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The Applied Anthropologist publishes peer-reviewed articles, commentaries, brief communications, field reports, and book reviews on a wide range of topics. The journal's focus is on cultural change and adaptation in the modern world. It explores how humans approach, analyze, and develop solutions to cultural, ecological, economic, and technological problems. The journal is supported and underwritten by the High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology. Guidelines for authors, electronic access to back issues, and further information about the society is available on the website at www.HPSfAA.org.

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POINT-TO-POINT JOSEF GARRETT

Dear Members and Readers, I want to thank you for your new or continued support for the High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology (HPSfAA) and its peer-reviewed publication, *The Applied Anthropologist*. I would like to take a moment of your time to comment on the state of applied anthropology, our society, and science in general. For those of you who don't know, I am an Applied and Visual Anthropologist; my training has allowed me to focus my views on how we see our field and how we disseminate its information. I believe that as scientists, conducting research is only one aspect of our responsibilities towards the public. As a faculty member at the Metropolitan State University of Denver, I enjoy the privilege of being able to work with students on various projects and help educate the next generation. One of the things that I have noticed, as I am sure many of you have, is how interconnected everyone – especially members of this younger generation – has become. Often, when stepping into a classroom I find that my students are buried in their phones or computers, scanning the latest Facebook update or looking at their friends Instagram posts. While I sometimes hear from other faculty members how terrible this state of affairs has become, I just see it as a product of our evolving culture and something that we, instead of complaining, must adapt to in order to better connect with this generation. This also speaks to how the average American spends a good part of their day; several studies have shown that people spend between 3 and 5 hours a day on their mobile devices. While many of us might see this as horrible, it is however a reality that we must accept. However, I do feel like there is something that we can do to deal with this new reality of social media and electronic dystopia.

So what should we do? As you have probably noticed, there has been a push back against scientists and science in general. Climate Change, which is generally considered to be science fact, has come under attack by those who either deny or don't understand the science backing the data. Science in general has been losing battles; just recently in Ohio, legislation was passed that allows students to give false answers to questions on tests if they coincide with their religious beliefs. While I support people's religious practices, I don't think it does the public any good to have a double standard concerning knowledge and facts. While there is an increase in those engaging in higher education in the United States, I believe that there are a lot of people that are still being left behind. Students who are entering college, especially those who have lived in the "No Child Left Behind" system of education, are coming in at a deficit. We must all engage in critical thinking, something that – for students – is often skipped over in lieu of how to better take tests. What does all of this mean?

As President of the High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology, I must comment on a new reality confronting our organization. We are seeing a change in our community; our elder members who have been the bedrock are getting to a point where they can no longer participate as much as they used to and, like all things, are leaving it to the next generation to carry on. This is an issue because many of our aging members still have much of give – the High Plains Society needs more, younger people to receive their knowledge. We need more students and others to join our community. This means that change must take place. An example of a key senior member is Dr. Jack Schultz, who has been a long-standing participant and leader of our society. Part of his legacy is that both the President and the President-Elect, Michael Kilman, along with several current board members, are or once were students of his. As we consider the direction of the society, we must reflect on people like Jack Schultz and their ongoing influence, under new conditions.

Michael and I are both filmmakers and a lot of our efforts have been towards making films that can impact our organization. Other members of the High Plains society are constantly reaching out and helping it as well, but I think we need to do more. While many of us are certainly happy with the community we have, we are also in need of new members who can contribute not only to our organization but to the larger community, to society *writ large*. This brings me to my ultimate point: critically considering how we as the HPSfAA community, within the larger scientific community, can better deal with these issues under new conditions. Given that students and the general public are constantly exposed to social media (via cellphones, laptops, and television); that the public is exposed to traditional media (via newspapers and magazines); that the public is plugged into social networks confronting all kinds of "fake news;" and

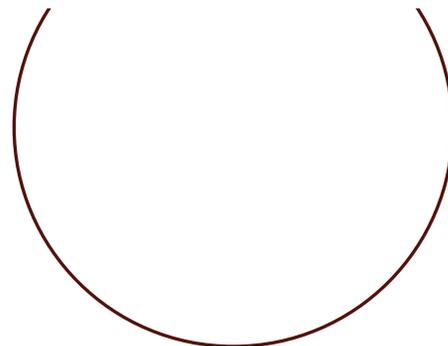
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that we as social scientists want to improve communications and contribute to science, how can we “better deal”? Ultimately, I have always believed that it comes down to education – but via methods that are new and that allow us to critique the old. Are the old ways of dissemination still viable? Are books and journals like *The Applied Anthropologist* still really important, to those within and beyond academe? If we want to more effectively reach the public, including those students locked into social media, we have to change how we communicate and tell our stories, how we share our knowledge.

Therefore, I suggest that we change how we process our information. I think that there has to be some way in which we can communicate with virtually everyone in the world, as it is, and to try and make it a world that ought to be. The keys are the methods by which we share our knowledge. I think we have to fundamentally change how we disseminate our work. I look at all of the research and all of the researchers who have spent decades working towards knowledge enhancement, and where does it go? On to a shelf, in a library where only other researchers or students will ever see it. With current technology, we still can capture that knowledge, but can more effectively share it in the multi-media sphere. We need to change how we express our information so that it can benefit more people, not just those in academia. I don't think it is enough that we teach the students who walk through the halls; even though it is a noble endeavor, we have to go beyond. I suggest that we take the next step and use multi-media to our advantage. We should take cameras and audio gear into the field, into our offices, into our classrooms, and share what we learn that way. We should take our research publications and transform them, so we can better speak about what we've learned and so people can better hear why it is important to understand culture, climate change, and science in general. We need to take responsibility for our work and what it can mean to a grander audience, if shared more effectively. I hope that as we explore further possibilities of technology and its impacts on – and through – applied anthropology, we can use it to more effectively reach out to educate and engage the public. We need to share our knowledge in these new conditions, because knowledge for knowledge's sake is no longer acceptable.

Thank you, Josef Garrett, MVA
President of the High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology



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CULTURALLY COMPETENT ASSESSMENTS WITH IMMIGRANTS,
MEXICANS AND MEXICAN AMERICANS: TRANSFORMING
MISPERCEPTION INTO CULTURALLY RELEVANT PERSPECTIVES

RAMON DEL CASTILLO

ABSTRACT

This article addresses the following research question: How important is the portrayal of culture in its many manifestations in the assessment and analyses of Mexican immigrants and Mexican American families as these two groups grapple with life's challenges and other urban stressors in American society, followed by seeking out assistance in mainstream health, mental health, criminal justice and other social service agencies? Cultural knowledge and the subsequent application of cultural concepts as methods for use by the aforementioned helping and healing programs are presented, as considerations when providing culturally responsive prevention, intervention and treatment services to Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans. My intention is to offer culturally competent perspectives that can be incorporated into human services fields that often operate from a mainstream model without taking into consideration the importance of diverse cultural influences. Salient information on Mexican and Mexican American histories and cultures is presented in order to provide analysts with information critical to shaping alternative perspectives. Readers are introduced to ongoing issues such as inter-generational and historical trauma, grief associated with loss, cultural and identity conflict, and acculturation, with citations from the historical and contemporary research extrapolated from state-of-the-art research coupled with my three decades of experience in community mental health and consulting with students and parents at a charter school, whose enrollment was predominantly Mexican and Mexican American children.

KEY WORDS: Mexican immigrants; Mexican American families; cultural portrayal; cultural competency; prevention, intervention, treatment services

Cultural Factors in Assessment and Analysis of Mexican Americans

This article addresses the following research question: How important is the portrayal of culture in its many manifestations in the assessment and analyses of Mexican immigrants and Mexican American families as families seek out assistance in mainstream health, mental health, criminal justice and other social service agencies and organizations as they grapple with life's challenges such as assimilation, acculturation, cultural conflict and other urban stressors in American society. Addressed here is cultural knowledge and the subsequent application of cultural concepts as methods for analyses to consider in helping and healing programs when providing culturally responsive prevention, intervention and treatment services to Mexican immigrants and Mexican American families. Please note that this article is not specific to any person or family but a compilation and analyses of essential variables that can be crucial in an assessment process. There is a caveat – please use caution when applying the concepts described in this essay with scrutiny and understanding of the variability caused by acculturation in all human groups, and also realize that what is presented here is but a smidgen of what constitutes Mexican and Mexican American histories and cultures.

Provided here are some of the more prominent cultural characteristics that are relevant for assessment purposes, featuring salient characteristics endemic to the Mexican and Mexican American cultures. It is important to also note that acculturation and the process in which members of one cultural group adapt and in some cases are forced into accepting the beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, values, and traditions of another group, are always a factor in analyzing a member of any group following entrance into a new society. The literature in adaptation to a new society, whether it is acculturation or assimilation, as human beings assimilate or attempt to emulate members of the dominant culture, is equally challenging. The research

describes an assortment of variables that contribute to either the maintenance or loss of one's culture that include – but is not limited – to length of time in a new society, knowledge of one's culture, changes as linguistic acculturation occurs, group membership identification, and interaction patterns with the dominant culture.

Each individual acculturates to the dominant society based on his or her desire or resistance in relationship to the concept of acculturation, coupled with other variables. The human organism in all of its beauty will react in defense and protection when potential annihilation is present, that is, when loss of culture and identity seem imminent. As well, be cognizant that current experiences and interaction patterns with the dominant culture is a contiguous process as entrants into a new society have various experiences in each of the defined categories. The utilization of the identified significant variables in assessing members of the group can change; therefore, persons should be treated as individuals whose relative cultural change can be fluid as the pressure to acculturate is present. This must ameliorate any tendency to make broad-based assumptions about an individual's acculturation level. In addition, it is not appropriate to interpret this paper as any type or template of psychological evaluation, but rather as a set of cultural tools useful in assessing the emotional and psychological impact that cultural concepts/factors can have on the spiritual, emotional, and psychological components of someone's personality.

The Antecedents of Historical and Intergenerational Trauma

The importance of cultural competence in health care delivery has become of paramount importance over the last four decades. Some movement has been made towards institutionalizing cultural competency into health care delivery, but the process has been slow. This movement includes incorporating history and culture as crucial meta-variables in the process of assessment. Indigenous healers are

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familiar with such processes and on occasions are invited to participate in mainstream psychiatric centers and helping professions as consultants (Del Castillo 1999). Diana Velazquez, a *curandera* who mentored me for 13 years, was invited into many organizations to provide culturally specific mental health interventions (Del Castillo 1980-1993). Flores (2013) shares “that mainstream analysts do not include or minimize the historical, cultural and social context of psychological, emotional characteristics; therefore, also marginalizing explanatory models,” that provide deeper insight into the psychology of the individual and the group. Some of the areas excluded in the process are historical and intergenerational trauma. When these are often left out or unattended, the assessment results may be incomplete or leave gaping holes. Historically, the initial conquest of 1519, instigated by Spaniards against indigenous populations, has been depicted as not only a physical but a moral and spiritual conquest (Paz 1961, Ramos 1962). And although time has passed and scars have been formed, wounds still exist. In 1846-48, following the Mexican American War, those wounds were reopened for the Mexican American population. The loss of land was traumatic, resulting in economic, social, political, cultural and spiritual wounds. Psychologists familiar with historical and intergenerational trauma argue that healing has never occurred within the Mexican and Mexican American populations. Historical and inter-generation trauma persists, adding insult to injury, with intense psychological responses. Today it is being repeated through gentrification, for example, in Denver, Colorado.

Mexican immigration into American society has a long and tenuous history with intermittent struggles causing pain and suffering. Arbona, et al. (2010) present research indicating that Latino immigrants develop mental disorders tied to their migration experience, such as trauma history, low education levels, low socio-economic status, limited English proficiency, limited access to (or trust in) the health care system, stress associated with acculturation, and also separation from their nuclear families.

This is the basis for the development of inter-generational trauma that is passed onto to other family members as they cross borders, enter American society with an expectation to cross even more metaphorical borders that add to the pain and stress after they arrive. When this is coupled with the many historical losses minority groups have experienced, the results are damaged and wounded spirits. As the aforementioned groups trek back and forth onto American soil, sometimes aware of the many struggles they will face, and many times without constructive alternatives to deal with the challenges, new wounds rip open their collective psychology. When this is added to the loss and grief experienced when leaving a society, coupled with the added burden of historical trauma buried underneath historical pangs, trauma accumulates; thus, there is increasing stress with concomitant psychological adjustment issues. Comas-Diaz (2000, 2007) stresses Post Colonization Stress Disorder (PCSD) as opposed to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), defining it “as the result of struggling with racism and cultural imperialism, as well as with the imposition of mainstream culture as dominant and superior. It involves internalized and projected racism...a disorder of the self, due to colonization’s severe insults to individual and collective self-esteem.” Duran and Duran (1995) posit that “intergenerational trauma and the prevalence of race, class and institutionalized systems of oppression that emerged from conquest and domination adversely affect the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the Latino [populations].” Brave Heart (2012) defines historical trauma as “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma.” Cultural story-telling from generation to generation keep the stories alive but also adds salt to the

wounds of historical oppression (Grayshield, personal communication, 2019).

Ramirez and Castaneda (1974) share, “The histories of families in traditional communities have close ties to one another.... The sense of historical continuity is a major factor in the development of a strong sense of identification with the ethnic group.” Loss of this continuity results in loss and a degree of grief as the wounded *alma* (soul) attempts to recover. Whether individuals have actually experienced the trauma or if it is transmitted through *cuentos* (stories) passed down from generation to generation or some other cultural mechanism, youth absorb the unresolved pain caused by centuries of mistreatment. It is internalized and is a heavy burden to carry. Secondary trauma also causes pain as the individual feels a sense of hopelessness in life when stories filled with trauma and oppression are shared with family members. As Duran and Duran (1995) state, “Losses are cumulative and additive and can be traumatic, resulting in intergenerational Post Traumatic Stress Disorder” (PTSD). McCubbin and Marsella’s (2009) research argues that, “The impact of conquest and colonization on indigenous or aboriginal communities is well known to constitute risk factors for emotional and psychological distress as well as to contribute to health disparities for the generations that follow.”

Recent research has well documented the trauma experienced by immigrants migrating from their societies of origin to another country, leaving behind families and cultures that provide security, balance and support, but when abandoned also result in long term grief and despair. It is now understood that immigrants coming into new societies experience a variety of symptoms that are related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder PTSD. Additionally, the anticipation of living in a society without legal status causes a variety of feelings such as fear, ambivalence, anxiety, and depression – classical symptoms of PTSD. Traumatic experiences while coming into a new society can often involve a threat to life and can leave a person feeling overwhelmed even if it does not involve a threat of physical harm. A sense of helplessness, culture shock, a loss of nuclear and extended families, grief and acculturation are further symptoms of PTSD. According to the most recent data, about one in four American children younger than 18 live in immigrant families and over four million U.S. citizens have a least one undocumented child (Del Castillo 2017).

Mirich (2014) states, “Immigration courts in the United States decide the fates of those who come to this country seeking the proverbial American dream. While their circumstances here might sometimes be less than ideal, the terrifying threat of deportation to an impoverished and crime ridden no-man’s-land for such people, including their American born children, can result in shattered lives – or even death.” The extreme pressure caused by living in fear are precursors for possible mental breakdowns. While consulting with a family whose 14 year old son had been beaten by police officers, the mother dropped the case because of her immigrant status, believing that this would cause even further abuse (Del Castillo 2017).

Historical Development of Mexican and Mexican-American Communities and Family Structures

The concept of Mexican immigrant and Mexican American *familias* can be characterized in modern society as a viable force providing strength and support to its members during trying times as families and children adjust to new ways of life. As previously mentioned, immigrants face many of the challenges their ancestors encountered throughout history, during the Spanish Conquest, followed by the long-term ramifications of colonization in the 16th century as well as further colonization that occurred after the Mexican American War of 1846-





48. Families in modern America face an onslaught of issues that accumulate and cause psychological consternation that will be further expanded upon in this article.

The prevailing feature of *la familia* in the Mexican and Mexican-American cultures postulates that the family is perhaps the single most-cited source of informal support available to older persons of Mexican heritage (Sotomayor 1973; Korte 1981; Villa 1994). Within the family structure, elders are highly revered, serving as wisdom keepers and responsible for passing on cultural values, traditions and lessons of life. The family also serves as a protection and sustenance for all of its members. The elders are considered the wisdom keepers and the transmitters of culture with a responsibility to pass on sacred traditions to the next generation. "It takes a barrio to raise a child" is a motto framed by Mexican Americans as they wandered into what was once their ancestral land, transforming the barrio into an institution that withstood the many pressures during historical immigration for Mexicans coming into American society.

The familial system practiced by Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans during migration and settlement in American society became saving graces for many families. Dolan and Hinojosa (1994), in a historical analysis of Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans and the concept of community development and *familia* state, "This social history helps to illustrate how these and other families provided support to one another and created the culturally relevant relations that provided social equilibrium rather than social breakdown" during migration into the United States of America. Through the development of the barrios in the Southwest, communities were formed that assisted families in adjusting to a new way of life. The development of *mutualistas* (mutual aid societies) also became part of the fabric of *el barrio*. *Mutualistas*, similar in form and structure to nonprofit organizations, served the needs of the community. Mario Barrera (1988), a well-known Chicano scholar, states, "It is no exaggeration to say that the *mutualistas* were the most important social organization among Chicanos from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s."

There is no prototype of *la familia* as acculturation within America's mainstream institutions wraps its tentacles around *la familia* and forces change that creates anxiety and tension within the traditional family structure. The family provides emotional support and a sense of belonging, especially as Mexican immigrants and Mexican American family members interact in dominant institutions that are often viewed as hostile and unaccepting. Historical social science research has not necessarily been kind in its depiction of the Mexican family. Ramirez and Castaneda (1974) have criticized the theoretical framework of the "damaging culture view" established by mainstream social scientists that states, "The culture and values of Mexican Americans are the ultimate and final cause of their low economic status and low academic achievement" (p. 14). Sanchez (1993) states that social scientists "...viewed Mexicans [in California] as authoritarian and macho-dominated, impeding individual achievement and independence while promoting passivity and *familia* dependence."

Seldom do mainstream social scientists ask the question why acculturation has not been *fait accompli*. Unsympathetic research has been mitigated with research in Chicana/o studies that criticizes social science research that compares Mexican immigrant and Mexican American families to the mainstream Anglo models, using the mainstream model as the correct one, worthy of emulation. From the perspective of more contemporary research, this criticism has been valuable in assisting the helping professions create more balance and a willingness to seek out alternative perspectives that more aptly describe the groups more objectively, especially when the blinders of ethnocentrism are removed and cultural dynamics are more fully understood.

Assimilation, Acculturation and Americanization Policy: Going into Cultural Shock

Acculturation is a complex phenomenon as each individual negotiates his or her desire to maintain personal cultural identity or abandon it to fit into the normal expectations placed on individuals as they socialize in a new society. Individual choice and free will are always at play consciously or unconsciously as adults make decisions regarding life's choices. With children it is different as they are left, many times unsupported, to the whims of daycare providers, teachers and employers unfamiliar with the shibboleths of systems equally unfamiliar with cultural diversity and its many manifestations. When this is combined with ecological and environmental factors, the process of acculturation becomes very intricate, causing anxiety and stress; generally, without appropriate cultural resolution. The anxiety is repressed and may surface at inopportune times as the human organism attempts to survive. Cultural conflict was a very common phenomenon while I worked at El Centro de las Familias. However, patients could not identify what it was; they only lived in perpetual anxiety, often times blaming themselves for this psychological response (Del Castillo 1980-1993).

One of the more salient stressful factors that individuals from different cultures experience in a new society is identity conflict. Caught between whether to identify strongly with one's culture or deny it causes ambivalence and stress, especially in English-only environments where choosing the incorrect behavioral or linguistic responses may result in negative feedback. Denial of one's cultural identity is self-debasing and can cause one to begin to negate the self and lose self-esteem. Some individuals overcompensate this dilemma by choosing the path of the dominant culture at the expense of denigration from in-group members. Conversely, choosing to demonstrate one's pride in his or her ethnicity, can cause negative feedback from the dominant culture. Sometimes there is no middle ground, which causes the individual to deal with the ensuing trauma. The development of a bicultural identity, that is, living within two cultures, is a process that can also cause identity conflict. Ramirez and Castaneda (1974) in early research argue: "A Mexican American must (a) learn to function effectively in the mainstream American cultural community, and (b) continue to function effectively in and contribute to the Mexican American culture community." The lack of adequate cultural adjustment can be stressful.

As Garza and Gallegos (1995) further elaborate, "If an individual finds the inconsistencies and contradictions of simultaneously living in two or more cultures overwhelming, he or she can retreat into the security of choosing one set of stimuli and totally rejecting another" (p. 9). However, each choice has a set of consequences that may cause even further stress. As these authors stress, "Although serving a short-term function of decreasing anxiety and uncertainty, the choice to constrict ones' world view results in long-term damage to the person's psychological health and ability to adapt constructively to a complex environment" (p. 9). Other variables that can contribute to decision making and acculturation are experiences with racism and discrimination that can act as inhibitors to acculturation adjustment in one way or another. Some research argues that not enough attention is given to "simultaneous contributions of cultural, ecological and personality variables" (p. 5).

Chun, et al. (2002) offer typologies when dealing with assimilation and acculturation. Each strategic approach considers both resolution and stress, particularly as an individual decides what approach to implement. The Assimilation Strategy applies to individuals who do not want to hold onto their cultural identity and seek daily interactions with members of other cultures. The Separation Strategy is defined as individuals who place a value on holding on to their original culture and at the same time avoid interacting with others. The Integration Strategy



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applies to people who have an interest in maintaining their original culture, used when there is little possibility of or interest in cultural maintenance and little interest in having relationships with others. While at the clinic, it was not unusual for patients to not know how to answer a simple question as to his or her ethnic identity (Del Castillo 1980-1993).

A person who chooses to operate within his or her cultural framework should not be criticized; this ethnocentric attitude has caused undue harm to Mexican immigrants and Mexican American families that have experienced change in American society for decades – forced to abandon important values during intense cultural dismantling processes. Referred to as “Americanization policy,” it can eventually transform Mexicans into second-class citizen status, particularly women. This term is used when the United States attempts to subjugate a culture or people in an attempt to westernize them (see www.chacha.com/question/what-is-the-americanization-policy). It reflects a United States government and public opinion that there is a standard set of cultural values that should be held in common by all citizens. This policy stipulates that success can only be obtained by going through an acculturating process without taking heed of the long-term ramifications of this dilemma. Alfredo Mirande (1985), linking back to Camarillo (1970), shares that, “One consequence of Americanization policy was the initiation of a process that has been termed *barrioization* of the Mexican community,” which entailed formation of residentially and socially segregated Chicano barrios or neighborhoods. Eugene Garcia (1996) states: “When immigrant students became shining academic stars, their success is often attributed to the values and habits of their native culture rather than their Americanization. There is some evidence that assimilation may actually inhibit academic success. Studies of Mexican immigrants suggest that those who maintain a strong identification with their native language and culture are more likely to succeed in schools than those who readily adopt American ways.” What generally occurs is that the person internalizes self-blame and humiliation, with a concomitant loss of identity (Del Castillo 1980-1993).

The imposition of Americanization policy resulted in intragroup conflict that has persisted throughout time, with seemingly no resolution. Dolan and Hinojosa (1994) state, “Conflict erupted between first and second generation Mexicans, who had differing notions of freedom and responsibility,” once acculturation began to take place as parents and children observed cultural differences at play. “In the United States children were exposed to and came to accept, the more egalitarian and less restrictive style of family life in America” (p.146). These types of cultural differences led to forced acculturation, as members of *la familia* constantly experienced what have been termed micro-aggressions. To clarify this, I would add that it is one thing to observe different cultures in action, but quite another to criticize a culture for its members behaving differently – a general pattern of racism that has occurred as misperceptions became institutionalized into stereotypical labels. The institutionalization of Americanization policy set the stage for cultural conflict between the two primary groups that persists. I worked with both Mexican and Mexican American gangs in the 1980s when this phenomenon hit the streets as they battled for identity and turf (Del Castillo 1984-1993).

The kinds of behaviors just mentioned have been referred to as microaggressions in modern-day nomenclature, being defined as “brief and commonplace verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial, gender, sex-oriented and religious slights to the targeted person or group that produce stress and affect the emotional well-being of individuals and groups” (Sue 2010, p. 5). Microaggressions have pernicious effects on the psyche and can lead to feelings of

outrage, rage, and sorrow (Hardy and Laszoffy 2005). Ricardo Carrillo (2017), a clinical psychologist and *curandero* (indigenous healer), with his colleagues states, “Through acculturation, there has been an erosion of Mexican American values such as *familialismo* (loyalty to family), *respeto* (respect), *confianza*, (trust), *dignidad* (dignity), *carino* (love) and *coraje* (courage).” Other values affected include *humilde* (humility), *respeto a la autoridad* (respect for authority) and spirituality, *confianza* (trust in one another), *fatalismo* (fatalism), *orgullo* (pride), *personalismo* (good character, personable use of self), *simpatia* (simpatico or congenial attitude), and *espiritualismo* (spiritualism, holism).

In the final analysis, there is research on biculturalism which supports the propensity to adequately achieve a positive outcome, but it takes time and the ability to deal with frustration, aggression and racism that are endemic to the process. Buriel (1984), Mendoza (1984), and Ramirez (1984) posit that social scientists often ignore the possibility and effectiveness of bicultural orientations that produce healthy adults. Most models generally argue that change is unidimensional, that is, that achieving biculturalism is almost impossible. If biculturalism is not successful, then the individual is destined to live in perpetual stress. Biculturals can demonstrate expanded behavioral repertoires that make them more flexible and able to effectively, more comfortably interact with both cultures (Mc Fee, 1968, Valentine, 1971). The lack of awareness regarding this process leads to misperceptions and misunderstandings that cause conflict between Anglos and immigrants in American society.

Family Life and Cultural Conflict

Mexican immigrants' and Mexican Americans' cultural expectations and behavior patterns, like other cultural groups, are passed down from generation to generation via the socialization process. As Mexican Americans have been transformed from a predominant rural group into an urban group, some of the cultural traits and characteristics have been palliated and changed at varying levels while others have remained tempered. In either case, cultural conflict is present during the acculturation process. In a classic article of applied anthropology, Graves (1967) stated: “Cultural conflict is caused by the negation of or suppression of Latino cultural mores in order to learn the values inherent to the Anglo American culture. Difficulties in adapting to or reconciling the conflicting values of two cultural systems result in an approach-avoidance conflict in which the individual is faced with a more provocative but also a more threatening alternative. A frequent result of this conflict is increasing psychological stress an eventual behavioral dysfunction.” Such conflicts become normalized within the structure of the family as stories galore during the negotiation of differences become everyday occurrences, often resulting in microaggressions.

There is a wealth of literature that emphasizes the importance of family in Mexican immigrant and Mexican American social life. Family life is built around a network of relationships based in rites and rituals within the family structure that are, in turn, linked to consanguinity and fictive kin relationships within the community. This inter-locking network provides an abundance of security, reinforcement and acceptance for its members. The Mexican and Mexican American cultures in their strictest definition are described as collectivist cultures. Gustavo Yep, in Amado Padilla's *Hispanic Psychology: Critical Issues in Theory and Research* (1995), includes a characteristic that he refers to as allocentrism, or collectivism, as one of many cultural traits predominant in Mexican and Mexican American families. He states that “allocentrism is a cultural trait associated with the preference for interpersonal relationships in ingroups that are nurturing, empathetic, loving, intimate, and willing to sacrifice for the welfare of the group.” For example, in a hierarchy of



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needs, group members will sacrifice their needs for the common good, which translates for them into survival, in order maintain balance in the family structure. Freeberg and Stein (1996) report that Mexican American cohorts exhibit higher levels of *familismo* and more collectivist attitudes with regard to family obligation than non-Hispanic White males. Some of the research postulates that this phenomenon is seen particularly in rural areas and Mexican *barrios* where the extended family system is operable at some level. I have found that a highly acculturated Mexican American would perceive this as unusual (Del Castillo 1980-1993).

Familismo seems to be one value that has resisted change. Although the extended family has undergone some transformations, *la familia* remains intact and continues to provide comfort and succoring assistance to its members as it experiences the many challenges caused by the stressors in urban life. Syncretism related to cultural variables is not always complete, that is, remnants of the past almost always linger on in the collective psychology of the group. Allocentrism may seem odd to mainstream analysts from the WASP persuasion and may be misunderstood; however, it is a cultural value that remains intact.

Structural Considerations of La Familia

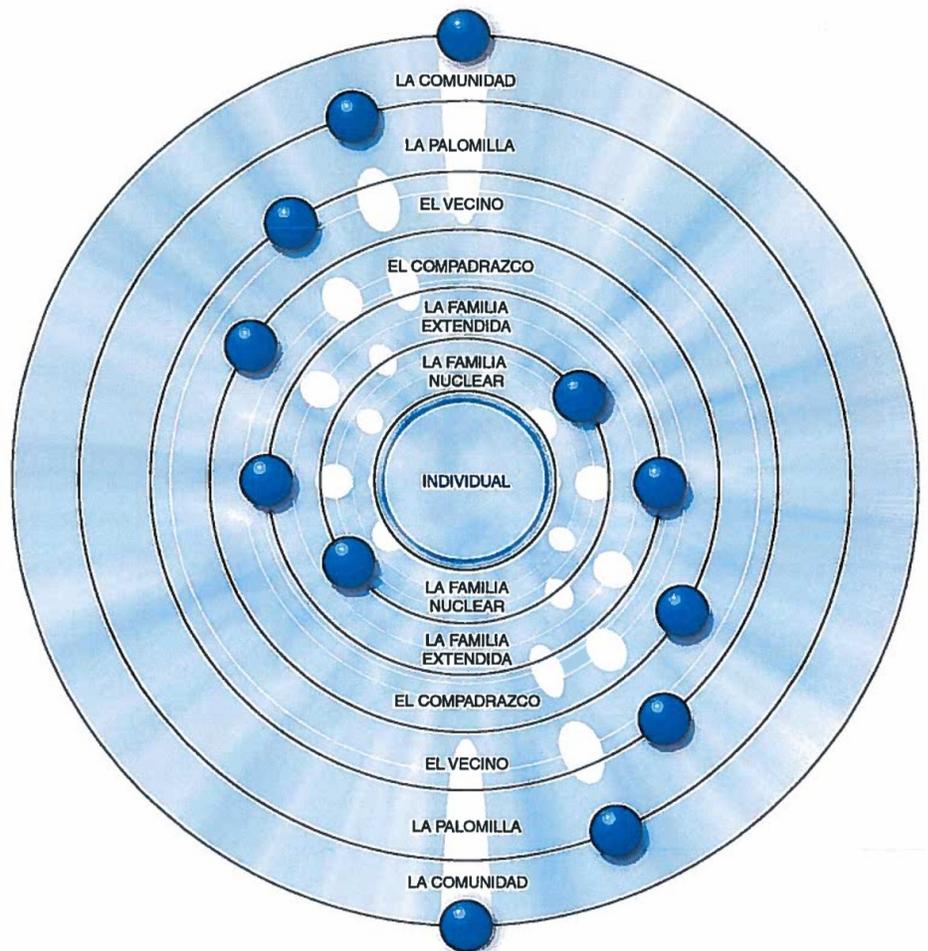
Within the structure of the Mexican family, deference is paid to both age and gender. There are distinct roles assigned to females and males within the structure of the family such as caring for and socializing younger brothers and sisters. Socialization practices of the children in Mexican families, more specifically males, include a "display [of] *machismo*, *caballerismo*, being strong, honorable and responsible providing and protecting the family and community" (Arciniegua, et al. 2008). There is not one definition of *machismo*, which has become a concept used in both American and Mexican cultures. Generally, there is a set of stereotypical characteristics that are used to define this concept. They indicate that machos involved in violence subscribe to the following: a) hold traditional patriarchal beliefs, b) are emotionally unexpressive, c) are isolated due to their difficulty in maintaining close relationships, d) have low self-esteem that relates to using violence to achieve superiority, and e) are unemployed or dissatisfied with their current employment (Padilla 1995). The problem with the assignment of these characteristics is that researchers seldom include the structural elements that may often cause this disruption in someone's life – elements like poverty, racism, discrimination, and a bombardment of microaggressions.

The counterpart of *machismo* left out of most narratives emanates from Mesoamerican history and is referred to as *El Hombre Noble* (The Honorable Man). Recently, *El Hombre Noble* has emerged by healers that have studied Mesoamerican and Mexican codices. It has been introduced as an alternative to the negative aspects of the concept of *machismo*. My own related summation is as follows:

Within this construct and its counterpart *Jovenes Nobles* (Noble Youth), is the concept that it is designed to heal

the many wounded spirits that roam urban barrios and Mexican American neighborhoods; youth are finding peace and cultural acceptance. In particular, these models/programs deal with youth caught in the quagmire of broken homes where violence is the norm and gravitation to gangs becomes overwhelming, thus, becoming something to emulate. Youth are taught to become whole human beings in these programs.

It is important to note that the concept of *machismo*, particularly the negative aspects associated with this term, have undergone change in American society. Mexican American women are demonstrating their agency and demanding their place within the family structure, sometimes with ambivalent reactions from the men. Continued exposure, participation and interaction in dominant society has contributed to some of the cultural change. Each family and its members acculturate at different levels regarding *machismo*, with correspondingly different acculturation correlates exhibited by the family's siblings depending on age and interaction patterns, these influenced by all the family's members. In general, the eldest child, particularly if a male (but occasionally a female), in times of crisis such as death of a parent, is expected to



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assume the role of the provider, caring for and protecting other family members. The older children are expected to play surrogate parents to the younger children, taking care of their economic, cultural, emotional and psychological needs.

Reflections on the Concentric Model of *La Familia*

In 1986, after the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), I worked with the Colorado State Division of Mental Health to develop culturally appropriate intervention and treatment services for immigrants who had opted to request amnesty, and therefore, qualify for mental health services. As I stressed, outreach was the most appropriate intervention strategy at the time because of the fear of deportation and the stigma associated with mental health/illness (refer to the accompanying concentric circle model).

The model I developed describes the support systems that are part of the Mexican and Mexican American communities as they struggle against the many challenges described in this article. The model is a set of ideal types that can be modified and applied to individuals and families as they acculturate to the dominant society. At the center of the model is the individual, surrounded by support and subsystems within the community. As previously indicated, each person is unique with a set of distinctive characteristics related to the size and structure of the family. The nuclear family (*familia nuclear*) is defined in American society as mother, father and the children. The extended family (*familia extendida*) in Mexican and Mexican American families includes mother, father, children and the many aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, et al., who are bound together by lines of consanguinity for the most part. For some newly arrived immigrants, there are other family members present and for others they begin the process of developing relationships that become honorary family members, but certainly other human beings that can become surrogate family members. The concept of the *compadrazco* (co-parenting) system is more intricately described in the next section; it includes those parents and other adults who become part of the family structure as their children complete the rites and rituals of the Catholic Church.

In essence, the family grows as children age and are baptized and confirmed through the aforementioned rites and rituals. Sometimes this process is through lines of consanguinity and sometimes through nonfictive relationships. *Barrio* culture is such that *vecinos* (neighbors) and families create a web of social and personal relationships and work together to raise families, assisting each other socially and economically. *La palomilla* (flock of doves) consists of the many subsets of children and young adults who socialize together in the community and become inter-connected socially and culturally. Anthropologist Arthur Rubel (1966) described this concept of *palomillas* as a custom wherein key community social groups form. The origins of the word derived from the Spanish meaning for a covey of doves, thus emphasis on the group. It was a usual custom for *palomillas* to transform into the bridge that assisted in transitioning children into young adults. At times, *palomillas* are misconstrued as gangs, when in many cases, they are simply youth socializing together. The final piece of the concentric model is *la comunidad* (the community), a constellation of agencies and nonprofit organizations, churches, and other organizations that serve the community. When the aforementioned subsystems are combined, what is formed are larger multi-dimensional families, some linked together more by blood ties, others more by cultural influences.

Influence of Religion and the Catholic Church

Lastly, I believe that organized religion is a critical variable to be used in understanding the Mexican and Mexican American populations. Therefore, attention is given to religious and spiritual experiences

based on the Catholic Church. As Dolan and Hinojosa (1994) state, "Mexicans coming to the United States left a country where Catholicism dominated religious and cultural life. The Catholic Church remained one of the pillars of the regime of Mexican President Porfirio Diaz, which lasted from 1876 through 1910." However, it is also important to note what Sanchez (1993) describes as the inculcation of this thought: "Liberal thinkers who dominated Mexico's educational and financial systems during the thirty-five-year reign of dictator Porfirio Diaz (1876-1911) promoted science, progress and social Darwinism." This resulted in an influential attempt to incorporate the Protestant Work Ethic into Mexican society. Sanchez further elaborates on how Methodist, Presbyterian, and Mormon churches established settlements in Mexican society. However, Sanchez concludes that, despite these pressures, relatively few became practicing Protestants.

Currently, there are a high percentage of Catholics in Mexican society. Many have immigrated into the United States. I am fully aware that Mexicans and Mexican Americans have also gravitated to other religious denominations and spiritual groups, with obvious religious differences. In American society for some time there has been a Mexican and Mexican American movement towards indigenous spirituality, adding another dimension to the assessment process. As such, it is important to determine what role organized religion and spirituality play in the lives of those being assessed.

In Mexican American communities, relationships and traditions between and among *barrio* residents are built on strong communal ties that maintain balance and harmony within the group. Religion as represented in the Catholic Church in many instances plays a very important part in a child's socialization and in the building of community ties. In addition, the Catholic Church in many instances is a haven for protection from harm caused by insensitive immigration policies. An example of a culturally specific tradition – value-laden at the core of *la familia*, influenced by the Catholic Church, and withstanding the pressures of complete acculturation – is the *compadrazco* (co-parenting) system, previously noted. This system, inherited from Spanish Catholic tradition following the Conquest of Mesoamerica in the 15th and 16th centuries, was utilized by Native Americans after religious acculturation had taken place during the Colonial Period (Dolan and Hinojosa 1994). Although some traditions with their specific rites and rituals may experience relative change in practice, the basic structure, form and function of *compadrazco* does not change. Even though a degree of syncretism may have occurred, this system can aptly be described as part of the ongoing family structure.

A specific example of a Catholic ritual is baptism, which is a spiritual and religious practice that is part of the *compadrazco* system and embedded within the structure of the Catholic Church. Godparents referred to as *compadres* and *comadres* to the child's parents that baptize the child are expected to raise their *ahijada/o* (god daughter or son) in the Catholic tradition. If an unfortunate situation were to happen to the child's parents, the godparents would be expected to continue to socialize the child according to Catholic tradition. The key feature is that godparents become part of the extended family in a fictive kinship network. Failure to adhere to the responsibilities associated with *el compadrazco* would constitute a broken *palabra* (word) and a violation of the compact established between both sets of parents. *Compadres* and *comadres* are included in the many rituals and ceremonies that are practiced within the community and familial systems. These parents become viable co-parents. I recollect when my mother died that her *comadre* reached out to me, asking the question, "How is your spirituality?" It had taken five years for her to find me as I had left my home state of Kansas.





In the Tradition of Filial Responsibility and Fatalism

Filial responsibility refers to the sense of personal obligation; adult children are obligated to assist with the maintenance of aging parents' well-being (Blieszner and Hamon 1992). In Mexican and Mexican American families, it is expected that children will care for their parents as the life cycle continues transforming them into the elders of the nuclear and extended families. This obligation emanates from the value of loyalty to the family. Respect for elders is a value that prevails. It is embedded deep within the cultural heritage of these families. Thus, an older person's *fe* (faith) may serve to reinforce the perception that they will be cared for in times of need and stress. When dire circumstances present, following tragedy or unexpected challenges, it is not unusual for older children to assume the roles and responsibilities of their parents, including caring for younger children and providing for their needs. Generally, this is at the expense of these individuals as they must continue their own life cycles. Sotomayor and Curiel (1999) argue, based on the many struggles faced by Mexican and Mexican American families, that they have learned to survive with minimal help from sources outside their families or *barrios*. This survival comes from the inner strength and strong bond of mutual caring associated with the family structure. They state: "Their ability to cope with life strains and stresses may be directly related to the degree of integration within their family and within their *fe* (faith)."

The value of filial responsibility, although practiced with the care for aging parents, can also be applied to the broader family in times of crisis. No age distinction is made when the family is in crisis. Children forsake their own needs to respond to the needs of the families. When tragedy strikes, it is not unusual for children to quit school, even if it is high school or college, place friendships and significant relationships with age-related friends on hold, and respond to the crisis at hand. There are countless stories where children quit school to assist in the maintenance of the family. Failure to adhere to this may result in deep feelings of *verguenza* (shame), a collectivist view of reaction to the violation of a cultural norm. In cultures of shame Mexican and Mexican American families subscribe to the collective, which supersedes the individual. Therefore, one's behavior is a reflection of the family and members of the family's perception – *tienen verguenza* (are shamed). Conversely, cultures of guilt are generally specific to the individual, who will generally suffer alone because of the responsibility placed on him or her. This is not to argue that Mexicans and Mexican Americans do not experience guilt. The concept of guilt is well embedded in the psychology of the individual as a result of Christianity and Catholicism. Within the interdependent model of the culture of shame family members must save face. In order to avoid this predicament, family members will absorb the responsibility associated with this cultural norm, even at the expense of undue stress and sacrifice.

The Mexican and Mexican American interpretation of fatalism, often referred to in the literature as one's life control dimension, is an issue that both groups struggle with in American society. Based on the notion of pre-determination, it suggests that one's life is predestined; God's will always prevails. Farmer (1972) states: "Most Mexican American children grow up hearing and seeing the practice of two basic philosophies, which underlie the entire social, economic, and educational structure of the world." Pre-determination is reflected in expressions such as: "Dios dira" (God will tell, or, it is in the hands of God) and "Si Dios quiere" (if God wills it). Some of the research argues that this value acts as a deterrence from acting upon the world. Richardson (1999) reinforces the power of fatalism. Earlier, Kiev (1968) argued: "The Mexican accepts the world as God made it and since he does not feel responsible for his own future, [based on fatal-

ism] he does not actively change it." He believes that spiritual salvation will come the way God intended it to happen.

Acculturative Stress

The literature is abundant regarding acculturation and stress associated with belonging to a minority group in American society as bicultural persons navigate between two cultures, having to make difficult decisions, decipher role expectations, and respond to environmental dictates at all levels. Saldana (1995, p. 44) shares, "Little distinction has been made between an individual's ethnicity (particular ethnic group membership) versus potentially stressful aspects of his or her ethnic identity in the context of different situations." "The concept of Acculturative Stress refers to one particular kind of stress in which the stressors are identified as having their source in the process of acculturation, often resulting in a particular set of stress behaviors that include anxiety, depression, feelings of marginality and alienation, heightened psychosomatic symptoms and identify confusion. Acculturative Stress is thus a phenomenon that may underlie a reduction in the health status of individuals, including physical, psychological and social health" (Williams and Berry 1991, p. 634).

There is always pressure present when entering into these kinds of situations. Minority status persons can become obsessively concerned about their ethnic status, at times not knowing how to respond to stimuli in the environment, as they are forced to make decisions that cause internal conflict. Investigations on acculturative stress point out at least four major categories: daily hassles, chronic unresolved stress, stressful transitions, and role strain. The latter, role strain, is simply defined as conflicting behavioral expectations placed on an individual in situations where roles are in conflict. An example occurs when a person assumes the role of a parent surrogate, with its associated responsibilities. Exchanging roles from child to parent is challenging.

Conclusion

The intention of this article was to provide cultural insights, related to needed competencies, into human service fields that often operate from a mainstream model and fall prey to viewing cultural stimuli through mainstream lenses, without taking into consideration the importance of human cultural diversity in the assessment process. Too often, personnel trained in the mainstream healing fields interpret cultural differences through ethnocentric perspectives. Without sound cultural awareness, sensitivity and competency to interpret certain behaviors and place stories in historical, social and cultural contexts, personnel in the healing, social service and criminal justice fields can be led blindly into incorrect assumptions. Lack of knowledge about a person's background can lead to misdiagnosis or misunderstanding; correct context is essential. If not, the client will suffer. Inadequate assessment is an injustice that many times cannot be rectified before important decisions are made regarding the client's fate. One cultural difference or nuance can make the difference between incarceration or probation, between one medicine or another.

Ramon Del Castillo, Ph.D., earned his doctorate in public administration in the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado at Denver in 1999. His background includes interdisciplinary research and publications in the area of indigenous healing, with special emphasis in management and public policy regarding mental health. Ramon currently is a professor in the Chicana/o Studies Department at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He is also a published poet. He can be reached at delcastr@mstate-denver.edu.





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CLIMATE CHANGE IN KENYA: ADJUSTMENTS, ADAPTATIONS, AND THE FUTURE

MEGAN O'BRIEN

ABSTRACT

Climate change is a global crisis, but it holds particularly catastrophic political, economic, and social threats in East Africa and Kenya. Although the term “climate change” may not be a part of daily vernacular, Kenyan people are faced with increasingly unpredictable and intensified weather patterns, and they have responded by cleverly adjusting to these changes to try to ensure their survival. However, although individuals and communities may be resilient, short-term solutions are no longer sustainable, and Kenyan leaders must continue to fervently fight for their environmental security. Viable short-term adjustments must lead to viable long-term adaptations.

KEY WORDS: Kenya, climate change, resource use, adjustments, adaptations

Introduction

With all of the challenges that individuals, communities, and countries face on a daily basis, it may seem difficult to justify dedicating resources to the seemingly less immediate threat of climate change. Although Kenya has recently had, for the most part, sustained economic growth, the country still faces development challenges including poverty, inequality, and vulnerable governance (World Bank 2019). However immediate and valid these concerns may be, climate change is a broader, cross-cutting issue that is relevant to each of these challenges. For example, the anomalous slowdown of Kenya's economic growth from 5.9 per cent in 2016 to 4.9 per cent in 2017 has been attributed not just to the uncertainty of a prolonged election period, but also to the adverse effects of weather and climate (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2018).

The political and etic, or outside analytic, understanding of climate change in Kenya follows the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to wit, “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods” (Republic of Kenya 2016, 7). But there is a mixed, emic understanding of the term internally among Kenyan civilians. The Kenyan government has made valiant efforts to address and mitigate climate change risks and political consequences, but the people living in rural areas, particularly pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, have a more intimate understanding of climate change, although they may not know or refer to that specific term. They are continuously and consistently observing abnormal, dire weather patterns which are causing drought, loss of livestock, and forced migration. Instead of these pastoralists' observations being attributed to the scientific concept of climate change, Michael Okoti, the Assistant Director and climate change researcher for the Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organization, has found that recent catastrophic and unpredictable weather is oftentimes believed to be God punishing man for being disobedient (Okoti 2019). Taken in concert, the understanding of factors of harsh weather leading to economic and social turmoil must be considered from both etic and emic perspectives.

A political ecology framework proves beneficial when deconstructing the effects of climate change in Kenya. One can begin to understand the relationships between political, economic, and social spheres by exploring the types of short-term adjustments and long-term adaptations that are taking place as a response to the hetero-

genous effects of these dramatic environmental changes. Additionally, a political ecology lens emphasizes the importance of interventions in order to mitigate the compounding consequences of climate change on communities facing pre-existing inequalities, as exemplified by rural farmers living below the poverty line. Through this exploration, policymakers and communities can become better informed as they consider action plans to combat and adapt to climate change, while also pursuing more productive environmental governance.

Kenya's Current Climate Context

Kenya is a large country with a varied landscape, and its climate ranges from tropical along the coast to arid in the mountain regions. There are two rainy seasons; the first historically lasts from March to May/June, and the second begins in September/October and lasts through December (World Bank Group 2019). Between the rainy seasons much of the country faces increased winds. However, there are recent changes which contrast with these traditional weather patterns – but why? According to the World Bank Group's Climate Change Knowledge Portal, the average temperature has increased by 1.0 degree Celsius since 1960, consistent with global trends. A continued trend toward temperature increase poses dire consequences, both globally and specifically to Kenya. With an increase of an additional half- to one degree, “heat waves would last around a third longer, rainstorms would be about a third more intense, the increase in sea level would be approximately that much higher...” (Silberg 2016).

According to the Government of the Netherlands Climate Change Profile (2018), Kenya is exceedingly at-risk for climate change. Projections for temperature increases in the country suggest that the temperature will rise by 2.5 degrees Celsius between 2000-2050, which means Kenya will be one of the most dramatically affected countries in the world. Rainfall will be unpredictable and, while at times intensified, the increased frequency of droughts will deteriorate food security and water availability. Kenya's coastal area will also suffer, as sea levels will rise resulting in floods and the contamination of potable sources because of saltwater intrusion.

Although these remain projections, there is already evidence of climate change significantly impacting Kenya and its citizens. East Africa as a whole, including Kenya, depends heavily on rain-fed agriculture, and because climate change is affecting variables such as length of growing season, livelihoods and food security have been

at risk for some time (see Case 2006). Although there is substantial migration from rural to urban areas, 73% of Kenya's population still lives in rural areas where the immediate – and potentially long-term – impacts of climate change are especially profound.

One of the ways climate change can impact a region is through water availability; less precipitation, especially during already dry seasons, can lead to frequent and severe droughts (Case 2006). At present, there is an ongoing drought in areas of Kenya which began in 2014 and is affecting 23 out of the country's 47 counties. On February 10th, 2019, the Government of Kenya declared a national drought emergency. According to Relief Web (2019), in concert with UNICEF, these drought conditions have left 3.4 million Kenyan citizens severely food insecure. As of early 2019, there were approximately 500,000 people without ready access to water and nearly 500,000 children in need of treatment for acute malnutrition. Relief Web notes that the drought has also led to an overall decline in school attendance and participation, and increasing dropout rates.

In 2018, there were historically above-average rains. This relieved some of the negative consequences of the aforementioned drought by improving food security in some areas of Kenya. However, although these heavy rains were celebrated by some, since they occurred concurrently with the drought, a new humanitarian crisis was created. There was flooding on desiccated landscapes which created economic instability, displaced families, and caused many deaths (Relief Web 2018). The economy of Kenya, particularly its agriculture sector, was intensely affected as livelihoods were disrupted, farmland was submerged, homes and infrastructure were damaged and destroyed, and over 6,000 livestock were killed (Relief Web 2018). These floods also increased the risk of disease outbreaks (particularly in congested, urban areas) such as diarrhea, water-borne diseases, and cholera.

Climate change therefore is no longer a threat to be dealt with in the future. Its effects are being seen today, and public conversations must be reframed around this issue in order to engage civil society in transformational practices. A decade ago the UNHCR declared that "extreme climatic events such as flooding, soaring heat, storms and drought are on the rise in Africa," and that increases in temperature and its effects on agriculture and crop production are linked to conflicts in the continent (Needham 2009). Today the situation is even more dire. For this reason, more and more resources are being dedicated to adaptation strategies, and there are an increasing number of movements to address the long-term effects of climate change.

What is Being Done

In East Africa, Kenya is an exemplary country when it comes to taking governmental action and addressing climate change. The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources is Kenya's key coordinating body to create action plans and develop climate and environmental policies (World Bank Group 2019), and they have acted strategically: The National Climate Change Response Strategy (2010), the National Climate Change Action Plan (2013), and a National Adaptation Plan (currently under preparation). The country is also a signatory to the Paris Agreement. While all these long-term government-led movements are taking place in the formal sector, it is also important to recognize the civil society adjustments that have been made on a more micro-level, aimed at addressing the breadth of climate change effects permeating the country.

Rural Context and Adjustments

There are over 13 million pastoralists (persons who raise livestock) and agro-pastoralists (persons who practice agriculture and raise live-

stock) living in the arid and semi-arid regions of Kenya. These populations' survival depends on their "agro-pastoral abilities," but unpredictable and scarce pastures caused by climate change are leading to the weakening of livestock; many are falling ill or dying more frequently. Losing livestock can be devastating for pastoralists, when the loss of even one animal can severely diminish a family's economic stability and food security. The changes in weather, particularly the recent droughts and floods, have resulted in their need to immediately adjust, and ultimately adapt, in order to survive (Okoti 2019).

The pastoralists of Kenya are innovative, and they have taken personal initiatives to adjust their farming practices in order to combat the negative effects of climate change on their livelihoods. One way they have done this is through the diversification of their livestock. For example, instead of raising cattle, goats, and sheep, pastoralists are now also investing in camels because they are more drought resilient and do not need water as frequently as other herd animals. They are also adjusting their livestock's diet, changing from grazing methods to feeding the livestock purchased or harvested fodder. Because traditional, rain-fed water sources are drying up, pastoralists are also investing in more modern technologies and approaches, such as having water delivered by tankers. By contrast, when households become particularly desperate, they can be forced to sell some of their livestock. Although there is a market for these animals, it is common for people to end up losing money in the long run since the prices offered for livestock during droughts tend to be low (Okoti 2019).

There is also documentation that pastoralist communities are diversifying their incomes in other creative ways, one of which is starting small businesses to cover basic household needs (Okoti 2019). Support from county governments and aid agencies has been helpful to pastoralists who are particularly vulnerable and have not been able to recover from the unpredictable weather events caused by climate change (Okoti 2019). Additionally, to avoid anticipated or occurring droughts, some pastoralists and agro-pastoralists are migrating to new pastures where there is water. Yet this forced migration and displacement creates other negative effects. These unsustainable practices are increasing in frequency as people search for food, water, and pastures (Heikkila 2018).

Urban Context and Adjustments

The effects of climate change are not restricted to rural areas where agriculture dominates the economy. They are also being felt in the rapidly growing urban areas of Kenya, including the capital city of Nairobi. The reduced availability and access to water is causing fluctuation, irregularities, and a reduction in hydropower generation, a major source of energy for Kenya, as well as increased vulnerabilities for the urban poor (Opiyo 2019). The heavy rains of 2018 reached Nairobi and caused general flooding, flash floods, and casualties (Relief Web 2018). Many people's livelihoods have been negatively affected, as the flooding has severely damaged businesses, other places of work, homes, and infrastructure (including roads).

To immediately combat the effects of climate change in urban centers, particularly the worsening flood threats, there is an emphasis on investing in disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction. Kenya's government has approved a National Disaster Risk Management Policy which is intended to reduce the country's and public's vulnerabilities to climate change hazards through disaster research efforts (Langat 2018).

Refugee Camp Context and Adjustments

The large overcrowded refugee camps of Kakuma and Dadaab, an already pressing issue for Kenya, add another layer of complexity

to climate change considerations. There is little infrastructure or protection against the effects of climate change in the arid lands where these camps are located. Because Kakuma and Dadaab are often drought-ridden, with dry soils, when it rains the camps experience flooding, leading to potentially catastrophic consequences such as water-borne diseases and cholera (Needham 2009). The rising temperatures are also leading to problems with crop production, resulting in food insecurity and internal conflict. These pressures can contribute to the already-displaced persons living within the camps to be forced to flee once again. Similar to the government of Kenya's preventive urban policies, UNHCR is working to develop disaster-preparedness plans to combat the effects of flooding. Such adjustments hopefully will lead to longer-term adaptations.

Deforestation

The refugee camps have themselves had negative (albeit unintended) consequences on their local environments. Because of the large demand for firewood, the primary source of cooking fuel, there has been rapid deforestation and exploitation of Kakuma and Dadaab's surrounding woodlots (Brown 2018). However, deforestation is not solely limited to the regions surrounding Kakuma and Dadaab; it is also a consequence of the strategic diversification of income which is necessary for pastoralists to adapt to climate change effects. Pastoralists and other rural dwellers are being pushed to environmentally damaging practices such as overly-intense charcoal production as a means to generate income for survival (Okoti 2019). To combat deforestation, efforts to replant trees are increasing. It is noted, however, that these efforts are a race against time as "the rate of deforestation continues to outpace reforestation efforts" (Gordon and Gordon 2012, p. 255).

Kenyan Environmental Leadership

The devastating effects of climate change on the people of Kenya are compounding and exponential, and in order to address the problem in an effective way, long-term and sustainable solutions must be implemented immediately and concurrently with the adjustments that have been made to deal with the short-term effects. Real leaders must step forward. Here is one.

Wangari Maathai

Beyond engaged communities, there have been and continue to be Kenyan individuals working fervently on the issue of climate change to better the environmental security of their country. A prime example is the late Wangari Maathai, whose work, although far-ranging, was driven by her approach to political ecology. She was born in rural Kenya and grew up to be the first woman in East Africa to earn a doctoral degree in her field. Maathai was not just at the forefront of education in East Africa; she was also working at a grassroots level to diligently fight for democracy, human rights, women's rights, and environmental conservation. While serving on the National Council of Women, she introduced the idea of reforestation at a community level which eventually flourished into the Green Belt Movement (GBM), an organization focusing on tree-planting as a means to support communities and support women who take action against climate change, combat poverty, and ensure environmental conservation (GBM 2019a). Tree-planting, or reforestation, attempts to correct the damage done by deforestation linked to charcoal production and helps to conserve biodiversity, restore ecosystems, and reduce the impact of climate change (GBM 2019b). Wangari Maathai was also the first woman from East Africa to win a Nobel Peace Prize, and these accomplishments only begin to scratch the surface of what she did for the world as a whole. Although she passed away in 2011, her innovations and impacts contin-

ue to inspire civil society and to help Kenya navigate climate change.

Conclusion

The world is under perilous stress as climate change threatens global survival, but East Africa is predicted to be catastrophically damaged by the unrelenting rise in global temperature. Exploring the current condition of Kenya through various political, economic, and social factors as they relate to the environment clearly shows the intertwining and compounding effects of climate change. Kenya's economy is beginning to struggle as a result of unpredictable weather patterns. While government spending and policy cannot solely focus on climate change because of other immediate concerns, efforts nonetheless inevitably must be redirected, more so than now. Kenyan citizens already are being forced to migrate or otherwise alter their daily lives in order to survive the consequences of climate change, and communities already are attempting to adapt by (e.g.) changing their farming practices. Despite the resiliency being shown by Kenyans, effective long-term, sustainable approaches are yet to be fully implemented.

There are long-term adaptations that can be pursued by Kenya's government and its citizens to position themselves and the country to effectively combat climate change. In order to adapt, eco-political advocates must be involved at senior advisory levels. There can be further investments made in renewable energy, such as solar or wind. Dedicating resources to reducing inequalities that are exacerbated by climate change will reduce the impact on marginalized and vulnerable populations. This can be done through the building of infrastructure to creatively adapt farming strategies and to assist in bringing consistent and safe water to rural areas. There is already admirable work being done in Kenya and increasing the country's efforts to combat climate change may ensure successful adaptations.

There also continue to be immediate, short-term adjustments that will prove beneficial. Pastoralists and agro-pastoralists must continue to diversify their incomes in sustainable ways for themselves and their local environments. When possible, households must strategically invest in technologies to ensure the success of subsistence farming. Families must be empowered to implement permaculture projects and find other innovative ways to produce the food they need, no matter the weather conditions.

Finally, the voices of Kenyans such as the late Wangari Maathai must be heard. They are leading the fight against climate change on both small- and large-scale levels, and, because of this, there is still hope that actions can be taken to keep Kenya habitable and Kenyans secure. These actions must be immediate.

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the potential avenues for civilian protection strategies in Burundi. Recent reports note the prevalence of violence against civilians, who are at further risk with the upcoming 2020 presidential election. Although engaging the state government and international actors is key for mitigating civilian harm, the most practical strategies involve civilian self-protection. Depending on the forms of violence present, and the level of social cohesion among communities, civilians should either pursue a strategy of neutrality or flight.

KEY WORDS: Burundi, protection of civilians, human rights, civilian self-protection, protection strategies

The Issue

"There are some Burundians who have strayed and still think that division can get them some benefits and other favours based on hypocrisy. We hereby tell them openly that all their channels are closed and they have nowhere to pass. We hereby request them to untie themselves from this mess and to move from hell to life. Let them understand that things are no longer the way they used to be; old solutions no longer apply to new problems."

- President Pierre Nkurunziza (BBC Monitoring 2018)

Speaking on the strength of national unity, President Nkurunziza issues a warning to political opposition: conform or face the consequences. Throughout the speech, subtle threats undermine his optimistic rhetoric. Rather than national unity, Burundi exemplifies a dangerous culture of impunity, where civilians experience daily cases of forced disappearances, torture, sexual abuse, and killings (FIDH 2017). With Burundi's history of civil war and genocide, Nkurunziza's words need revision. Old solutions die hard.

The situation in Burundi is dire. For many years a beacon in the region, the small landlocked country is moving closer to civil war. Human rights abuses are increasingly common, and show little sign of slowing. This study seeks to address the potential risks civilians face, and the strategies necessary to mitigate civilian harm. Burundi is an unusual case for civilian protection given the absence of civil war. The country is transitioning towards violence, and therefore represents an opportunity to identify and address protection strategies to alleviate existing violence, while expecting more. The most applicable policies require understanding a theory of violence that considers armed actors and civilians, alongside examples of current protection strategies to identify best practices for Burundi. The most viable protection strategies in Burundi involve civilian self-protection, but also implore the Burundian government and the international community to take action.

Cycles of Violence: A Short History

To grasp the current crisis, it is important to understand the history of violence in Burundi. A former Belgian colony, Burundi is similar in size and cultural makeup to its better-known neighbor, Rwanda. In 1962, Burundi declared its independence, and soon spiraled into conflict (Lemarchand 2009). The country is split ethnically between a traditional elite minority, the Tutsi, and an underprivileged majority, the Hutu. Differing primarily in socioeconomic status, the divide be-

tween Tutsis and Hutus has manifested ethnically and violently (Toyi 2016).

After independence, Burundi experienced mass violence, civil war, and genocide, though the most recent post-war agreement seemingly afforded peace. In 1972, Hutus began killing Tutsis in the south, prompting severe reprisals from the Tutsi-dominated government. Genocidal campaigns on both sides resulted in over 200,000 deaths (Lemarchand 2009). Following years of coups, political assassinations, and minor skirmishes, civil war broke out in 1993. Tutsi extremists assassinated the first Hutu elected president, Melchior Ndadaye, and retaliations led to war (Lemarchand 2009). During the 12 years of fighting, thousands died, and armed Hutu fighters led another genocide against the Tutsi (Bouka 2017). Following this devastating war, Nelson Mandela brokered a power sharing agreement in Arusha, Tanzania, helping establish democratic institutions (Wittig 2016). In 2005, voters elected Pierre Nkurunziza, a leader within the former Hutu rebel group (turned-political-party) CNDD-FDD, in free and fair elections (Wittig 2016). However, recent events undermine the agreement's initial success.

Reemergence of Violent Conflict

A 2015 political crisis caused the reemergence of conflict in Burundi, risking civil war, and raising new civilian protection challenges. On April 25th, 2015, President Nkurunziza announced his decision to run for a third term in office, breaking the constitutional two-term presidential limit (Bouka 2017). This left the country split between his supporters and opponents. Just two months before the 2015 presidential election, prominent CNDD-FDD members Godefroid Niyombare and Cyrille Ndayirukiye staged an unsuccessful coup (ICG 2017). Although Nkurunziza was re-elected, he began violently targeting any form of political opposition (Bouka 2017).

While 2015 was the tipping point, the Nkurunziza regime had been consolidating its hold on the country since the 2005 election. Concerned with legitimacy, Nkurunziza and the CNDD-FDD outwardly committed to the rule of law and democracy. Inwardly, however, the regime restricted opposition rights, and physically abused political opponents (Rufyikiri 2017). Nkurunziza's new official party title, "Supreme Eternal Guide," indicates this progression (Moore 2018). The government in Bujumbura insists that human rights are a top priority, but independent investigations suggest otherwise, describing Burundi as a prolific "slaughterhouse of humans" (Al Hussein and Ra'ad 2018; Kaneza and Keaten 2018).



Since the 2015 crisis, human rights violations have become increasingly common. In September, 2017, the U.N. Commission of Inquiry released its report on the state of human rights in Burundi. The report details state-sponsored torture, disappearances, executions, and sexual assault (OHCHR 2017). From 2015 to 2017, thousands of civilians experienced government abuse, with over 1,200 dead (FIDH 2017). Furthermore, over 430,000 had fled Burundi by 2018 (UNHCR 2018). Important to note, conflict in Burundi has remained largely political, rather than ethnic. Vandeginste (2015) attributes this to the ethnic quotas in the military, government mandated by the power sharing agreement. A secondary report issued by the Commission of Inquiry in 2018 noted similar trends of violence and abuse (OHCHR 2018).

2020 Presidential Elections

More recently, a nationwide referendum and announcements from President Nkurunziza have highlighted the potential for increasing violence in 2020. In May, 2018, Burundians voted to alter the constitution, allowing Nkurunziza to extend his term to 2034, and to begin a process to review (and potentially abolish) ethnic quotas in the government (ICG 2018). The vote itself was filled with irregularities, with violence against those either boycotting the referendum or suspected of voting against its provisions (HRW 2018). Surprisingly, Nkurunziza announced his intentions to abdicate the presidential office come 2020, creating a void of uncertainty with the upcoming elections (Economist 2018). This announcement appears a welcome development, but risks either outrage if he reverses his decision (a likely outcome given the referendum, and path to 2015 "2.0"), or a disruption to the current patrimonial system in the country. Analysts emphasize the role of patrimonialism in states like Burundi, and warn of the violent consequences when links between patrons and clients are threatened (Chabal and Daloz 1999; Van de Walle 2001).

Civilian Targeting and the Institutionalization of Violence

Violence in Burundi largely stems from the regime's desire to maintain control, but also involves group endowments and civilian denunciations. Given a culture of impunity, violence against civilians might appear indiscriminate. However, this is only partly true. Key analysts counter suggestions that civilian harm is random and barbaric, arguing instead for a strategic logic of violence (Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004; Valentino 2005). They find that violence against civilians serves a specific purpose. This is true in Burundi, where civilian targeting is aimed at regime consolidation. However, civilian targeting in Burundi fails to meet Valentino, et al.'s threshold for "mass killing," and is hardly a "final solution." One possible explanation is that the government is pre-emptively "draining the sea," undermining possible rebel support bases, but further explanation is necessary. Here it is useful to consider Helmke and Levitsky's (2004) institutional perspective.

Civilian targeting in Burundi is part of an institutionalized tendency towards violence from political elites. Helmke and Levitsky explain that informal institutions serve to reinforce or undermine formal institutions inside of states, which engage the rule of law. In Burundi, historical cycles of violence help explain the current regime's behavior. After decades of violence, an informal institution has emerged, where security actors prevail, and violence is understood as a political tool to allocate power and resources (Curtis 2013; Vandeginste 2015). With this lurking in the background, it makes sense that Nkurunziza would turn to violence against civilians to consolidate his regime.

Jeremy Weinstein's theory of violence helps account for such cases of indiscriminate harm against civilians. His theory focuses on resource endowments during group formation. Those with greater resources, given other chaotic circumstances, tend to exercise indiscriminate vio-

lence more often. These groups, which he terms opportunistic, are concerned with short-term gains, rather than longer-term ideological development (Weinstein 2007). This is characteristic of the Imbonerakure, an armed group in Burundi, as will be demonstrated.

A complementary theoretical tool considers how civilians themselves partake in violence. Drawing from Kalyvas (2006), civilians in Burundi engage in a joint process with armed actors to exchange information for security purposes. Here, the security forces target specific civilians based on this type of information (Trial International 2017; Amnesty International 2015).

Armed Actors

The majority of violence in Burundi stems from the government and armed groups associated with the government. Two of the main actors are the National Intelligence Service (SNR) and the Imbonerakure. The former was previously known as the Documentation Nationale. This agency lacks oversight, reports directly to the president, and is a source of abuse against civilians (HRW 2016b, HRW 2006). The latter is a paramilitary-like group formed out of restless youth and improperly demobilized soldiers (IRIN 2015). Officially the youth wing of the CNDD-FDD, the Imbonerakure zealously support Nkurunziza, act with impunity, and are noted for frequent cases of killing, torture, sexual assault, and plundering among civilian communities (OHCHR 2018).

The opportunist nature of the Imbonerakure stems from a large resource endowment. The government provides weapons, uniforms, and even judicial immunity for members (HRW 2017). Such is their standing, that a representative of the government explained that the Imbonerakure have "not only... the right, but also the obligation" to uphold surveillance and security in the communities where they operate (HRW 2017). Weinstein's opportunistic theory certainly applies here.

Additionally, the group is tasked with reporting suspected political opponents to the security forces, which increases the potential for civilian denunciations. Returning to Kalyvas's work (2006), here civilians become agents of violence in a joint exchange of information for protection.

Civilian Protection Strategies

This section considers three sectors for protection strategy implementation, and then assesses the viability of these strategies. These are: 1) the government, 2) the international community, and 3) civilians themselves.

The Government

The first set of protection strategies and recommendations involves the Burundian government, and prescribes an end to impunity and better training for armed actors. Rather than encouraging violence from the SNR and Imbonerakure, the government must instill a commitment to protect civilians. Although foremost concerned with maintaining domestic power, Nkurunziza also seeks legitimacy with the international community (United Nations 2018). Throughout his presidential tenure, Nkurunziza has attempted to consolidate political power, all the while maintaining the guise of a successful post-war democracy. Even with evidence of human rights violations by the government, Nkurunziza still seeks legitimacy. This perspective is supported by the government's constant responses to NGO and United Nations reports claiming abuse (Kaneza and Keaten 2018; United Nations 2018).

Training armed actors in civilian protection would bring legitimacy to the regime, and have the added benefit of mitigating civilian harm. The Imbonerakure are paramilitary-like, but too close to the government to offer plausible deniability. Forced Imbonerakure disappearances suggest that officials in Bujumbura understand this (IRIN 2017).





To pursue international legitimacy, therefore, it is in the best interests of the government to adopt a policy of civilian protection, and to train its allied armed actors in what such a policy means.

This strategy largely depends on the regime's perception of costs and benefits. Nkurunziza and the CNDD-FDD's end goal is to maintain domestic power. Since the 2015 coup, the cost of targeting civilians has not undermined its perceived benefits, namely preventing regime change. However, considering the government's efforts to cover up abuse, this cost-benefit relationship may be changing. To ensure legitimacy, it may be in the best interests of the state to adopt a policy of civilian protection. Even if employed for the wrong reasons, i.e. consolidation of an autocratic regime, this could prevent further violence against civilians. By comparison, the Center for Civilians in Conflict notes the situation in Nigeria where fighting Boko Haram is often conducted at the expense of civilians, "rather than with their safety as the goal" (Dietrich 2015, 12). However, new policies aimed at protecting civilians have helped mitigate harm to them (Nagarajan 2017). If applied to Burundi, training the Imbonerakure to avoid civilian harm could ease violence and help end the culture of impunity.

But counter-arguments are compelling. These strategies, while potentially viable, are unlikely to succeed in Burundi for two key reasons: 1) the government no longer holds a monopoly on violence, and 2) it may not want, or be able, to end impunity. In the Weberian sense, to be successful in this ominous way, the state should maintain a monopoly on violence. Although impunity emerged by design from the government, it is now an uncontrollable consequence of the fractured military and the weakness of rule of law (ICG 2017). Furthermore, inaction from international and regional actors may not drive the costs of harming civilians up to a point, to a threshold, where the government would want to end impunity (UNSC 2017). Perhaps Nkurunziza's apparent concern with Burundi's image abroad will offer opportunities to pursue more favorable strategies, especially when connected with mandates of the international community.

The International Community

The next set of protection strategies and recommendations to be considered engage the international community, and revolve around monitoring, advocacy, and peacekeeping. Bringing attention to the crisis in Burundi is an important role that international actors must take to benefit civilian protection. Government-sponsored reports on human rights in Burundi continually suggest little wrongdoing, and even improvement since 2015 (CNIDH 2018). Without externally validated reports documenting cases of abuse in the country, it is unlikely civilian protection will succeed. Such reports are necessary. Keck and Sikkink (1998), in seminal work two decades ago, used the examples of Mexico and Argentina to demonstrate the power of international human rights pressures. They noted a boomerang effect, where domestic governments and their partners only took action after the reporting efforts of external NGOs and INGOs. Although challenging, increased international attention on Burundi will improve the likelihood that Nkurunziza will implement the strategies suggested in the former section.

Another role of the international community involves peacekeeping forces. President Nkurunziza continues to deny access to peacekeepers and regional police forces, citing little need for intervention and the violations of sovereignty that this would entail (McCormick 2016). However, international actors should continue to press for a presence in the country.

It is also important to note that in the event of civil war, a peacekeeping force would be necessary for protection. It is useful here to turn to the lesson of Rwanda. Constantly cited for its failure to prevent genocide, events there eventually did demonstrate that international

forces can establish effective civilian safe zones. Kuperman (2000) explained that Hutus generally avoided attacking Tutsis in those few areas where there was a large international presence. He argued that a more robust force could have saved thousands. This argument is consistent with Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon's (2013) more recent findings that stronger peacekeeping forces benefit civilian protection. However, at present strong peacekeeping forces in Burundi would be unlikely given troop commitments elsewhere in Africa. Considering this, non-violent negotiation, which was marginally effective in Rwanda, could also apply to Burundi (see Stein 2014).

The renewed Commission of Inquiry is a positive step in recognizing Burundi's crisis, but the likelihood of intervention should there be civil war is low. Even monitoring efforts have become increasingly difficult. In August, 2016, Burundi rejected access to a UN monitoring taskforce (UNSC 2017). Additionally, independent domestic and international human rights groups have more recently faced expulsion. Ligue Iteka, one of last remaining independent human rights group in Burundi, was banned in 2017, and in December, 2018, the government forced the United Nations Human Rights Office to withdraw (France Diplomatie 2017; Kaneza and Keaten 2018). The situation in 2019 remains tenuous.

International and regional organizations, especially the UN and the African Union, must proactively design multilaterally relevant intervention plans in the event of civil war in Burundi, even if external agents would have limited access. Effective monitoring would have to be stressed as well; this is critical for civilian protection.

Civilians Themselves

The final considerations for civilian protection strategies and recommendations lie with the civilians themselves. Civilian self-protection strategies in Burundi would involve utilizing local organizations to effectively aid those fleeing violence, while practicing neutrality. It is easy to neglect civilians as agents in their own protection, but doing so undermines the potential for effective protection (Barrs 2010). Civilian strategies in Burundi must remain non-violent. Given the repressive nature of the government, and the volatile political and ethnic landscape, protection strategies necessarily revolve around decreasing violent action. Human Rights Watch (2016a) notes that cases where civilians or armed opposition respond violently to the Imbonerakure have only led to worse civilian treatment. In place of violent action, this article recommends two specific strategies: 1) neutrality, and 2) flight, both tactics of autonomy.

Neutrality as a tactic for civilian protection provides an option for Burundians to avoid harm. Neutrality is premised on non-violent, apolitical actors, with mechanisms for self-rule that are complemented by convincing armed actors that targeting the community in question is counterproductive (Kaplan 2017). Tactics of neutrality stem from the concept of autonomous communities, which require high levels of social capital. This theory in practice is demonstrated through Kaplan's analysis of the Peasant Workers Association of the Carare River (ATCC) in Colombia. The ATCC was able to avoid violence by negotiating conditions of neutrality with armed actors from a position of autonomy. They demonstrated investigatory capacity and the ability to clear the "fog of war," while remaining committed to non-violence (Kaplan 2017). Something similar to this neutrality/autonomy strategy might also be possible in Burundi.

Since the early 2000s, many rural communities in East Africa have established local organizations to enhance farm production, which also is key for expanding social capital. Again referencing Colombia, Kaplan (2017) found that social capital is a driver in strategy selection, yet is unlikely to emerge during periods of intense violence. In Burundi,



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farming organizations have created social capital within rural communities, but food shortages are wide-spread – with nearly a third of the population (over 3.6 million people) requiring humanitarian aid as of last year (AFP 2018). To cope with this pressure, during the last decade certain of these organizations have focused on better management of crop production, along with strategies for farm dispute resolution (Vervisch and Titeca 2010; Minani, Rurema, and Lebailly 2013). These local organizations offer the social capital necessary to pursue neutrality tactics, as long as the civilians remain committed to such a policy.

Additionally, there are reasonable prospects that well-organized rural communities may be able to convince the *Imbonerakure* to refrain from violence. Disappearances of witnesses to human rights violations are increasing, even among the *Imbonerakure* (IRIN 2017). While a culture of impunity remains present in Burundi, the government strongly desires a “clean” image. Therefore, highly visible cases of civilian targeting put perpetrators at risk. This presents an opportunity for such communities to dialogue with armed actors and convince them to show restraint.

In some cases, flight is a better option. Flight is a dispersive protection strategy that is most effective in the face of ideologically genocidal groups. Flight was a common tactic during El Salvador’s civil war, where civilians escaped violence by temporarily fleeing their homes (Todd 2010). Kaplan (2017, 58) explains that groups with “strong preferences to target or kill” civilians, yet who also “derive little benefit from civilian support,” are considered ideologically genocidal, and that flight strategies therefore will be needed by civilians. Although not necessarily genocidal, the *Imbonerakure* are characteristically similar to these groups. Such opportunistic actors may not consider potential government reprisals enough to deter violent action. The perceived benefits of targeting civilians may still be deemed to be great; if so, civilians must flee. Given the existing local organizations in rural Burundi, it is reasonable to expect these flight tactics to mitigate civilian harm.

Conclusion: Emphasizing Social Cohesion

In Burundi, while civilian self-protection strategies are more likely to succeed than strategies involving international actors and the government, each is inter-related and each has potential. These can be mutually reinforcing. Training armed actors in civilian protection increases the likelihood of success for civilian self-protection, just as successful civilian self-protection may encourage policies against harm among armed actors. For the international community, monitoring and engagement with local community leaders can help develop self-protection strategies, and can encourage the development of better top-down policies within the government. Although the likelihood of success is not the same for all these strategies, their potentially reinforcing inter-relationship suggests that all must be pursued – especially in light of the upcoming 2020 elections.

For those interested in engaging further with Burundi and promoting civilian protection, there are several key considerations and potential avenues available. First, despite – or perhaps because of – the dip in media coverage, Burundi still requires the attention of scholars and practitioners. Applied anthropologists can play key roles. The most recent iteration of the Global Peace Index (GPI) lists Burundi as a country becoming more peaceful year-over-year (IEP 2019). However, as this article demonstrates, this largely obscures Burundi’s troubling reality, emphasizing our need to distinguish between negative and positive peace. As Johan Galtung (2011) reminds, the former relates to the absence of physical violence while the latter relates to active initiatives that promote peaceful conditions. Reported reductions in physical violence have led some journalists and other analysts to turn away from Burundi, using peace indices like the GPI as a rationale. But a focus on

positive peace is needed, and with recent reports of continued abuse, it is apparent that Burundi still deserves and requires a great deal of attention.

Second, for the first time since 2015, opposition leaders recently claimed that an armed insurgency may be the only realistic way to combat the regime (Vandeginste 2018). This is troubling news, and suggests a potentially emergent issue for engagement. Although this article has primarily focused on harm perpetrated by the government, insurgent groups (even those deemed “righteous” by the people) often resort to violence against civilians. This trend was earlier noted by Kalyvas elsewhere, and was shown to correlate with denunciations and territorial pressures (2006). With this in mind, engaging Burundian opposition groups today on civilian protection, using a medium like the newly formed National Congress for Freedom (CNL), may serve to limit harm in the near future. Members of the opposition in exile also can help create more accurate accounts of the current on-the-ground situation.

Third, refugees and members of the diaspora can be essential resources. Large numbers of Burundian refugees have fled to places such as Tanzania; they can offer a direct way to begin implementing the necessary groundwork for successful civilian self-protection. Displacement is hugely disruptive, and despite high levels of both overt and structural violence in Burundi, many refugees are seeking a return home (UNHCR 2019). This partially stems from the poor conditions in refugee camps. It also stems from a desire to assist their compatriots back home. As they return, they will again face the risks currently present (with the potential for greater violence in 2020), but also will be able to create opportunities. As such, external and internal specialists cooperating with these populations on civilian protection strategies will prove very important. Since access to Burundi is so limited, interacting with refugees in places like Tanzania is a sensible way for practitioners such as applied anthropologists to help. Building on the work of Kaplan (2017), practitioners should emphasize initiatives that dually improve living conditions and promote social cohesion. This will help current civilians and returnees to focus, together, on protection. There are numerous benefits that come from enhanced social cohesion in a challenging landscape like Burundi.

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ABSTRACT

The use of children in armed conflict is not a new phenomenon. There continues to be an increase in the utilization of children in armed conflict across the globe, despite international and human rights laws and numerous resolutions passed by the United Nations. Intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and aid groups have developed Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (DDRR) programs to address dealing with children used in armed conflict. To be successful these programs must understand and address the underlying causes that allow the recruitment of children into armed conflicts.

KEY WORDS: child soldiers, DDRR programs, Lord's Resistance Army, armed conflict, Africa

The Issue

Armed conflict is not new to the human condition, neither is the use of children in armed conflict. Currently, the numbers of children engaged in armed conflict are at an all-time high. The numbers are increasing at the global level despite ten United Nations resolutions denouncing the recruitment of children into armed conflicts (Faulkner 2016). According to UNICEF, in 1988, there were approximately 200,000 child soldiers (UNICEF 1996). Current estimates suggest that over 300,000 children are currently engaged in armed conflict worldwide (Haer 2017). These estimates may be understated, as exact numbers are hard to obtain due to war and the propensity for leaders to hide the use of child soldiers (Wessells 2009). Boys as young as eight are often recruited through either coercion or "voluntarily," to act as human shields, porters, lookouts, front-line soldiers, and spies for armed conflicts (Bosch and Easthorpe 2012; Betancourt, et al. 2013). The use of young girls in armed conflicts is also increasing. Such girls are used to transport detonators, provide logistical support, collect information, and serve as sex slaves to the armed forces (Bosch and Easthorpe 2012). Although 168 countries have ratified the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC) since its inception in 2000, rebel groups continue to recruit and retain child soldiers. Since rebel groups were not involved in the development of the standards nor can they be signatories, such groups are not influenced or motivated by international agreements (Faulkner 2016).

Armed conflict in Africa has seen an increase in the recruitment of child soldiers, often by non-state actors. Despite prohibition under international humanitarian law, human rights law, and the threat of prosecution under the purview of the International Criminal Court, these actions have failed to curtail the recruitment and retention of children into armed conflict. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) was estimated to have abducted over 16,000 children from Uganda, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic as of a decade ago (Bosch and Easthorpe 2012). The LRA is a rebel group that was initially created in 1987 by Joseph Kony to fight the Museveni government of Uganda. Despite the International Criminal Court handing down an indictment in 2005, Kony remains at large with the continued backing of the LRA forces. The focus of this article is not on the LRA specifically, but to use it to illustrate how a rebel group has remained largely intact for over 30 years, in part

through the recruitment and retention of child soldiers.

Programs that have been put into place to help address issues faced by child soldiers after leaving an armed conflict are referred to as Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Rehabilitation (DDRR) programs (Wessells 2009). These programs promote security and stability through disarming combatants, removing them from military structures, and attempting to reintegrate them socially and economically back into society (Haer 2017). Current research is lacking in evaluating the long-term success of rehabilitation and reintegration programs. The research that does exist tends to focus on short-term successes but ignores that for these programs to be successful they likely need to be in existence for years (Haer 2017).

In order to understand how to successfully rehabilitate and reintegrate child soldiers back into civil society, one must understand the experience of the child soldier. It is important to hear the experiences of the child and not to silence their voices; we must recognize that children can be vulnerable and competent simultaneously (Ensor 2013). To gain a complete picture of how armed conflict affects child soldiers, it is important to comprehend the entire experience, from recruitment through retention through the rehabilitation and reintegration process. Failure to recognize how each of these phases interplays with one another, results in lacking a full understanding of the child soldier and will likely result in a failure to successfully rehabilitate and reintegrate the child back into society. Overall, it is important to remember that during acts of war, a child soldier acts as a perpetrator but should be treated as a victim (Betancourt, et al. 2008).

Phase I: Recruitment

The recruitment of child soldiers falls into one of two broad categories, voluntary or coercive. The use of the term voluntary to describe recruitment tactics means it is only used to describe the juxtaposed position of coercion. The less coercive tactics used for recruitment are defined as voluntary. It is worth noting that no child under the age of 18 can voluntarily be recruited into an armed conflict per international law. Leila Zerrougui, the special representative of the UN Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, argues that the distinction between voluntary enlistment and forced recruitment is a distinction without meaning, claiming that one can never speak of voluntary enlistment in the case of child soldiers (Haer 2017).

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Economic, social, cultural, and political conditions are factors when looking at voluntary recruitment of child soldiers (Bosch and Easthorpe 2012). Evidence indicates that some children join armed conflict without explicit coercion to obtain security, health care, and training; to escape familial abuse; to obtain a sense of power and prestige; or to carry a gun (Wessells 2009). Poverty and related employment constraints are believed to be key structural indicators of children who are voluntarily recruited into armed conflicts. When a group of people experience extreme economic hardships, they may engage in activities purely as acts of survival. Children living in areas affected by conflict must deal with issues of displacement, food insecurity, and violence. The majority of people living in an armed conflict zone will suffer from food shortages due to the destruction of productive capacities and infrastructure. This destruction may force families to volunteer their children as potential combatants (Achvarina and Reich 2006). Impoverished families may align themselves with a rebel group because of promises made to them of economic incentives, this leading to allowing the use of their children in the conflict (Faulkner 2016). Regions that experience impoverished living condition generally suffer from high rates of unemployment. Inadequate educational and employment opportunities make participation in armed conflict an attractive option for such children (Ensor 2013). Children in impoverished areas may perceive no other economic opportunities, making them easy targets for rebel group recruitment (Faulkner 2016).

Vulnerable populations such as orphans, refugees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) offer additional targets for armed forces to obtain children (Faulkner 2016). According to one earlier estimate by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 57% of all global refugees were children (Achvarina and Reich, 2006), with the percentage subsequently to have increased. Children who find themselves in camps for refugees or internally displaced persons, or who are orphans, may lack the familial protections of other populations. Due to the lack of familial guidance and care, these children are especially amenable to incentives and threats. Achvarina and Reich (2006) argue that it is this high number of congregated children within orphanages, IDP camps, and refugee camps that make them easy recruitment targets for armed forces. Areas that struggle with economic constraints and weak social structures may be more vulnerable to recruitment efforts if conflict arises.

When there is a lack of resources to recruit soldiers voluntarily, and armed forces need more members, they will rely on forced recruitment (Gates and Checkel 2017). Abduction, conscription, fear, and intimidation serve as the principal means of recruitment for many military organizations (Gates and Checkel 2017). It must be understood that leaders in recruitment efforts during armed conflict are rational, calculating, self-interested, and have the desire to maximize their efforts. Armed forces will seek out the necessary resources to ensure the survival of their organization. With overpopulation, children are seen as cheap, limitless, and a renewable resource. Children are easier to mislead, indoctrinate, cheaper to retain, and are more responsive to coercive methods (Beber and Blattman 2013). When a rebel group uses the threat of death, they are able to recruit without having to offer many rewards (Gates and Checkel 2017). Children may also be more likely to fight for nonpecuniary rewards such as honor, duty, or protection. The view that children are more malleable, adaptable, and obedient, makes them easier to control (Beber and Blattman 2013). There are many factors influencing how a child ends up as a soldier, but they all relate to vulnerabilities of that child. These vulnerabilities allow armed forces to exploit him or her as a combatant.

In order for a group or organization to be successful, it must have committed members. Such groups must be able to persuade people to

join and continue to participate (Gates and Checkel 2017). For military groups, recruitment and retention are vital steps. While none of these explanations cover all the nuances in how or why paramilitary forces are able to recruit children, they do give us overall insights into the combination of factors that entice children to join armed conflicts.

Phase II: Retention

Many analysts view the recruitment and retention of child soldiers into an armed conflict as a continual process. However, the recruitment and retention processes are distinct and need to be understood as such. Coercion may effectively enhance recruitment, but it will not be effective in maintaining the cohesion necessary to maintain troop retention (Gates and Checkel 2017). For most rebel groups the cost of continual coercion of potential soldiers is too expensive and thereby not sustainable. The answer to how rebel leaders are able to retain forcibly recruited soldiers is found within the mechanisms used to socialize them. There are three socialization methods used in retention:

1. Compliance, where punishment and fear motivate retention,
2. Role learning, where a member of the group alters their behavior to fit in,
3. Norm internalization, that induces preference changes, leading to group allegiance (Gates and Checkel 2017).

As these authors stress, the highest level of retention is achieved when rebel leaders are able to employ more than one of these methods in their efforts. These socialization methods work to reduce the need for punishment and increase the perceived value of being a member of the group. Beber and Blattman (2013) indicate that retention is achieved because children are easily indoctrinated and misinformed; they are also less successful in escaping. They add that the use of violence is employed as an incentive for performance, with threats for severe punishment for desertion. Deserters pose a large threat to a military organization, as they may be able to reveal valuable information to opposition forces such as location of troops, headquarters, weaknesses, strategies, and tactics (Gates and Checkel 2017). In short, the ability to retain child soldiers is largely based on psychosocial manipulation.

Let us examine retention efforts of the LRA to illustrate processes of psychosocial manipulation. At one point in time, only 5% of LRA soldiers, including officers, received material incentives according to Beber and Blattman (2013). The threat of punishment and violence were the main instruments of control for these soldiers. They indicate that 26% of abductees were forced to kill a civilian, 23% were forced to desecrate dead bodies, and 12% were forced to kill a family member or close friend. The exposure to, and participation in, such extreme violence breaks down the psychological defenses and desensitizes the children to such violence. Getting children used to the perpetration of violence unites them to the group, which increases the acceptance and the promotion of these actions as their social norm (Banholzer and Haer 2014). Additionally, these acts of violence committed against members of the children's own community bind them further to the LRA due to the fear of community rejection from the LRA if the child were to flee (Beber and Blattman 2013). Abductees are told that if they escape rebel leaders would return and kill them or their families. In addition, they are moved far away from their communities and are intentionally disoriented to help prevent escape (Beber and Blattman 2013). The armed group eventually replaces the child's social network, acting as the child's family and community (Banholzer and Haer 2014). Joseph Kony, although his activities recently have been attenuated, was able to successfully establish a new spiritual identity for his recruits. He was able to convince people that he possessed spiritual powers. Local people disagreed as to whether these powers were good or bad (Beber





and Blattman 2013). These perceived powers were used to impart terror and wonder in the abductees. Part of the new spiritual identity that was formulated by Kony consisted of restrictions on personal conduct and on military practices, used to inculcate fear. Indoctrination, misinformation, and identity manipulation have been acknowledged as recruitment tools in military sociology and social psychology studies (Beber and Blattman 2013).

Phase III: Rehabilitation/Reintegration

Often times, rehabilitation and reintegration programs represent two separate processes. Demobilization also is a correlate. Following Wessells (2009), however, I will include them together. Rehabilitation and reintegration are complex processes where ex-combatants return to their communities and attempt to adjust to civil society. Often pressure is so great for demobilization that this process begins before the communities and families have had enough preparation for successful reintegration. During reintegration, specialists must remember that child soldiers are not a lost cause. Most children are resilient and many will be able to successfully reintegrate peacefully into society. It also is important for successful rehabilitation and reintegration programs' specialists to understand the nuances child soldiers contend with. Most of the research on successful rehabilitation and reintegration programs focuses on three areas:

1. Social integration
2. Economic and educational integration
3. Psychological integration (Banholzer and Haer 2014).

Reintegration services include psychosocial support, vocational training, quality education, and health care (UNICEF 2018). UNICEF has devised a broad set of guiding principles for reintegration that include:

1. The best interests of the child
2. The child being considered as a victim
3. The child's right to life, survival, and development (UNICEF 2018).

The first principle is concerned with any actions that affect the child; these must be based on "best interests." The second principle stresses that the child should be considered as a victim, but also as a survivor, which means that alternatives to prosecution and detention should be utilized to help reintegration efforts and avoid further stigmatization. The third principle relates to the right to life, survival, and development, these in turn including physical integrity and harmonious development involving spiritual, moral and social factors; education plays a large role in minimizing discrimination.

Child soldiers are not a homogenous group. Each child soldier has differing experiences and thus differing needs during the rehabilitation and reintegration process (Banholzer and Haer 2014). Understanding and acknowledging these differences are essential in developing a successful rehabilitation program for former child soldiers. Child soldiers may have been exposed to land mines, forcibly separated from their parents, forced to kill members of their own community (including immediate family members), forced to witness death, and forced to sever ties with their support systems (Wessells 2009). With such wide ranges of possible experiences, it is important to acknowledge that even children coming from the same armed conflict may well have very different experiences. The rehabilitation and reintegration program must be attuned to these, and be able to address the individual needs of each child.

Several factors should be considered when developing a rehabilitation or reintegration program. The duration of time that a child soldier spent in armed conflict is a key factor (Banholzer and Haer

2014). Currently, the thought is that the longer a child has spent in an armed group, the more accustomed he or she has become to a violent lifestyle, and the harder it may be to reintegrate into a peaceful society. Additionally, the longer a child soldier was engaging in conflict, the longer he or she has been unable to attend school and learn basic life skills. Banholzer and Haer (2014) further stress that the age at which a child was abducted is also a key factor for rehabilitation and reintegration. The younger the child was at the time of the abduction, the more likely he or she was to have become deeply indoctrinated to the propaganda of the armed forces. Children who have been forced to commit atrocious acts of violence upon their own communities often find it very difficult to reintegrate and to reestablish ties, these authors add.

It therefore is important to engage and provide adequate support to prepare communities for receiving children who have served in armed groups (UNICEF 2018). Family and community must engage in dialogue whereby the experiences of the child are explained, so the community can understand that these children are not inherently bad, that the leaders of the armed conflict manipulated them, and that they can reenter the community and become successful citizens (Wessells 2009). Communities must be sensitized to reduce the stigmatization of what a child soldier is (Haer 2017). Empathy is fundamental for community reconciliation (Wessells 2009).

It is obvious that the egregious experiences these children have been put through have lasting psychological and social effects, often resulting in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD in children can cause hypervigilance and a poor ability to self-regulate, and can lead to aggression, drug abuse, and depression (Wessells 2009). It must be noted that all children are different, of course, and therefore often react to situations differently; program developers must remain cognizant of their own biases and be aware of both clients' individual and cultural differences in the treatments selected. Looking solely at experience from the PTSD analytic framework may prove too narrow and may not adequately address emotional, psychological, social, cultural, and economic dimensions of these children's differential experiences (Wessells 2009). Additionally, stigma and perceived discrimination due to former association with armed forces correlates with deteriorating mental health (Benancourt, et al. 2013). For former child soldiers the role of family appears to be central in aiding recovery. Successful rehabilitation and reintegration programs for healthy psychosocial recovery additionally must emphasize three characteristics: maintenance of an intact sense of purpose, effective control of traumatic memories, and successful protection against social isolation (Betancourt, et al. 2008).

With loss of educational and economic opportunities, the joblessness a child soldier faces is a threat to his or her long-term stability. If economic stability is not provided to these children, there is a real possibility that they will be recruited to the paramilitary forces again; they may perceive better organizational stability there. One of the best ways to increase personal psychosocial stability is through education. Targeted, skill-oriented education is seen as one area of great importance for reintegration and psychosocial adjustment for former child soldiers (Betancourt, et al. 2008). Providing educational opportunities is also a way for improving social cohesion. However, educational support must be used with caution. Educational opportunities provided through rehabilitation programs should not provide more opportunity for child soldiers than for the general community. The process must refrain from harming already-fragile community relations. If a community is generally lacking in educational opportunities for children, the best course of action may be to provide the service to



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both former child soldiers and the other children (Wessells 2009). By offering educational opportunities to all children, it also may help to increase the bond between the affected and non-affected children.

DDRR Case Studies

Let us look at an example of a relatively recent DDRR program implemented in South Sudan. Part of South Sudan's development plan was implementing such a program for their child soldiers after decades of conflict in the region, as detailed by Ensor (2013). Within this DDRR plan, all qualified ex-combatants were required to participate in the program. Another mandate was that former soldiers (child or adult) were not allowed to return to state military forces. A major thrust was to help establish livelihoods for the former soldiers. For the child soldiers this included psychosocial and educational support, including vocational training and a monthly stipend paid to the child's caregivers. However, the program was hindered by the lack of funding and the unavailability of schools and other training centers. After the demobilization process, ex-combatants were returning to militias in order to provide financial security for their families. (Additionally, for the children, communities saw a potential for discord as child soldiers were receiving opportunities that were not readily available to the general population.) Within such communities, the child soldiers were not seen as vulnerable victims, nor as perpetrators of wartime atrocities, but as heroes due to the ability to provide this financial security for their families. It should be noted that during their time in the armed conflict, some child soldiers may have been able to travel home to see their families.

Several factors caused strain on this DDRR program. First, the policy that required former soldiers not to return to the military failed to recognize that being armed and a part of paramilitary actions, is embedded in the social environment of South Sudan (Ensor 2013). Sudan, and now South Sudan, have been in conflict almost consistently since gaining independence from Britain. The requirement that a child soldier will not reenter combat, when combat is entrenched in social norms, fails to take into account the culture of the community. This is evidenced by children who reported joining militia groups after the DDRR program began (Ensor 2013). Additionally, this process can diminish the free will of the person and put it into the hands of the state. To reiterate, this program also fails to recognize the financial and physical security that taking up arms provides for the family of a child soldier. Also to reiterate, the lack of educational opportunities for the general population has the potential to become an additional problem as time goes on. Hostility toward ex-combatants must be ameliorated. A strength, ironically, for this DDRR program lay in the fact that there was little to no apparent work needed to defuse the stigmatization of being a child soldier.

The DDRR program in South Sudan is in sharp contrast to one operative in Gulu, Uganda. It has been analyzed in detail by Veale and Starou (2007), with similarities and differences to that in South Sudan emerging. In Gulu, children were systematically recruited by the LRA over several years. The child soldiers came from the Acholi people, which is the same community that the LRA terrorized. Children were removed from their communities and socialized into new norms by means of violence. As humans, we desire to belong which encourages socialization to conform to the norms of a new group. Conceptually, the reintegration is challenging within the original, home community because often the family believes the child is dead. When the child returns, the family is happy but they are also fearful of who the child has become. The perception of a child soldier can change based on given circumstances. If a former child soldier displays any anger or

aggression, they can go from being viewed as a peer to being viewed as a rebel again. In these researchers' work, they found the longer a child participated in armed conflict the harder the reintegration. The Acholi people rarely spoke of revenge toward these former child soldiers but in private, they admitted forgiveness was difficult.

In Gulu, the main failure of the rehabilitation and reintegration program was not educating the community to the experiences of the child soldiers to help ensure successful reintegration back into civil society. Rather, specialists did not do enough research to understand the varying experiences of the ex-combatants. Like that in South Sudan, the program fell short in understanding and evaluating the cultural nuances of their given population. While certain structural factors differed between the two cases, the failure to understand key societal influences on the reintegration process proved to be a detriment to both. Additionally, both case studies found that the respective DDRR programs fell short in their abilities to provide economic incentives through targeted education, vocational training, or job placement, thus diminishing the personnel's opportunities to dissuade the child soldiers from being recruited into conflict again. While neither study addressed the results of any psychological treatment or intervention for the former child soldiers directly, it appears – based on re-recruitment or voluntary re-enlistment rates – that there may have been opportunities for such support.

Future Actions

While great efforts have been made in trying to address the issue of child soldiers through international and human rights law, to attempted prosecution of perpetrators through the International Criminal Court, to the development of DDRR programs, there is room for additional positive growth and more successful programming. As stressed earlier, recruitment is the initial process to understand when addressing the issue of child soldiers. Analyses that deal with this are fundamental. For reintegration programs to be successful, international aid agencies must understand local conditions and the incentives that allow groups like the LRA to be successful at gaining child recruits (Beber and Blattman 2013). Program developers must remember that recruitment efforts for armed forces are based on local issues; what works in one place may not be successful in another. Agencies must have a thorough understanding of the political, socio-cultural, and economic conditions that influence the ability to recruit child soldiers (Ensor 2013). Agencies must get to the root, structural causes within a society through working with the community directly to better understand what is driving civilians, especially children, to join armed or paramilitary forces. It takes a great amount of effort and time for agencies to fully understand the issues within any given community; this is why it is imperative that agencies work together with the local community and local governments from the onset. If an agency is able to gain a deep understanding of the root causes, it may then be able to successfully work toward curtailing recruitment efforts.

The best way to curtail the recruitment and retention of child soldiers and thereby possibly reduce the need for DDRR programs is for an increase in educational and job opportunities. Governments need to work to create real opportunities for children, economic and educational, to help make the recruitment more difficult (Beber and Blattman 2013). There are many issues linked to lack of education and job opportunities, beyond those impacting just child soldiers *per se*, which is why this should be a top priority. When people feel like there is a defined purpose, that they can have a successful future for themselves and provide for their families, they are less likely to be voluntarily recruited into armed conflict. The community structure must embody



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nonviolent values, provide economic stability, create new social opportunities, and support the capacity of the government to provide social services (Wessells 2009). Overall, by increasing the moral value of the human experience, recruitment and retention of child soldiers in armed conflicts can be curtailed.

International policy has been focused on increasing the cost and risk to leaders of armed forces who are committing war crimes, but this is not enough. As Beber and Blattman (2013) emphasize, there needs to be more done at the community level to counter the indoctrination and misinformation strategies used by the armed forces. There needs to be counterpropaganda against recruitment efforts that includes escape training. For this to be successfully implemented, it means that both local governments and aid agencies need to act expeditiously once new field information becomes known. The challenge here is that because each conflict is different, and each rebel leader uses certain tactics that differ, once the initial rehabilitation process starts it will need to be modified as more information becomes available and as field tactics change, so that re-recruitment does not occur. Ongoing communication with the community is key; there must be avenues for continuous open and honest dialog about new developments. While this may be idealistic in terms of implementation, if this can be achieved after a war begins, it may help to substantially reduce further recruitment efforts. If the DDDR programs are successful in terms of communication sharing, this will help co-engage community members in the overall process.

This article makes it clear that there is no one thing that can be done to eliminate the use of child soldiers. Yet, we must continue to make strides to eliminate this deplorable practice. I have indicated viable options. We must remember that these children are our future. Humanitarian organizations and governments must do everything in their power to keep them safe, educate them, and provide real economic opportunities for them. It is also important to remember that young people have tremendous creativity and capabilities; we have to find better ways to learn from them as well. Humanitarian intervention is about creating hope for the future and enabling young people to play constructive roles in converting cultures of violence into cultures of peace (Wessells 2009).

"Our guns were still strapped onto our backs, because a gun meant life. Without it there was no life in the LRA. After crossing the water and walking for a long time, there was a whisper in my heart, telling me that if we kept the guns we would get killed. I was learning to listen to this gentle voice that spoke to my heart. This time what was said was hard to accept. I didn't know how I would convince my friends to throw away what seemed to be their last hope. The voice would not leave me alone. It continued to whisper in my ears to drop the guns." — Grace Akallo (Child Soldiers, n.d.)

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COMMENTARY

WHAT IS WATER?

LUCOR JORDAN

We were on the trail of a bear that we'd been following for the last half-hour and all signs pointed to it being just up ahead. However, it wasn't the bear we were looking for; we were looking for flowing water. The summer of 2018 was among the driest many parts of Colorado had seen in a very long time, and there hadn't been water to be found anywhere in this system of canyons on the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation through most of the summer. The spring we were looking for had only been represented by some GPS map coordinates for the last few decades – now it was important to find out if it was flowing. A recent executive order affecting the federal definition of water was threatening to reduce tribal and state authority over Ute water resources.

Several years prior to our expedition searching for the spring, in 2011 I attended Metropolitan State University's Ute Mountain Internship Program and Applied Anthropology Field School and I was assigned to the tribe's environmental department. One of my first outings with members of their team, was to go out to the field to check on some flood controls at a wetland area. Driving through the mostly arid landscape I had images in mind of a hidden desert oasis suddenly springing into view like Canyon de Chelly. What I found after we parked and hiked down through a split in the earth was a fence that hung over a chasm and was angled nearly flat. It was covered with debris and along the sides of the chasm several straw waddles were staked in place to slow the rushing water. It was clear that at some point there had been a lot of water running through this area despite the fact that, at the moment, I couldn't see where the water could have come from. At the bottom of the wash, there was an area that appeared at one time to have been a lake or pond, but now it was parched and cracked. In the center were a few huge and healthy-looking cottonwood trees.

Examining the wattles which had fortunately not washed away in a prior flood that would have rushed over our heads, I had my first lesson in desert water systems. As the title of Thomas Hornsby Ferrill's poem which adorns the Colorado State Capital insinuates, "Here is a Land Where Life is Written in Water." But – the inverse is true as well: "Here is a land where water is written in life." I began to see that in the harsh climate of the four corners region, water and wetlands mean something different than in wetter climates. If you saw patches of lush green cottonwoods or grey blue Russian olives in July, you were looking at an area connected to a desert water system and subsurface water resources.

This first wetland we visited ran dangerously with flashfloods in the wet seasons, where rain slicks off the dense clay soil and races across the hydrophobic, dusty, cryptobiotic earth atop the mesas, which feed into a system of arroyos and washes. Eventually these waters are jetted into long, usually dry riverbeds, along with whatever gets caught in the slick muddy water. While this area didn't have surface water for long, if at all, and had no connection to a regularly flowing river or spring, the water table remained high enough even in dry years to keep the cottonwoods' leaves showing the deepest green as they danced in the wind, like water catching and reflecting the sun. This subtle oasis was indeed a vital resource for desert ani-

mals with or without surface water. The rest of the stops along our survey gave me a chance to see many more places where water would converge seasonally from far-off networks to create significant and powerful water features that would again vanish into ground water and sub-surface seeps that move like hidden rivers.

Returning every summer my familiarity with the area grew, and I found it no longer odd that I rarely actually saw surface water associated with wetland areas. The rains rarely came in force until long after I would leave in August. In 2013 I spent two grueling months building a huge fence around a dry patch of earth full of scraggly rabbit brush, sage, and wild roses – a fence that was part of an ongoing wetlands conservation project. The nearest water was a river that had been sucked dry by irrigation up stream and was no more than a cool refreshing mud slick by the middle of summer. After returning home I told my family and friends that I'd been doing wetland conservation without thinking that they might not imagine us chiseling holes for fence posts in dry baked earth at least as hard as cement.

Over the course of eight summers, I encountered many different perspectives on water and water use. The word water did not carry a universal meaning as an element removed from human interpretation; water was a cultural construct, or more properly it was several often competing and always overlapping constructs.

I would learn that water communicates a variety of different things depending on the context that goes along with its use. When linked with weather and climate in the area, water could represent periodic heavy rains and droughts that can last for years; this placed water at the center of an environmental binary. In another context, water could mean monsoons, mud slides, and flashfloods that continue to shape and reshape the dry landscape. In dry years water could mean an acute lacking, where mountains and mesa-tops turn into tinder boxes which are sometimes so dry that hot-shot fire crews are powerless to fight the fires that break out.

Within the context of the environmental department, water is a natural resource central to the biotic health of human and non-human eco-systems. It is framed as precipitation, river flow, and aquifer level. After testing it is considered as a gradient from pure H₂O, across various levels of contamination which may render it toxic to plants, animals, or both. Water as being "potable," "clean," or "polluted" are culturally defined constructs. If it is clean water, it can be framed as a valuable economic resource needed for agriculture which is transported to often massive pivot watering systems. If it is potable water, it can also be framed as a public service like power or heat, moved through pipes and trucks as needed to reach thirsty people. When it is bottled it is at its height of purity and an essential item to consume on a hot day or share as hospitality with a guest. If it is polluted, it must be "treated" or sent to isolated places where it can be contained; it is common now for water to be so damaged by hydrocarbons that it can be stripped of its biotic value for generations.

Water is also a construct of power, self-determination and compromise among equals. Since 1987 the Clean Water Act (CWA)

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What is Water?

established clear protocols for considering tribal sovereignty over water in the same manner that it considered state sovereignty over water. With the passing of CWA's article 518 (e) or Tribe as State (TAS), water officially found a place as a construct of sovereignty. The process to get recognition in TAS is not simple; it requires meeting certain federal requirements. The environmental monitoring program had to be organized under an autonomous bureaucratic government, and be funded adequately to hire experts, afford scientific equipment, and pay to have samples analyzed in state-of-the-art labs. Even doing everything right doesn't guarantee that the EPA will back up tribal sovereignty claims over their *jurisdictional waters*, and states often attempt to undermine tribal autonomy (Erickson 2002).

In 2017 an executive order aimed to revise the federal definition of what constitutes jurisdictional waters. This change, which was set to take effect in 2018, stipulated:

The proposed definition specifically clarifies that "waters of the United States" do not include features that flow only in response to precipitation; groundwater, including groundwater drained through subsurface drainage systems; certain ditches; prior converted cropland; artificially irrigated areas that would revert to upland if artificial irrigation ceases; certain artificial lakes and ponds constructed in upland; water-filled depressions created in upland incidental to mining or construction activity; stormwater control features excavated or constructed in upland to convey, treat, infiltrate, or store stormwater run-off; wastewater recycling structures constructed in upland; and waste treatment systems (Federal Register 2019).

This change made it important for the Ute Mountain Tribe to verify the existence of any continuously flowing water resources present, including a very remote spring that had been put on a map many decades ago. In preparation for these changes, many sites such as this would need to be visited to verify and test in order to determine which wetland areas would retain that legal identification of having a:

direct hydrologic surface connection as proposed occurs as a result of inundation from a jurisdictional water to a wetland or via perennial or intermittent flow between a wetland and jurisdictional water. Wetlands physically separated from other waters of the United States by upland or by dikes, barriers, or similar structures and also lacking a direct hydrologic surface connection to such waters are not adjacent under this proposal (Federal Register 2019).

Water is distinct from land as a place for the discourse of power in that the water-cycle is inherently a process removed from borders and static dominion. If water is owned, it is owned in theory only, since it moves fluidly through, over, and above land. The power to control potential water, finally provided some level of recourse for harm done to upstream tributaries or the flood planes that fed the tributaries of the tribal territories. The EPA's role as an agency of enforcement through article 518 (e) finally opened a door that had been closed by Chief Justice Marshall's 1831 ruling of *Cherokee v. Georgia* which sought to truncate indigenous judiciary agency. Via the EPA as a proxy entity, tribal authority over lands and resources (i.e., water) could result in non-indigenous individuals and organizations being brought to task in court (American Bar Association 2019).

State and federal representatives face significant pressure to be seen as "pro-business" and so prior to these changes rulings often still favored industry, meaning the EPA had been at best a fair weather friend to tribal sovereignty. Even prior to these changes, tribes faced disproportionate exposure to water contamination because states notoriously choose to permit areas bordering reservations to be sacrificial

areas where risks are considered less compared to those impacting white communities. The strategic language of the document further endangers tribal and state water sovereignty throughout the Southwest by removing ground water and seasonal waterways associated with precipitation, as well as the wetland ecosystems that depend on them. This will mean further limiting tribal control over what private industry discharges into the often-invisible desert water systems, thus losing monitoring and enforcement over the most preventable risks to water quality and public health coming from tailing ponds or ditches, as well as irrigated agricultural areas.

Eventually we did find the spring, and it was that hidden desert oasis, a broad cold pool surrounded by deep rich green shrubs and no shortage of ripe red sumac berries – it was little wonder that a bear might hide out near it during a drought. This spot, because it happened to feature surface water unrelated to precipitation, would remain a jurisdictional water and the area it fed would remain a wetland under the law. But the changes would unfortunately leave a great deal more areas outside of tribal and state jurisdiction. After all, if companies can't prevent fracking and mining tailing ponds from contaminating ground water and other water resources during precipitation-induced flood events, then why not redefine water?

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BOOK REVIEW

TASTE THE SWEETNESS LATER: TWO MUSLIM WOMEN IN AMERICA, BY CONNIE SHOEMAKER

REVIEWED BY: PETER VAN ARSDALE

Connie Shoemaker is a powerful storyteller, and – although she might not characterize herself this way – also a powerful ethnographer. In *Taste the Sweetness Later: Two Muslim Women in America*, she provides crafted, compelling, compassionate accounts of the lives of Nisren, an immigrant to Colorado from Iraq, and Eman, an immigrant to Colorado from Libya. She builds on skills honed during more than a half-century of work as an international educator and author – primarily based in Colorado – and as a co-founder and former director of that state's renown Spring International Language Center. Her earlier work in Cairo was an additional inspiration for her to dig deep into Islamic cultures and related issues.

Nisren was born in Iraq in 1979, the same year that Saddam Hussein became its president. As a child she indirectly experienced repercussions of the Iran – Iraq War, then further repercussions of her country's invasion of Kuwait. Operation Desert Storm, launched in 1991, led to the Persian Gulf War. As a member of a Shiite Kurd family in Baghdad, "[e]conomic and political restrictions were part of the family's daily lives [with their ethnic minority] persecuted by tyrant Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist government" (p. 13). They increasingly came to fear for their existence, especially as Saddam's thugs harassed them in their home. Neighbors began to be abducted. "I always had to remember that 'Eyes were on us,'" Nisren later recalled (p. 21).

Thanks to Shoemaker's skill as a writer *cum* ethnographer, Nisren and her family's story moves seamlessly back and forth, past and present, from Iraq to Colorado, from 1991 to 2016. That Nisren's husband Raad had helped U.S. troops in Iraq as an interpreter, combined with accusations by some that he therefore was a traitor, opened the possibility – the necessity – of emigration to the U.S. Years passed, but in 2009 the family finally arrived. U.S. General David Petraeus was one of those who wrote Raad a letter of recommendation.

While all sections of this book will be of interest to applied anthropologists, other social scientists and educators, the section on Libya immediately pre- and post-revolution is particularly gripping. 2011 was a watershed. Muammar Qaddafi's increasingly ironfisted and dictatorial rule had spanned over 40 years. While there had never been an expansive form of freedom or democracy, there had been initiatives which benefited much of the Libyan population. For example, the educational system was moderately well-funded and the health care system included modern facilities, many of which attracted top-flight professionals. Yet, "[t]he truth had been always hard to come by..." Shoemaker stresses (p. 156). Allegiances and alliances had developed around various camps, with those favoring Qaddafi (while waving the green flag and touting his *Green Book*) countered most boldly by those favoring other leaders (while waving the traditional Libyan striped flag). Throughout the book, Shoemaker does a good job assessing the interface of cultural symbolism, religion, and politics.

The area around Benghazi, strongly disapproving of Qaddafi (with some dissenters) was countered by the area around Tripoli, strongly approving (with some dissenters). Where did loyalties lie? Qaddafi's increasingly acrimonious rants further aggravated the situation. On television he shouted, "Who are you? Who are you?... You are the drug-takers, jihadis, and rats.... You people taking *helluwassa* drugs have been made crazy!... Zenga! Zenga! We will cleanse Libya inch by inch, alleyway by alleyway, person by person, street by street, house by house" (p. 155). Drug-takers became Qaddafi's scapegoats; he hoped his rants would attract more fighters to his cause.

Amid this chaos, the themes of violence, abuse, political oppression – and survival – played out a decade ago. Eman had been born in Libya long before, in 1983, when there had been less turmoil. Qaddafi had been in power for 14 years. Although the two following events did not immediately impact her childhood, the U.S. bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi in 1986 (which killed one of the leader's children) and the 1988 attack on a Pan American airliner by Libyan agents, shaped the tense international landscape. As Eman told Shoemaker years later, "I really didn't like my childhood" (p. 106).

A Sunni Muslim, like most Libyans, Eman grew up in a very large family of 26 people. With two wives, her father was trying to maximize his chances for economic success, particularly with their herds of sheep and goats. Her mother was masterful in the ways she cared for her children; she and her co-wife "believed their reward for giving birth and serving as good mothers would come in heaven" (p. 110). Eman's grandmother "drove" the sheepherding, engaging the children, and in other ways drove the family. Her tough regimen instilled survival skills which, ultimately, aided Eman's ability to leave her homeland for what she hoped would be a much more peaceful life.

Once in Colorado, having arrived in 2009 and 2012 respectively, from different countries but owing to similar educational interests and political pressures, Nisren and Eman thrived. In different ways, their nuclear and extended families continued to lend support. The migrant-attuned educational programs at Spring International proved essential. In 2014 Nisren's immediate family became U.S. citizens. In 2016 Eman earned a Masters of Science degree. They both could now, as Connie Shoemaker sensitively attests, taste the sweetness.

Peter Van Arsdale, Ph.D., is semi-retired but still actively engaged in work at the University of Denver and *pro bono* activities for non-profit organizations including the Selian Hospice of Tanzania, the Village Health Partnership of Ethiopia, the Coalition Against Global Genocide, and Rotary International. He is a former president of both the High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology and the National Association for the Practice of Anthropology. His latest book is *Global Human Rights*. He can be reached at petervanarsdale1@gmail.com.