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Toward a Scholarship of Peace Leadership

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Abstract

This article discusses the phenomenon of peace leadership, an emerging sub-area of leadership studies. This literature review discusses peace leadership scholarly work specifically identified as such by its authors, and therefore does not include literature potentially viewed as informing the broader discussion of peace leadership. The peace leadership specific scholarly literature discussed herein includes work on the traits, characteristics, and practices of peace leaders; peace leader role and responsibilities; and the connective and collective nature of peace leadership. Discussion of the literature concludes with a proposed definition of peace leadership and three suggestions for ways to continue to build peace leadership scholarship including: empirical studies, theoretical and conceptual model creation, and ongoing informed discussions, and in itself contributes to the emerging conversation of peace leadership.

Keywords: peace, leadership, scholarship

Article Classification: Literature Review

Introduction

Leadership, as all major fields of study, has witnessed numerous transitions and transformations since the early days of exploring leaders and leadership. Many of those transitions, such as the movement from traits-based leadership to context-specific leadership, and from transactional to transformation leadership, have shifted the way the role of the leader, their relationship with followers, and in fact, the entire tradition of leadership is viewed. Currently leadership scholarship is in the midst of yet another transition- one that places leadership outside

of predominantly Western-based organizations and businesses, and into various community spaces, nature and the sciences, and art and humanities.

This review of literature continues that notion of expanding leadership by discussing, in particular, the connection of peace and leadership into the emergent movement of peace leadership. This review of literature will briefly track the transitions of leadership, the formation and origins of peace leadership, and the discussion of how peace leadership has appeared thus far in the literature. The conclusion of this review proposes a definition of peace leadership, followed by a discussion of next steps and areas for expansion and further research.

Setting the stage for an emerging discourse

Multiple leadership scholars have discussed at length the transitions and transformations of leadership studies as a field over the course of time. Simon Western's (2015) book *Leadership: A Critical Text* nicely covered the larger notion of these transitions, and included the discussion of four discourses of leadership history. The first three discourses are the mechanistic functioning of transactional and bureaucratic methods of organizational operation; the leadership as therapist movement, which focuses on the needs of the followers; and the transformational leadership movement, which focuses on the leaders' use of culture in creating and sustaining organizational functioning and change.

Western's (2015) final discourse consists of much of the emergent work of leadership studies to date. Titled the eco-leader discourse, these new models of leadership are more inclusive and interconnected, and focus often as leadership as a collective capacity, as opposed to an individual one. This discourse provides the space that incorporates the growing understandings of leadership, with the inclusion of scientific thinking and leadership, non-

Western and global perspective and leadership, and space for social justice connections to leadership. For example, work in science and leadership has made way into new connections on sustainability leadership (Redekop, 2011), connecting of quantum physics to leadership (Wheatley, 2006), and looking at leadership and organizational interactions through systems theory (Capra & Luisi, 2014).

Similar to the awareness seen in connecting leadership and science, there is a push to connect indigenous and non-Western teachings into predominately Western understandings of leadership. Books such as Bordas' (2007) *Salsa, Soul, and Spirit* and Connerley and Pedersen's (2005) *Leadership in a Diverse and Multicultural Environment* demonstrate non-dominant perspectives and practices of leadership. In addition, there is a push to look toward leadership as a global phenomenon, with numerous books and articles that focus on how to build global leadership competence and comfort in working in various cultures and with culturally diverse teams, such as Mendenall, Osland, Bird, Oddou, Mazneyski, Stevens, and Stahl's (2013) *Global Leadership*. Books such as Kessler and Wong-MingJi's (2010) *Cultural Mythology and Global Leadership*, however, focuses on direct work in various cultures by studying 20 different country's leadership styles and preferences; work similar to and built on the famous GLOBE study (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004).

Some of the work in global leadership links toward another movement in the leadership studies literature- that of leadership for social justice and humanitarian action. LaFasto and Larson's (2012) *The Humanitarian Leader in Each of Us* discusses leaders whose goal is to help people in need, and the choices in their life journey that lead them to this point. Crosby and Bryson's (2005) *Leadership for the Common Good* and Komives and Wagner's (2009)

Leadership for a Better World explore collaborative work engaged in leadership for positive social change.

Each of these shifts in the leadership literature- inclusion of scientific principles, non-Western perspectives, and social justice- uniquely contribute to the emergence of a scholarship around peace leadership. In fact, Satterwhite, McIntyre Miller, and Sheridan (2015) argued this point in their book chapter on *Leadership for Peace and Sustainability*, which reasoned that much of the same emergent models of leadership, such as connectivity, justice, systems thinking, adaptability, and equity, can utilized both for sustainability and peace, and perhaps other wicked challenges. Additional literature seems to agree, as more of a conversation emerges around peace leadership. This review continues with a comprehensive discussion of the emergence of this scholarship.

Peace Leadership Literature

One of the first mentions of peace leaders in the literature came from Boulding (1967), who discussed the American protest movement of the 1960s. He concluded his essay on protests by stating that eventually a protest movement may need to crystalize itself as the image of a peace leader- an educator, socializer, and example for positive, peaceful change. This image of a peace leader sets the tone for much of way the literature will come to describe peace leaders in the decades to come. While there is evidence of discussion in the literature about peace leaders and peace leadership for several decades, the biggest push for this growing subfield of Leadership Studies has occurred with the most frequency in just over the last decade. The bulk of this review focuses on this most recent push.

In the mid-2000s, Jean Lipman-Blumen began asking the question: Leadership for What? (Mexiner, 2006). Her notion was for scholars and practitioners to consider why one might lead, if not for peace? What might be obtained by leadership if peace could not be obtained? This question caught fire in numerous influential networks of scope, not least of which was within the International Leadership Association (ILA). This question fueled several conference panels over the next few years, and even the creation of the Peace Leadership Affinity Group in 2012. This group of committed ILA members share resources around peace leadership, and work to identify and implement peace leadership in research and practice.

During a similar time frame, as Spreitzer (2007) shared in her article discussed below, business schools and the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, an accrediting body, considered the links of peace with business and commerce, and thus ultimately leadership. The Association produced a Peace through Commerce Task Force and released a 2006 report called *A World of Good: Business, Business Schools, and Peace.* Movement in this direction by such large organizations further demonstrates an urging to consider the connections of peace and leadership, and an aim to understand peace leadership as an emerging concept. The scholarly literature described below is the beginning of that work.

Similar to the distinction in the overall leadership studies literature between a focus on leaders versus leadership (Schruijer & Vansina, 2002), this distinction appears in peace leadership literature as well. Two categories emerge from the scholarship described: peace leaders and peace leadership. It is important to note, that the literature discussed herein is literature that demonstrates a clear relationship between peace and leaders or leadership as expressed by the authors; therefore other, broader peace leadership informing literature, is beyond of the scope of this piece.

Literature relating to peace leaders tends contain a discussion of traits and characteristics of individual leaders, and the skills, practices, and actions as they put toward their efforts of peace. Peace leadership, on the other hand, tends to focus less on one particular leader over another, but rather on collective, broader-based, societal change. The remainder of this review will focus on the literature that revolves around these two concepts. First the literature of peace leaders will be discussed, and then that of peace leadership.

Peace Leaders

As previously discussed, the literature around peace leaders tends to focus on individuals leaders and their work in peace movements, talks, or negotiations. Specifically, the literature often discusses the traits and characteristics of individual leaders as they work toward peace in their communities, organizations, and societies, and also the roles and responsibilities that peace leaders hold. This section of review will discuss scholarly work with each focus. Understandings of peace leaders come in many different forms and it is quite impossible to provide an exhaustive list of case studies and biographies of people who may be considered peace leaders, although several exemplars include works detailing the lives of Martin Luther King, Jr. (Garrow, 2004), Mahatma Gandhi (Brown, 1992), Frederick Douglass (Douglass, 2003) and Nelson Mandela (Mandela, 2004). Others tackle case studies of peace leaders in article form. These are more in-depth insights into specific peace work of leaders, named and unnamed, around the world. Described below are those articles that clarify their subjects as peace leaders

Traits, Characteristics, and Practices of Peace Leaders.

The first category of peace leader literature addresses their traits, characteristics, and practices. In two articles, Lieberfeld (2009; 20011) discussed the work of both Abraham Lincoln

and Nelson Mandela and then Chile's Michelle Bachelet, focusing on their reconciliation-oriented leadership. He shared findings from his biographical analysis and revealed important traits for peace leadership, which included empathy and cognitive complexity, optimism about potential for change, emotional self-control and forgiveness, and propensities toward reconciliation.

McIntyre Miller and Wunduh (2015) presented another case study of a peace leader. They discussed the life and work of Dr. Christiana Thorpe of Sierra Leone. Her ability to build organizational capacity, integrity, and capacity for peace was highlighted through her work as the country's Minister of Education; the founder of the Sierra Leonean chapter of the Forum for African Women Educationalists; and as the first female chief of the National Electoral Commission who headed the country's free and fair elections in 2007 and 2012. The article also discussed her current work promoting women's rights in higher education.

Goulah and Urbain (2013) wrote of Buddhist Daisaku Ikeda's philosophy of leadership for peace as the movement from inner transformation, through dialogue with others, and into global citizenship. In order to work through these transformations, Ikeda taught, individuals must perceive the interconnectedness of life and the living, to understand and engage in varying cultures, and to maintain imaginative empathy. Ikeda is said to believe that ultimately the dialogue stage between personal and global transformation is essential for sharing our personal growth and for internalizing the nature of the world (Goulah & Urbain, 2013).

Other scholars moved from the reflection of the experience of one peace leader to analyze multiple peace leaders. Matesi (2013), in her dissertation work, broadened the conversation of specific peace leaders by examining and discussing the speeches of 17 human rights-focused

Nobel Peace Prize winners. She found that each had strong visions for the future, foresight based on intellect and imagination, and utilized narrative in discussing their success.

Ngunjiri (2010), examined the cases of African female leaders, and characterized these women as tempered radicals, critical servant leaders, and spiritually guided. She demonstrated how many of these peace leaders utilize the principles of servant leadership, while also "rocking the boat without falling out" (p. 147). Ultimately, Ngunjiir (2010) painted an image of these women as using what she termed Spirited Leadership, or the combinations of tempered radicalism, servant leadership, and spirituality. It is this notion of Spirited Leadership that may partner closely with the notions of peace leadership discussed in the following section.

There is also some cultural contexts that prioritize peace leader traits, characteristics, and practices. Yazzie (2000) discussed the position of peace in the Navajo tradition, where peace means one of three things: peace within oneself, peace within family or clan relationships, and calm or serenity in the surrounding environment. Dating back to the 1600s, Navajo communities had both war and peace councils. The peace council comprised of peace leaders who were responsible for overseeing economic development, settling disputes, and diplomatic relations within and among tribes and governments. The selection of peace leaders was based on their character, charisma, and speaking abilities. In Navajo tradition, believed elders to be as exceedingly important for the preservation of peace.

Reychler and Stellaman's (2005) work focused more broadly on traits, characteristics, and practices of so-called peace building leaders. After reviewing related texts, Reychler and Stellamans's (2005) found that there are 16 traits and characteristics that peace leaders often demonstrate as part of their repertoire. The authors are careful to note that there is no formula for the peace building leader, but rather that many peace building leaders have some combination

and variation of these traits, skills, and practices. These include: broad definitions of peace; focus on the whole of a challenge, including strengths and weaknesses; framing conflict in a reflexive way; being adaptive and integrative; flexibility; selecting the right people; relational, mediation, wisdom, and elicitive skills; effective understanding and use of time; desiring alternatives to violence, but not condemning those who justly act otherwise; maintaining a sense of international and consequential ethics; having a sense of purpose; and a personality that includes courage, humility, hardiness, a sense of humor, and personal integrity.

Ganz (2010) focused more directly on leaders working in peace movements. While he pointed out some typical challenges to peace leadership endeavors that must be taken into consideration, such as the organization of leadership, accountability, and processes in place for deliberation and decision-making, he also discussed practices for successful peace leaders. Ganz (2010) posited that important practices for leaders of peace movements included relationship building, creating a narrative for purposeful action, catalyzing that action, and being creative in ways to challenge those with power.

Global PeaceWorks (2004), an interfaith dialogue group with a focus on work in India, has a practical approach to peace leadership, which follows a set of Principles of Peaceful Leadership to guide their work. This framework aims to build authentic leaders aligned with the principles of harmony. The framework is as an experiential understanding of these principles, and includes: looking within to learn wisdom, building trust to lead with integrity, serving others to lead with love, creating the future by leading by example, and modeling peace to live in harmony.

Perhaps also important in the conversation of traits, characteristics, and practices of peace leaders, is the notion of inclusivity- particularly of women. Adler (1998) believed inclusion to

be an essential element of the peace puzzle, and stated that in order for us to live truly in peace we must acknowledge the world's indivisibility- peace for all or for no one. Adler (1998) believed one way to move toward peace for all was the acknowledgement of the potential of female leadership in that space.   Potential evidence for the role of women in peacemaking comes from Spisak, Dekker, Kruger, and van Vugt (2012). The authors conducted a study analyzing human facial characteristic responses and posited that the more feminine a face, regardless of assigned sex, the more likely to be seen as a peace leader, or one who is focused on group cohesion and reconciliation. Perhaps, they argued, there is some evolutionary biological holdovers that may influence who we perceive to be a stronger peace leader.

Overall, what the peace leader literature demonstrates, then, is that there may be important traits, characteristics, and practices a peace leader can embody. Some of these include empathy, optimism, forgiveness, being reconciliation and service-orientated, intellect and imagination, a focus on the future, a holistic viewpoint, flexibility, strong relational skills and interconnectedness, cultural appreciation, use of narrative, integrity, character, trust building, humility, and a sense of humor. While the larger trait-based leadership studies literature demonstrates some of these same practices, traits such as empathy, forgiveness, optimism, and reconciliation-orientation might be unique to those leaders who intend to, and do, engage in efforts of peace.

Peace Leader Roles and Responsibilities

The second category of literature around peace leaders is their roles and responsibilities in moving forward issues of peace. Boyer (1986), in his review of 701 biographies, saw peace leaders as those who were involved in a peace movement, or pacifism broadly defined, but faced difficult political decisions in order to be successful in their endeavors. Sarsar (2008)

categorized peace leaders in two ways, those who are peace makers and those who are peace builders. Peace makers are as those who strive to end conflicts, while peace builders are those who strive to build long-term peace. On their own, Sarsar (2008) saw these individual leaders as not sufficient to lead for peace in broad terms, but envisioned peace makers and peace builders coming together to become peace actualizers, those who were uniquely positioned to be successful in realizing their visions and strategies for peace.

Not all visions and strategies for peace are positive factors, though. The literature also demonstrates some negative reflection on leaders engaged in peace practices., These leaders are more concerned with their political and positional power than they are with making positive motions toward peace. A study about Israel's Yitzhak Rabin focused on his desire for maintaining credibility and appearance in peace process decision-making over peace itself (Auerbach & Greenbaum, 2000). Stedman's (1997) work discussed the spoiler problem in peace processes- leaders who were more concerned about their power, worldview, and interests to embark on peace movements, and oftentimes even used violence to maintain their hold on a given situation. Thankfully, not all spoilers succeed, especially when what Stedman (1997) called 'international custodians of peace' have created effective strategies for building peace and challenging spoilers; Stedman (1997) outlines some of those strategies in his study.

Peake, Gormley-Heenan, and Fitzduff (2004) also shared similar findings in their work on the role of leaders who were involved in the perpetuation of conflict becoming leaders for peace. They also found that there was a crucial role for international leaders as fixed elements in the transition process to ensure peace. Studying Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone, Peake, et al. (2004) determined that international pressure often enables local leaders to stay the course of peace, when they otherwise may not be inclined or equipped to do so.

Therefore, it is clear to see that the role of a peace leader may also be important in creating and maintain peaceful change. There is also a clear political element that may define a peace leader's success in a role. It appears there may also be an importance in linking the peace makers and the peace builders for sustainable peace. If those in a role of peace leadership can exhibit the ability to become peace actualizers, perhaps peaceful transition can be possible. One might argue from the literature on peace leaders that becoming a peace actualizer, in whatever role one may hold, will take some of the traits, characteristics, and practices previously elucidated for the previous section. While the case studies and text analysis in the peace leader literature provide important insight into a peace leader focus of peace leadership, one might argue the need for more expanded research studies in many of these areas to further understand these characteristics and practices and link them with work in the field.

Peace Leadership

Peace leadership scholarship branches away from the focus on individual leaders to demonstrate a complex concept, requiring multiple capacities, with often multiple parties involved. Much like the broader field from which it is born, peace leadership also does not have a common definition. In working toward a common definition, however, the Peace Leadership Affinity Group of the International Leadership Association conducted a membership survey. Those who responded identified peace leadership as one or more of the following: the promotion of culture of peace in individuals and around the world, challenging conflict, creating a common notion of and space for peace, and the promotion of peace in organizations. Interestingly, a reflection of many of these definitions is in the literature described below. It is important to note that the emerging peace leadership literature discussed below is coming primarily from conceptually-based scholarly work.

Connecting with the notion that the purpose of leadership should be for peace, Ledbetter (2012) also argued for a moral element in peace leadership work. Utilizing a dialectic approach, Ledbetter (2012) highlighted the importance of connecting the divide between power and resistance to be successful in peaceful, moral progress. Ledbetter (2012) utilized the case study of the Occupy Wall Street organization in her work, and pointed to businesses such as Patagonia and Timberland, who engage in sustainability leadership practices, as paving the way in moral progress and resistance leadership.

Sprietzer's (2007) work also explored peace leadership through a link with business. It was her notion that businesses focused on participative leadership and employee empowerment could directly contribute to peaceful societies. In fact, Sprietzer (2007) argued, peaceful societies are actually often a pre-condition for business success. She sought to see business as more than just increasing trade, engaging in track two diplomacy, and enhancing economic well-being, but contributing to a more peaceful society through enabling employees the experiences of being participatory. These participatory experiences, Sprietzer (2007) posited, could lead to collective agency, shared sense of action toward peace, in various aspects of public life.

Similar to Ledbetter (2012) and Sprietzer's (2007) arguments, Harber and Davies (2003) discussed the role of schools and education in building leadership for peace. Their notion was that schools should be responsible for 'doing no harm'- or to lower the levels of pain found in schools. Harber and Davies (2003) recommended the inclusion of democratic practices in schools in order to challenge conflict escalation and to provide for a sustainable future.

The notion of inclusion is also essential in Dinan's (2012) model of Ubuntu leadership. Relational in nature, Ubuntu leadership demonstrates the movement between self-awareness, self-mastery, relational awareness, relational mastery, and the creation of a humanistic and just

global world and community. Similar to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs model in structure, one can move through these processes with inputs of mutuality, compassion, reciprocity, dignity, interconnectedness, and humanity in the social, economic, and environmental sectors. Ubuntu leadership aims to reveal a means for collaboration across sectors through the outlined connections of masteries and necessary inputs.

Lastly, focusing on mobilizing change for good, McIntyre Miller and Green (2015) utilized Wilber's (2000) integral theory as a way to frame peace leadership. The authors saw peace leadership as an interactive and "… integral process to understand individual leadership capacities, relationships with others and representatives groups, and the interrelated systems underlying interactions around the world" (McIntyre Miller & Green, 2015, para.1). This theoretical perspective of peace leadership aimed to understand the interrelated, complex phenomenon of peace leadership through inner work; peace and leadership related theories and processes; communities of practice; and the globality of the field. The authors demonstrated these four connected areas of peace leadership through examining the case study of Kenya's Green Belt movement.

Upon review of this peace leadership literature, it is clear that there is a sense of connectivity among these ideas and definitions. These authors focus on utilizing the connections of power and resistance and other related theories and processes, building on participatory practices for collective agency, democratic practices, collaboration across sectors, relational practices, and systems thinking to theorize about peace leadership. These conceptual notions, similar to the literature around peace leaders, also focuses on case studies for examples of how one might proceed in building peace leadership. Here as well, there is a lack of empirical data,

which would help to further explain and elaborate about these collective practices of peace leadership.

Discussion and Conclusion

The scholarship discussed in this review demonstrates a beginning understanding about the nature of peace leadership, a phenomenon that is complex and interconnected. There are traits and characteristics that may enhance an individual's capacity to engage in peace leadership, and a clear relational element to the practice. Although there may be a great deal of inner work necessary to enhance the skills of individuals engaged in the practice, peace leadership is not a lone endeavor.. Notions of peace in this literature range from a cessation of violence, to the building of a positive society. Perhaps, peace leadership, therefore, must build upon Galtung's (1996) notion of both positive and negative peace. Considering these notions, peace leadership is defined here as the intersection of individual and collective capacity to challenge issues of violence and aggression and build positive, inclusive social systems and structures.

While this review introduces a good deal of literature on peace leadership, it is clear that the topic is still emergent. The literature on peace leaders focuses perhaps too narrowly on individuals and their work in peace movements and activities. The literature on peace leadership is based primarily still in the conceptual world. While there is a clear emergent interest in this sub-area of leadership studies, in order to grow the area in way that provides it rigor and credibility, a great deal more work must be undertaken. The works of this journal edition may nicely take a step forward in that endeavor. In order to achieve the goal of a more complete literature around peace leadership, those in the field must engage in three areas of scholarship: empirical studies, theoretical and conceptual model creation, and ongoing informed discussions.

The first need in the peace leadership arena is for continued and more advanced research in the area of peace leadership. There is a wide range of research opportunities for scholars and practitioners. An increase in the interesting work that analyzes important peace leaders to understand the traits, characteristics, and practices these leaders utilize in making peace is important. Studying the actions and interactions of those engaging in peace leadership at a community, organizational, or global level can further the understanding of the collective nature of peace leadership. . The continued use of case studies can further demonstrate how communities, organizations, and larger systems engage in efforts of peace leadership. Further understanding this phenomenon of peace leadership can help to demonstrate effective practices and work to connect with the building of peaceful societies around the world.

The second way of enhancing peace leadership scholarship is through building informed theoretical models and perspectives grounded in the literature and the research emerging from the field. While there are emergent perspectives and models that begin to explain the complexities and dynamics of peace leadership, including Ngunjiri's (2010) Spirited Leadership, Dinana's (2012) Ubuntu Leadership, and McIntyre Miller and Green's (2015) Integral Perspective of Peace Leadership, further development and testing around each would grow their usability and function in further elucidating peace leadership and connecting this theoretical work with practice.

Lastly, encouraging dialogue and discussion around peace leadership can lead to the expansion, and broader understanding, of the sub-field. Connecting with like-minded scholars and practitioners in leadership, peace studies, and related to fields, can build a conversation around peace leadership. The space of peace leadership has such dynamic potential, and as is seen through the broader field of leadership studies, stronger ideas, experiences, practices, and

research is achieved when connections with others working in similar and disparate areas is fostered. This is an exciting time to be in the sphere of peace leadership. The world is clearly craving peace, and while there has been a decrease in war since World War II, there is a surge in violence, such as increase in terrorist attacks and growing homicide rates (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2014). It is the responsibility of scholars and practitioners to continue to build the work of peace leadership in order to increase the individual and collective work needed to challenge violence and aggression and build positive, inclusive social systems and structures.

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