Constructing Peace

Collective Understandings of Peace, Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, and Peacebuilding

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International interventions to reestablish peace in conflict areas have multiplied since the end of the Cold War, with United Nations operations, non-governmental agencies, diplomatic missions, and regional organizations becoming ever more numerous and intrusive. Concurrently, in international relations, a large body of literature on peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding – which together this essay terms "peace interventions" – has developed. Broadly speaking, peacemaking refers to the process of bringing parties in conflict to an agreement through peaceful means, peacekeeping denotes the deployment of armed personnel to prevent the resumption of large-scale violence after a peace agreement, and peacebuilding includes actions to strengthen and solidify peace.[2]

In the international relations literature, the dominant approach, which we might call rational choice, overwhelmingly emphasizes that vested interests and material constraints determine peace intervention strategies.[3] This research has contributed significantly to our understanding of what leads to international involvement, whether such engagement makes a difference, and which types of interventions succeed and which fail.[4] The dominant approach, however, is problematic in two ways. First, it fails to inquire into the process through which vested interests and material constraints have been constructed. Second, it looks at intervention failures as a "problem for which technical solutions could be worked out," such as additional resources or more robust involvement.[5]

In contrast, a different international relations approach has recently developed. It focuses on the influence of beliefs, cultures, discourse, frames, habitus, identity, ideology, norms, representations, symbols, and worldviews – which together this essay terms "collective" or "shared understandings" – on peace interventions. The authors who work with these concepts belong to diverse theoretical schools, but political scientists often refer to them as "constructivists," as they reject the dominant rational choice

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[2] On the transformation of these concepts, the different visions of peace they imply, and the constitution of the field of peace studies, see Oliver Richmond, *The Transformation of Peace,* New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. On the constitution and transformation of the field of peacemaking, see Jacques Faget, "Les Métamorphoses du Travail de Paix. État des Travaux sur la Médiation dans les Conflits Politiques Violents," *Revue Française de Science Politique* 58 (2), 2008. On bottom-up peacebuilding, see Sandrine Lefranc, "Convertir le Grand Nombre à la Paix... Une Ingénierie Internationale de Pacification," *Politix* 80 (4), 2007.

[3] See for example Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2006; Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements,* Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 2002; and William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa,* New York, Oxford University Press, 1989.

[4] In addition to the books listed in the previous footnote, see Barbara Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2002; Virginia Page Fortna, *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents' Choices after Civil War,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2008; and Lise Morjé Howard, *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars,* New York, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

[5] Quotation from Robert Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire: Culture and Intervention,* Boulder, Paradigm Publishers, 2008, p. 9.

methodology. They indeed all share the same view on causality: while collective understandings neither "cause" nor "determine" action, they render some actions possible and others improbable.[6]

Compared to rational choice analyses, the number of constructivist studies on peace interventions remains limited. However, its relative size and continuing growth indicates that a map of this literature is much needed. Additionally, this review intends to correct a shortcoming in the constructivist literature on peace interventions: it rarely builds on or references the large body of anthropological research on peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. (Admittedly, most anthropologists also rarely refer to international relations research). This neglect is most likely due to the nature of academic training in both disciplines, which limits the use of interdisciplinary approaches, but it is nevertheless surprising given that anthropologists work on the same overarching question as international relations constructivists: how do collective understandings shape peace interventions? Authors from both disciplines also often examine the same cases, such as the international interventions in Somalia and Cambodia. In fact, the anthropological body of research on collective understandings and peace interventions is larger than that of international relations, as it emerged in the mid-1980s, more than ten years before the first constructivist studies appeared.

Due to these similarities, when reading the two bodies of literature one is struck by the extent to which they complement one another. While international relations scholars often adopt a top-down approach and look primarily at policy-makers in national capitals and international organization headquarters, anthropologists frequently develop bottom-up analyses and focus on specific cases of international interventions on the ground. As exceptions to these broad trends demonstrate, and as research in comparative politics, area studies, and political anthropology illustrates, only analyses that combine top-down and bottom-up approaches, and those built on both political science and anthropological questions and methods, can provide a full and nuanced picture of the influence of collective understandings on peace interventions.[7]

Beyond the rigidity of disciplinary boundaries, anthropologists' reliance on the concept of culture may account for international relations scholars' overlook of anthropological research. A number of political scientists view the concept of culture as politically and ideologically biased, and as inadequate to account for the complexity of the social world.[8] However, in line with political science views, today's anthropologists also reject the formerly dominant conception of culture as "homogeneous, static patterns that determine behavior [and that are] uniformly distributed among members of a group."[9] Today's anthropologists working on collective understandings and peace interventions, such as Robert Rubinstein and Kevin Avruch, now view culture as "a dynamic … activity that *orients* and *constrains* … behavior and

[6] On this view of causality as a central feature of constructivism, see James Fearon and Alexander Wendt, "Rationalism Versus Constructivism: A Skeptical View," in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons (eds.), *Handbook of International Relations*, London, Sage Publications, 2002, p. 58; and Martha Finnemore, "Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism," *International Organization* 50 (2), 1996.

[7] See, for example, David Ambrosetti, "Urgences et Normalités de Gestionnaires Face aux Violences 'des Autres', L'ONU et le Soudan," *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 174 (4), 2008; Séverine Autesserre, "Hobbes and the Congo. Frames, Local Violence, and International Intervention," *International Organization* 63, 2009, pp. 249-280; Séverine Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding,* New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010; Nathalie Duclos (ed.), *L'Adieu aux Armes : Parcours d'Anciens Combattants*, Paris, Karthala, 2010; Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions,* New York, Zone, 2010; Vincent Foucher, "'Tradition Africaine' et Résolution des Conflits. Un Exemple Sénégalais," *Politix* 80 (4), 2007; S. Lefranc, "Convertir Le Grand Nombre à La Paix... Une Ingénierie Internationale de Pacification," *art. cit.*; Béatrice Pouligny, *Ils Nous Avaient Promis la Paix : Opérations de l'ONU et Populations Locales,* Paris, Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 2004; Roland Marchal, "The Roots of the Darfur Conflict and the Chadian Civil War," *Public Culture* 20 (3), 2008, and Stephen John Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War: International Mediation in Zimbabwe, 1974-1980,* Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1991. See also the special issue of *Cultures et Conflits* "Crises et Organisations Internationales" (2009).

[8] On this issue, and on the topics discussed in the rest of this paragraph, see the discussions of the concept of culture in R. Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire*, *op. cit.*, pp. 41 – 48 and Kevin Avruch, *Culture and Conflict Resolution,* Washington, United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998, part I.

[9] K. Avruch, *Culture and Conflict Resolution*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

thus allows for considerable intracultural variation" and internal contradiction[10] – an approach to causality similar to that of international relations constructivists.

Overall, anthropologists and constructivists, as well as area study scholars and political anthropologists, agree that a multiplicity of collective understandings orient peace interventions. Interveners and local populations belong to a range of national, regional, professional, organizational, ethnic, and religious communities, all of which have a specific cultural framework. These frameworks shape actors' theories on the causes of peace and conflict and they "provide the context within which the actors' beliefs and actions are constructed, expressed, interpreted and understood."[11] Importantly, the understandings that are dominant within each framework are not spread across all international interveners to the same extent. Instead, various organizations and sub-units have different identities, sub-cultures, constraints and interests (as well as different visions of peace and peace interventions). Scholars from various disciplines also emphasize that shared understandings influence interventions more profoundly than the broader economic, political, and social contexts, or the vested interests and material constraints on which rational choice scholars focus. Indeed, the actors' cultural, normative, professional, and ideological frameworks, as well as their perceptions of time and history, shape their interpretation of constraints, interests, and contexts. Finally, a number of constructivists and anthropologists emphasize the policy significance of their approach. Research on collective understandings can help explain the conditions for the success or failure of peace interventions, and thus help boost their effectiveness.[12]

This review examines both the anthropological and international relations literature on collective understandings and peace interventions to identify their contributions, elucidate the current debates, emphasize the literatures' complementary and conflicting aspects, and shed light on their respective shortcomings. I first look at the top-down research, which focuses on two main topics: national negotiation styles and diplomatic culture, and the liberal peace paradigm. After highlighting the deficiencies of this top-down approach, I move to two central debates in the bottom-up research on peace interventions: the divergence between cultures of interveners and those of local populations, and the significance of the interveners' organizational and professional frames. To conclude, I emphasize areas that remain under-researched.

Top-Down Approaches: Policy-Makers in Headquarters and National Capitals

National Negotiation Styles and Diplomatic Culture

Authors who study peace interventions today regularly build on a large body of literature that looks at how national and professional cultures influence international negotiations.[13] This literature, which developed in the second half of the twentieth century, usually focuses on high-level diplomats and state representatives. It can be divided into two different approaches.

[10] R. Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire: Culture and Intervention*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[11] Tamara Duffey, "Cultural Issues in Contemporary Peacekeeping," *International Peacekeeping* 7 (1), 2000 (citation from p. 143); and Betts Fetherston and Carolyn Nordstrom, "Overcoming Habitus in Conflict Management: UN Peacekeeping and Warzone Ethnography," *Peace and Change* 20 (1), 1995, p. 94.

[12] S. Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo*, *op. cit.*; T. Duffey, "Cultural Issues in Contemporary Peacekeeping," *art. cit.*; O. Richmond, *The Transformation of Peace*, *op. cit.*; R. Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire*, *op. cit.*

[13] See the very useful reviews of this literature in K. Avruch, *Culture and Conflict Resolution*, *op. cit*, part II; Kevin Avruch, "Culture as Context, Culture as Communication: Considerations for Humanitarian Negotiators," *Harvard Negotiation Law Review* 9, 2004, p. 405; and Michael Fowler, "Culture and Negotiations: The Pedagogical Dispute Regarding Cross-Cultural Negotiations," *International Studies Perspective* 10, 2009, pp. 341-359. For a text representative of this literature, see Guy Olivier Faure and Jeffrey Rubin, *Culture and Negotiations,* London, Sage publications, 1993.

The first emphasizes the differences between national or regional negotiation styles.[14] It argues that shared national or regional values can affect "a government's inclination to negotiate an issue, as opposed to adjudicate[ing], arbitrat[ing], or ignor[ing] it," as well as the "proper pace or appropriate timing for certain bargaining behaviors, … [what is] considered a reciprocal obligation, … what constitutes a fair and just outcome, … [and how] the prospect of future renegotiation [should] be handled."[15] By contrast, the second approach underscores similarities among diplomats. It argues that negotiators share an international diplomatic culture, which shapes the actions of diplomats from diverse countries or regions in a similar manner.[16] Most authors view this professional culture as stemming from Western history and values, which links this literature to the debate prevalent in today's top-down research on peace interventions, the debate on the liberal peace.

The Liberal Peace Debate

Since the late 1990s, most scholars who examine how collective understandings influence peace interventions in headquarters and national capitals have focused on the liberal peace paradigm. The constructivist literature on this topic is distinct from the older, rational choice debate, which examines whether having states founded on liberal democracy ensures domestic and international peace.[17] Constructivists instead focus on the nature and influence of a "liberal peace agenda."

In the constructivist literature on this topic, the dominant narrative emphasizes similarities between interveners. It shows that diplomats and international civil servants working for institutions as different as the African Union, the International Monetary Fund, various non-governmental organizations, the United Nations, the United States, and the World Bank share a distinct world-polity culture. This culture, which relies on Western, liberal values, is dominant on the international scene and shapes all of the international organizations' strategies in a similar manner. As a result, Western, liberal norms orient international interventions toward the implementation of a liberal peace agenda, which includes the organization of elections, the creation of a market economy, and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law.[18]

Constructivists usually critique this agenda as hegemonic and unsuited to the realities of post-conflict environments.[19] Many scholars also emphasize that policy-makers consider conflict and post-conflict management to be a technical process. Using a checklist approach, today's interveners view each situation as requiring the use of a preexisting toolkit, including the deployment of peacekeepers; the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of combatants; the repatriation of refugees; the liberalization of the economy; and the organization of elections.[20] Overall, the constructivist literature

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[14] See, among many others, Raymond Cohen, *Culture and Conflict in Egyptian-Israeli Relations: A Dialogue of the Deaf,* Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1990; and Edward Hall, *Beyond Culture,* Garden City, Anchor Press, 1976.
[15] M. Fowler, "Culture and Negotiations," *art. cit.*, p. 345.
[16] For example, William Zartman and Maureen Berman, *The Practical Negotiator,* New Haven, Yale University Press, 1982, and Iver Neumann, "To Be a Diplomat," *International Studies Perspectives* 6, 2005, pp. 72-93. For the classic book on diplomatic culture, see James Der Derian, *On Diplomacy: A Genealogy of Western Estrangement,* Oxford, Blackwell, 1987.
[17] For works representative of the large literature on the Democratic Peace, see for example Michael Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12 (3), 1983, and Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, "Normative and Structural Causes of the Democratic Peace, 1946-1986," *American Political Science Review* 87 (3), 1993.
[18] Roland Paris, *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004 provides an excellent overview of this narrative.
[19] See, among many others, David Chandler, "Introduction: Peace without Politics," *International Peacekeeping* 12 (3), 2005; Mark Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security,* New York, Zed Books, 2001; and O. Richmond, *The Transformation of Peace*, *op. cit.*. See also the special issues of *International Peacekeeping* devoted to this debate from 2004 (issue 1) and 2009 (issue 5).
[20] D. Chandler, "Peace without Politics," *art. cit.*, p. 308; B. Pouligny, *Ils Nous Avaient Promis la Paix,* notably p. 293. On the creation and transformation of this toolkit, see Marina Ottaway, "Promoting Democracy after Conflict: The Difficult Choices," *International Studies Perspectives* 4, 2003.

insists that the Western, checklist approach to peace interventions can build neither a sustainable peace nor a functioning democracy.

There are two main challenges to this prevalent analysis. Post-structuralist theorists sometimes argue that a process more subtle than a mere imposition of Western values is at work. To them, current peace interventions are a form of biopolitics: they represent a new type of international regulation that denies the exercise of open power and evades accountability for it.[21] Organizational theorists develop a distinct criticism, which highlights the differences among interveners. These theorists emphasize the significance of organizational frames, holding that each institution pursues a different conception of peace, peacekeeping, or peacebuilding. These organizational frames are not necessarily related to the liberal peace paradigm, but instead are primarily shaped by the internal cultures of international bureaucracies.[22] From this point of view, the liberal peace paradigm is only one of the many shared understandings that influence peace interventions in headquarters and national capitals.

A Partial Picture Based on Misleading Assumptions

Overall, the literature on liberal peace and international negotiations convincingly demonstrates that a world-polity culture (Western and liberal), as well as regional, national, organizational, and professional frames, contribute to shaping peace interventions from the top, down. However, this approach provides only a partial view of international interventions. It often neglects the concrete, daily practices of international action, the social and epistemological tensions among international actors, and the impact of public opinion and domestic considerations.[23] Moreover, it regularly ignores the need for in-depth knowledge of specific cases as a pre-requisite for theoretical contributions. Finally, it overlooks how international interventions operate on the ground, meaning both in the rural areas and provinces, where most peacebuilders are deployed.

The top-down approach implicitly assumes that the micro level is a mere replica of the macro level and, consequently, that developments on the national and international scenes – or actions taken by interveners in the upper political spheres – automatically result in similar transformations in the field. In fact, the dynamics of war and peace on the ground are usually distinct from those at the level of the state.[24] Likewise, instructions from capitals and headquarters do not automatically translate into action in the field. Since orders must be interpreted, decentralized interveners have substantial leeway in conducting action on the ground.[25] Finally, as the following section illustrates, the collective understandings prevalent in the field are often different from the shared understandings dominant in national capitals and headquarters.

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[21] David Chandler, *Empire in Denial: The Politics of State-Building,* London, Pluto, 2006; François Debrix, *Re-Envisioning Peacekeeping: The United Nations and the Mobilization of Ideology,* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1999; and Mark Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples,* Cambridge, Polity Press, 2007.

[22] Michael Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda,* Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2002; Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore, *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics,* Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2004; and Susanna Campbell, *Organizational Barriers to Peace*, Ph.D. diss., Tufts University, 2010.

[23] For more on this criticism, see David Ambrosetti and Yves Buchet de Neuilly, "Editorial: Les Organisations Internationales au Coeur des Crises. Configurations Empiriques et Jeux d'Acteurs," *Cultures et Conflits* 75, 2009, pp. 7-14. For ways to redress this bias, see David Ambrosetti, *Normes et Rivalités Diplomatiques à L'ONU. Le Conseil de Sécurité en Audience,* Bruxelles, P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009, Brent Steele, "Making Words Matter: The Asian Tsunami, Darfur, and "Reflexive Discourse" in International Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* 51 (4), 2007, and the special issue of *Cultures et Conflits* on "Crises et Organizations Internationales" (2009).

[24] S. Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo*, *op. cit.*; Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War,* New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006; and Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda,* Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2006.

[25] Victoria Holt and Tobias Berkman, "The Impossible Mandate? Military Preparedness, the Responsibility to Protect and Modern Peace Operations," Washington, The Henry L. Stimson Center, 2006; and B. Pouligny, *Ils Nous Avaient Promis la Paix*, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-164.

Bottom-Up Approaches: Implementers on the Ground

International Interventions and Local Cultures

In the bottom-up research on collective understandings and peace interventions, the largest body of work focuses on the cultures of the local populations, and specifically how these cultures usually differ from those of the international interveners. Numerous social anthropologists and psychologists have researched the specific visions of peace and peacemaking in various societies.[26] More importantly for our topic, many scholars highlight a contrast between the interveners' conceptions of peace, peacemaking, and peacebuilding and those of the local populations (such as in Timor and Somalia).[27] Most of this literature recalls, sometimes implicitly, the debate on liberal peace, as it emphasizes that interveners use a conflict-management technique that is inspired by the liberal peace agenda and is inappropriate for most countries where intervention occurs.

The central insight of this literature is that the interveners' lack of cultural competence leads to peace intervention failures, as it orients intervention strategies toward unproductive approaches, severely affects the popularity of the interveners, and even generates conflict between international actors and local populations or armed groups.[28] Interveners should therefore engage with, and improve their understanding of, the local cultures of the host populations to enhance chances of peace success.[29] This finding has given rise to a large body of literature geared towards practitioners, providing advice on how to conduct inter-cultural conflict resolution.[30]

Organizational and Professional Cultures

Within the bottom-up research on peace interventions, a much smaller body of literature goes beyond the characterization of the interveners' approach as Western and liberal, and looks more closely at the collective understandings shared by specific kinds of interveners. Such analyses come mostly from anthropologists (and a few psychologists). They usually concentrate on organizational cultures, and they overwhelmingly focus on military peacekeepers from the United Nations.

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[26] See the review of the social anthropology literature in Roger Mac Ginty, "Indigenous Peace-Making Versus the Liberal Peace," *Cooperation and Conflict* 43 (139), 2008, pp. 147-149. In psychology, see, for example, Luciana Karine de Souza et al., "Brazilian Children's Conceptions of Peace, War, and Violence," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 12 (1), 2006; and Karen Myers-Bowman, Kathleen Walker, and Judith Myers-Walls, "'Differences between War and Peace Are Big': Children from Yugoslavia and the United States Describe Peace and War," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11 (2), 2005.

[27] See, among others, Jarat Chopra and Tanja Hohe, "Participatory Intervention," *Global Governance* (10), 2004, pp. 289-305; T. Duffey, "Cultural Issues in Contemporary Peacekeeping," *art. cit.*; Tanja Hohe, "Clash of Paradigms: International Administration and Local Political Legitimacy in East Timor," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 24 (3), 2002; B. Pouligny, *Ils Nous Avaient Promis La Paix*, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 133-136; and Paul Salem, "A Critique of Western Conflict Resolution from a Non-Western Perspective," in Paul Salem (ed.), *Conflict Resolution in the Arab World: Selected Essays*, Beirut, American University of Beirut, 1997.

[28] In addition to the sources mentioned in the previous footnote, see B. Fetherston and C. Nordstrom, "Overcoming Habitus in Conflict Management," *art. cit.*; Marianne Heiberg, "Peacekeepers and Local Populations: Some Comments on UNIFIL," in Indar Jit Rikye and Kjell Skjelsbaek (eds.), *The United Nations and Peacekeeping*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1990; R. Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire*, *op. cit.*, chapter 7; and Donna Winslow, "The Canadian Airborne Regiment in Somalia. A Socio-Cultural Inquiry," Ottawa, Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia, 1997.

[29] The scholarly literature on this topic focuses mostly on cases of failures. Exceptions include S. Campbell, *Organizational Barriers to Peace*, *op. cit.*, and R. Mac Ginty, "Indigenous Peace-Making," *art. cit.*, pp. 152-155.

[30] See, for example, Dan Landis and Rabi Bhagat, *Handbook of Intercultural Training,* Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 1996; Michelle LeBaron and Venashri Pillay, *Conflict across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences,* Boston, Intercultural Press, 2006; and John Paul Lederach, *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation across Cultures,* Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1995. See also the debate in the US military around the use of Human Terrain Teams.

In addition to researching the cultural differences between peacekeepers and local populations and the resulting intervention failures, these anthropologists focus on four main themes. The first is the process through which national, organizational, and professional cultures orient the choice of specific peacekeeping strategies.[31] The second is how differences in national cultures create tensions or misunderstandings between various contingents of a peacekeeping mission, and thus decrease the mission's effectiveness.[32] Here again, we see a divergence between researchers who emphasize the significance of national military cultures, and those who argue that national cultures dissolve into a common, military peacekeeping culture, which mitigates misunderstandings between different national contingents.[33] The third main theme is how gender impacts peacekeeping practices, notably by creating a dominant masculine and militaristic culture within the missions.[34] Finally, the last theme is concerned with "how culture works to maintain peacekeeping as a social institution" and to provide peacekeeping and peacekeepers with legitimacy.[35]

Bottom-up studies of other components of peace interventions – such as diplomats, civilian peacekeepers, and non-governmental peace and justice organization staff members – are much rarer. They disproportionately focus on humanitarian and development aid workers. This literature has identified a professional outlook dominant in the humanitarian and development field, which shapes aid interventions along technical and apolitical strategies.[36] Most importantly for this essay, this common professional viewpoint orients aid strategies away from an active engagement with on-the-ground peacebuilding.

A related body of literature examines the interactions between the two broad categories of interveners mentioned above: military peacekeepers on the one hand, and humanitarian and development aid workers (from non-governmental organizations or civilian sections of a United Nations mission) on the other. Most authors agree that the members of each group share a distinct and unique professional culture. The main differences include conflicting understandings of security and coordination, and the fact that militaries are hierarchical, closely controlled, and well-resourced, while non-governmental

[31] B. Fetherston and C. Nordstrom, "Overcoming Habitus in Conflict Management," *art. cit.*; Robert Rubinstein, Diana Keller, and Michael Scherger, "Culture and Interoperability in Integrated Missions," *International Peacekeeping* 15 (4), 2008; R. Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire*, *op. cit.*; and Donna Winslow, "Misplaced Loyalties: The Role of Military Culture in the Breakdown of Discipline during Peace Operations," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 35 (3), 1998.

[32] Eyal Ben-Ari and Efrat Elron, "Blue Helmets and White Armor: Multi-Nationalism and Multi-Culturalism among UN Peacekeeping Forces," *City & Society* 13 (2), 2001; T. Duffey, "Cultural Issues in Contemporary Peacekeeping," *art. cit.*; M. Heiberg, "Peacekeepers and Local Populations," *op. cit.*; and Maren Tomforde, "Motivation and Self-Image among German Peacekeepers," *International Peacekeeping* 12 (4), 2005.

[33] B. Fetherston and C. Nordstrom, "Overcoming Habitus in Conflict Management," *art. cit.*; R. Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire*, *op. cit.*; and Donna Winslow and Peer Everts, "It's Not a Question of Muscle: Cultural Interoperability for NATO," in Gustav Schmidt (ed.), *A History of NATO - the First Fifty Years*, Hampshire, Palgrave/MacMillan, 2001.

[34] Gurchathen Sanghera, Marsha Henry, and Paul Higate, "Peacekeepers as New Men? Security and Masculinity in the United Nations Mission in Liberia," Centre for Governance and International Affairs, University of Bristol, 2008; Liora Sion, "Peacekeeping and the Gender Regime. Dutch Female Peacekeepers in Bosnia and Kosovo," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 37 (5), 2008; and Sandra Whitworth, *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis,* Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 2004. On the gender and racial dimensions of peacekeeping, see also Sherene Razack, *Dark Threats and White Knights: The Somalia Affair, Peacekeeping and the New Imperialism,* Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2004.

[35] R. Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire*, *op. cit.*, p. 41. Examples also include E. Ben-Ari and E. Elron, "Blue Helmets and White Armor," *art. cit.*; Marianne Heiberg and Johan Jørgen Holst, "Peacekeeping in Lebanon: Comparing UNIFIL and the MNF," *Survival* 28 (5), 1986; and Liora Sion, "'Too Sweet and Innocent for War'? Dutch Peacekeepers and the Use of Violence," *Armed Forces & Security* 32 (3), 2006.

[36] See, among many others, D. Fassin and M. Pandolfi, *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions*; James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho,* New York, Cambridge University Press, 1990; and Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda,* West Hartford, Kumarian Press, 1998. For an in-depth study of the role of development and humanitarian aid in international security, see M. Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars, op. cit.*

organizations tend to be decentralized, minimally staffed, and operate independently.[37] These differences create tensions between civilian and military peacebuilders, which impede cooperation and eventually decrease the effectiveness of international interventions. The goal of these studies is therefore to promote civil-military cooperation, either by suggesting mechanisms for better coordination or by helping each group to better understand the other.

Three Areas for Further Research

The bottom-up literature convincingly shows that national, organizational, professional, and gender frames or cultures shape peacekeeping action in the field. It also provides several important explanations for peacekeeping failures, such as the lack of engagement with local cultures and the divergence between national battalions or between military and civilian interveners. However, the overwhelming focus on military peacekeepers leaves three topics largely under-researched.[38]

First, while the bottom-up literature provides a good grasp of how professional, organizational, and national shared understandings influence military peacekeepers, we lack similar knowledge regarding diplomats deployed in the field, civilian peacekeepers, and non-governmental peace and justice organization staff members. This is problematic given that civilians carry out the bulk of the peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding work.

Second, as most studies of peace implementation focus on specific groups of interveners, such as military peacekeepers or humanitarian aid workers, they tend to study this type of intervention in isolation, ignoring its interaction with other, concurrent types of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding work. This reductionism often causes analysts to attribute all of the improvements or deteriorations in the conflict situation to one kind of organization, though these developments usually result from the combined work of different local and external actors. This bias ultimately limits understanding: apart from the research on interactions between military and humanitarian actors mentioned above, we have little knowledge of how the various kinds of peace actors and functions interact on the ground. We also need to move beyond the dichotomy between external and local actors in order to better appreciate the normative and material impacts of peace interventions.[39]

The overwhelming focus on military peacekeepers and the tendency to study specific groups in isolation lead to a third under-researched area. While top-down researchers emphasize both differences and similarities between diverse groups of interveners, there is very little comparable bottom-up research. Bottom-up researchers almost exclusively emphasize the differences between interveners. Their study of similarities is limited to the claim that most interveners adopt a Western, liberal approach to peace. A more extensive inquiry into the similarities between interveners, in particular those shaped by elements that are not necessarily Western or liberal, would provide significant insights into peace interventions.

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[37] Donna Winslow, "Strange Bedfellows: NGOs and the Military in Humanitarian Crises," *International Journal of Peace Studies* 7 (2), 2002; R. Rubinstein, D. Keller, and M. Scherger, "Culture and Interoperability in Integrated Missions," *art. cit*., p. 543; and R. Rubinstein, *Peacekeeping under Fire*, *op. cit*., chapter 7. See also T. Duffey, "Cultural Issues in Contemporary Peacekeeping," *art. cit*.; and Hugo Slim, "The Stretcher and the Drum: Civil-Military Relations in Peace Support Operations," *International Peacekeeping* 3 (2), 1996.

[38] Successful forays into these topics have, however, been made. Such exceptions include, for example: S. Autesserre, *The Trouble With the Congo*, *op. cit*.; S. Campbell, *Organizational Barriers to Peace*, *op. cit*.; Sandrine Lefranc, "Du Droit à la Paix. La Circulation des Techniques Internationales de Pacification par le Bas," *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 174 (4), 2008; and Carrie Manning and Monica Malbrough, "Bilateral Donors and Aid Conditionality in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: The Case of Mozambique," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 48 (1), 2010.

[39] D. Ambrosetti, "Urgences Et Normalités De Gestionnaires Face Aux Violences 'Des Autres'," *art. cit.*

Conclusion: A Research Agenda

Although rational choice studies dominate the literature on international peace interventions, there is now a significant body of research demonstrating that multiple collective understandings shape peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding action. These shared understandings include a world-polity culture (mostly Western and liberal); regional, national, and local cultures; the internal frames of international organizations (such as the World Bank or peacekeeping missions); and the professional outlooks of specific groups (such as international negotiators or humanitarian aid workers). The main points of contention revolve around two central questions: first, which set of collective understandings is dominant and most profoundly influences interventions, and second, whether similarities or differences among interveners best explain international intervention practices.

This literature has greatly contributed to our understanding of international peace interventions and the conditions that promote their success or failure. However, the top-down research overlooks how international interventions operate on the ground, a problematic approach given that the micro level is not a mere replica of the macro level. The bottom-up literature on peace interveners corrects this shortcoming, but its overwhelming focus on military peacekeepers leaves three crucial areas under-researched: how collective understandings influence non-military peacekeepers, how the various actors and functions of peace interventions interact, and whether significant similarities exist between all interveners deployed on the ground.

Both the top-down and the bottom-up literatures also suffer from a common weakness. As most authors research how various collective understandings orient interventions toward failure, we have little knowledge of how shared understandings can promote peace intervention success. It would be worthwhile to expand our enquiry to cases of success: international interventions face such immense challenges that the most puzzling question is not why attempts at peace fail, but rather why they sometimes succeed.[40]

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[40] P. Fortna, *Does Peacekeeping Work*, *op. cit.*; and L. M. Howard, *UN Peacekeeping in Civil Wars*, op.cit.