Jewish haven after the Holocaust for Jews worldwide. Included in this narrative is victimization which has been shown to be a psychological barrier to peace. Out of these national Israeli worldviews emerge a cycle of conflict and peace negotiations (Johnson 1987; Baker 2002; Halperin and Bar-Tal 2011). Israel and its relationship to conflict in the Middle East is not solely based on Jewish worldviews. However, these social paradigms shape the way the Israeli state approaches conflict and peace.

Dominant social paradigms have played an important role in my experience in the Army. In Iraqi, dominant social paradigms shaped how we trained the Iraqi Army. We understood that in Iraqi military culture, officers, particularly those in charge carried almost absolute authority. This meant that staff meetings by a commander were rare and lower ranking officers were reluctant to give bad news or challenge the commander. The US Army is known for its hierarchy and for the expectation of following orders. While this is true to a degree, officers and non-commissioned officers are expected to challenge commanders and give bad news. Meetings among the US Army occur regularly as vehicles for these types of debates. There are also norms that shape how disagreement takes place. The process of learning social paradigms of another army takes time

and is difficult to incorporate in to plans to train them. Since training Army's during and after war is critical to establishing a lasting peace, understanding and accounting for social paradigms are critical in peacebuilding.

Policy Implications

Thus far my discussion has highlighted the methods used by the United States to develop and implement peacebuilding policy and the value of social agents within peacebuilding. A vital question, however, remains: what can be done with this information so as to improve the process for creating effective peace policy within the United States process. As a result, what follows are several recommendations for improving the peace process within the United States government.

One step for improving peace policy is a recognition that the US government and its associated agencies have their own unique sociocultural ideologies. Government organizations do reflect larger American sociocultural topographies, but they have their own social agents and stakeholders that shape their approach to policy development. To improve peace policy, some of these deeply held notions must be recognized and changed outright or recognize that there are other, alternative and more effective conceptualizations. For starters, one should critically question the dominant influence of democratic peace theory worldview that shapes US perceptions of peace. We should accept that this is but one theoretical approach to be considered, rather than a starting point for peacebuilding. Iraq, for example, with a history of totalitarian rule, an associated system of patronage, and already existent social divisions may not have been the best candidate for liberal democracy, which requires compromise and can take years to develop effectively. A recognition of the social agents of all parties involved in the peacebuilding process will tease out these differences, and create a viable starting point for effective policy discussions and formulations.

Another important factor, one which is reflective of broader United States attitude toward war, is the perception of peace and conflict as binary. A country or group is either in a state of war or peace. There is simply no middle ground. As Gatlung (1969) correctly points out, peace and conflict are not like this at all. He shows that peace and conflict function exist along a spectrum or sliding scale. In this framework, peace and conflict are complex, interrelated, and mutually constitutive of one another. Both are consistently present within any given society. Furthermore, he points out that considering peace as the absence of physical violence, which is the implication of the binary model, erases a more nuanced understanding of this sociocultural phenomenon. He points out that violence can be direct, such as physical, or passive as in the case of structural violence that harms groups in other long-term ways. This has important implications for developing effective peace policy. It requires taking into account context such as planning for a war already occurring or preparing for post-conflict operations prior to beginning any armed conflict. If the conflict has already begun, perhaps ending violence is far enough on the peace and conflict scale to achieve stable peace. If the conflict has ended and the state and society are not functioning, then ending other forms of violence may be more appropriate goals. Determining what is acceptable and achievable in terms of peace can be developed out of a close consideration of social agents and the various stakeholders involved. When examined through the lens of social agents, viewing peace and conflict as a spectrum rather than a binary relationship sets conditions for creating more realistic policy goals.

The affinity within the United States for democratic peace theory and a binary view of peace and conflict has created a skewed view of peace policy. Taken together, they create peace policy that does not effectively consider or account for social diversity either within their organization or the areas where peace is attempting to be developed. Creating stable peace requires an

appreciation for the interconnectedness of sociocultural themes and the importance of nuance within societies. While this is an important recognition, there remains the issue of determining the correct sociocultural agents to emphasize in developing peace policy.

Another implication is to incorporate local considerations into the development of policy. Although the founding principles of US government were ostensibly egalitarian representation, checks and balances, and system built on compromise, the US government is in fact a hierarchical bureaucracy. This creates several formal structural concepts inherent in the system of governance. There are delineated levels with decisionmakers at each. Processes, which have taken almost ritualistic significance, move information through the system. Furthermore, information moves up and down the system but policy for execution move down through the hierarchy. There are informal structures and gatekeepers that can limit information flow through system or facilitate the lateral exchange of information. This type of structure is prevalent in most government intuitions but is particularly ingrained in the US Department of Defense, which carries much of the burden for implementing peace. This hierarchy creates a system where policy development follows a top-down approach, meaning it is developed at high levels of government and flows down through the bureaucracy. Information from the local level has little chance to move up to policymakers and inform policy unless it moves officially through the structure. This movement can, and based on my experience does, alter information as it moves up through the system which impacts the development of policy.

The top-down approach has a significant impact on policy overall. With the military's relatively rigid hierarchy, top-down approaches have less of an impact the closer a situation get to war on the peace and conflict spectrum. However, as a situation moves closer to peace, the top-down model limits the peacebuilding efforts. Policymakers have broader foreign policy goals

in mind and may lack a full understanding of the nuances of a situation. Effective peace building occurs when local sociocultural considerations are considered and incorporated into peace processes. Autesserre (2014) makes this clear in her ethnography of international peacekeepers. She notes that peacekeepers have common approaches used as templates for peace no matter the area or context. The practical value of incorporating local concepts in the peace process have been illustrated. Nordstrom (1997) revealed two important ideas in her research on Mozambique. First, she highlighted that the successful implementation of peacemaking strategies occurred at the local level. Second, Nordstrom effectively illustrates that approaches to healing from violence are grounded in traditional African conceptualizations of medicine. Lederach (2017) made a similar observation in the peace process occurring in Columbia with the FARC. She also noted that the peace efforts spread out and were worked out locally. She also pointed out that local relationships with the environment played a key role in peace. Sociocultural concepts are not consistent across large constructed identifiers such as nation-states. They vary by region and in terms of ethnic or group affiliation. Considering social agents as part of peace policy development is a critical way to highlight the most important sociocultural concepts at play in determining a lasting peace.

Accepting that local agents play a critical role in peacebuilding is only part of the larger process of silencing conflict. Just as important is ensuring that those perspectives are accurately portrayed and used to inform the peace process in the correct manner. One of the best ways to ensure effective peacebuilding occurs at the local level is to use local perspectives to inform the development of higher-level policy goals. While the way in which this can happen is a key aspect, it will be discussed later in the study. For policy development, why and when to consider these components are more important. Policymakers tend to focus on goals that shape higher

level policy considerations. For example, how will entering conflict affect a relationship with allies or articulating the desire to bring peace to a certain area will have trade benefits. The details and more specific goal development occur lower along in the chain of hierarchical command. A full appreciation of local agents and what is required for local peace may not be fully appreciated at the policy formulation level. Considering the local at the upper echelons of the development of policy goals ensures that policy implementation will be more effective and relevant to local conditions. Equally important is when local agents are considered in the conflict resolution process. Local agents are largely not considered until intervention has already occurred. Understanding the local early on in the peace policy development process is critical as it ensures effort to create or maintain peace are focused on the “correct” locally acceptable goals from the beginning. In my own experience in military planning, preventing and carrying out war are the emphasis of planning, rather than stemming from the post conflict rebuilding and peace peacebuilding processes.

Another critical consideration in establishing the “correct” peace policy goals is determining where along the peace and conflict spectrum it is acceptable to achieve the higher-level policy goals. As mentioned previously, the United States tends to view peace and conflict as binary opposites. However, conflict and peace are best understood as a spectrum where aspects of each will always be present. A key step in the development of peacebuilding is determining where on the scale of conflict and peace does the explicit policy meet the desired goals. If the goal is ending direct warfare, the approach to peace will look very different than creating a functioning democracy out of a failed nation-state. This can be informed by an intersectional study of high-policy goals and the key social agents in the conflict area. Creating effective peace may mean

accepting some level of violence which seems counterintuitive especially in the mind of US defense professionals.

Identifying and clearly articulating the key policy goals in peace building is the critical component of the process. However, developing the “correct” goals is unhelpful if they are not properly moved through the hierarchy to local level for implementation. To ensure this happens, policymakers must make recognitions of local contingencies. First, one must fully recognize that the US military, particularly the Army, is the organization that will carry the policy goals forward and implement them at the local level. Second, after accepting the military’s pivotal role in the peace process, policymakers must have a deeper understanding of the US military’s framework for how to effectively implement policy.

Referred to as the levels of war, military doctrine succinctly outlines this framework. There are three levels of war: strategic, operational, and tactical. The strategic level encompasses Presidential level discussions, through the Secretary of Defense, and Combatant Commanders. The next level is operational level which organizes strategic level guidance into operations that are actionable at the local level. The next level, referred to as tactics, is military action on the ground at the locally (JP 3-0 2018; JP 5-0 2017). This highlights the hierarchical framework through which policy guidance makes its way to local level which reveals the difficulty in the movement of information from political goals to implementation on the ground. The sociocultural perspective of how this process plays out is telling on how the process functions. When moving from between the different levels, the process is referred to as translation (JP 3-0 2018; JP 5-0 2017). This mirrors my own understanding as an Army strategist. When asked what I do, my response is to say that I translate policy into terms that can be understood by military

commands implementing this policy. Translation, however, is a poor description and leads to a misunderstanding of what is occurs during this process.

This process requires more than translation, it requires interpretation to effectively move information through the hierarchy. This is where anthropology is critical. As Agar (2010) points out, a common view of translation is a movement from the source language to the target language. This implies more of an equal transition between understanding which Agar points out is an unrealistic expectation. Translations will differ based on insider and outsider perspectives. The process he describes is more akin to interpretation. This is best understood through Geertz's (1973) discussion of thick description which means not taking what is said in its literal terms but placing it in context to understand its true meaning. Geertz is saying that one must look past the literal, superficial language and delve deeper into context to understand the true meaning. While this seems to be a semantic difference it is important when developing policy. Simpson (2018) argues that interpretation is a critical component of strategy. Policymakers and military strategist come from different cultures marked by different social agents. In this case, the institutions charged with developing peace policy could benefit from understanding the social agents that define their different institutional cultures.

The final area that must be considered regarding the military and its role in peace peacebuilding is acknowledging the organization's strengths and weaknesses in this process. There are pragmatic areas that make military suited for building peace such as its budget or ability work in austere environments. The US Military's key weakness is that it is primarily structured for war. This is illustrated in the *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy* (DOD 2018). Shifting to peace operations, while outlined in JP 3-07.3 (2017) require a significant sociocultural shift to carry out effectively. There is, however, a basis for this change

within the military's sociocultural framework that makes that would make this transition easier. First, the military has a framework call the spectrum of conflict that mirrors Gatlung (1969) ideas. Called the continuum of conflict, this framework outlines the situations the military could find itself involved and the associated operations along the spectrum (JP 3-0 2017; FM 3-0 2017). With small adjustments this could incorporate key social agents in developing peace strategies. Second, social agents vary greatly between cultures and require an understanding of sociocultural methodologies to properly identify. The military has a process called Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (JIPOE) which helps develop an understanding of the area military units are working in. This involves examining social aspects of a region (JP 2-0 2013). With some incorporation of anthropological theory, this process could be modified for identifying social agents to assist in peace peacebuilding g. Acknowledging and working with these strengths and weakness can improve the organizations role as the primary implementer of peace policy.

Conclusion

From this examination, several issues are apparent. The United States has institutional cultures that limit its ability to build stable peace. This includes a bias towards democratic peace theory, a top-down approach to creating policy, and a perspective that the US military is the primary organization to implement peace policy which carries with it a host of issues. Furthermore, several case studies and first-hand experience as an insider in the United States Army role in the peace and conflict process illustrate the importance of social agents in understanding and developing stable peace. Key among them are place, social structures, and social paradigms. However, with some internal reflection and minor changes, the United States can create a framework that more effectively develops and implements peace policy. US

policymakers must take a reflexive look at their biases and processes to understand their own limitations and drive effective change. Two of the most important changes at this level are for policymakers to consider local agents, clearly define peace, and articulate it to the military to implement. The military must be reflexive in examining its role in peacebuilding. It must understand its role as an interpreter of policy and be cognizant of its strengths and weaknesses when it comes to building peace. The basis of this shift is understanding and incorporating anthropological method and theory in approaching peace and instituting sociocultural change. This link between anthropology and the military comes with its own ethical complications. However, it is not insurmountable (Evans 2018a). Creating peace is an area where the difference between the two organizations can be put aside and they can work together for the betterment of humanity.

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