



Conference Report

The Rowman and Littlefield
Handbook on Peace and Conflict
Studies: Perspectives from
the Global South

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Report of the Conference

Author's Workshop

*"The Rowman and Littlefield Handbook on Peace and Conflict Studies:
Perspectives from the Global South"*

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Key questions and results: Goals of the conference/project

The conference aimed bridge the gap between scholarly debates in the Global South(s) and the Global North(s), to reflect on the positionalities as PACS scholars and develop an inclusive research agenda resulting in Global PACS and a handbook outlining these gaps and exploring solutions. Peace and Conflict Studies was broadly founded in the Northern Hemisphere, leading to prescriptive and descriptive epistemologies of how scholars understand patterns of peace or violence in Europe and the Global North via a core-periphery relationship with the Global South. The rejection of ideas like Third Worldism on the international stage, after decolonization by the Global North, has led to the implicit strengthening of asymmetric colonial power structures in the way knowledge about peace, security, development and order has been produced. Thus, the workshop examined these needs to set a different agenda in PACS that takes cognizance of the grounded and global scale realities and asymmetries – political, economic, and social – of the Global South.

This international workshop intended to address these gaps and contribute to an emerging research agenda outlining the different trajectories of conflict and violence, justice and peace both in the Global South and North. It aimed to establish the comparative parameters of debates peace and war in a thorough academic discussion not only ABOUT but WITH the Global South. The conference thus put the following objectives and core questions at its centre:

- How has the gap between scholarly debates in the Global South(s) and Global North(s), e.g. on basic concepts, research questions, paradigms been addressed in recent projects, or are there still major contentions also within both hemispheres (e.g. critical vs. empirical conflict studies on the role of external intervention)?
- What are persistent structural inequalities, both epistemological and ontological, that inhibit a collaborative and inclusive research agenda? Are scholars from the Global South(s) better represented or do we have to question routines of knowledge production in the North(s)? What are the promising approaches that can benefit PACS?
- Can we define a joint research agenda which is both inclusive in terms of basic conceptions and participatory in terms of equal agency of the scholars from the Global South(s)?

Keeping in mind these questions and gaps, the workshop was organized into seven panels which also form the basis of the different sections in the handbook.

Opening Panel Discussion: Wednesday, 29 September 2021

The Opening Panel Discussion explored the theme “The Global South(s) in Peace and Conflict Studies: Is there a need for an inclusive approach?” chaired by Solveig Richter, Heisenberg Professor for International Relations and Transnational Politics, University of Leipzig. The participants were Navnita Chadha Behera, Department of Political Science,



University of Delhi, Manuel Salamanca, Michelle Small / Jacqueline de Matos Ala, Department of International Relations, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Thorsten Bonacker / Tareq Sydiq, Centre for Conflict Studies, Philipps-University Marburg.

This opening panel underlined the philosophy, need and the rationale of development of a Global Peace and Conflict Studies. The panelists critically examined the existing conceptual and analytic approaches on PACS which have tended to reproduce rather than challenge the intellectual Eurocentrism in the sub-discipline and how to create the space for a more global debate by discussing issues of agency, normativity, discourses and dilemmas. Important questions discussed were: can PACS learn from different disciplines namely sociology, anthropology, postcolonial studies? Is it possible to go beyond the unequal socio-political power relations through such an approach in peace and conflict studies?

Panel 2: Thursday, 30 September 2021

The second panel explored the questions of “Agency in and from the Global South and North: Reflecting on the Production of Knowledge and Identities”. The panel was chaired by Lucas Rezende. Panelists were Siddharth Tripathi: Agency, Berit: Field Research, Richard Stupart: Media, Bret McEvoy (institution).

This panel critically evaluated ideas (terminologies, concepts and premises), institutions and issues shaping the field of Peace and Conflict Studies in light of emergence of alternatives (local and global) in the Global South (s). The basic questions that were examined included how the categories mentioned have changed and evolved, if at all, over the last few years and in what way? What are the basic premises that can be set to guide the field and how can they be made applicable and relevant to the Global South (s).

Panel 3: Thursday, 30 September 2021

The third panel discussed the manifestations of conflict in the Global South(s). Chaired by Abdalhadi, the panelists included Rose Jaji, Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies, University of Osnabrück, Luicy Pedroza, Center for International Studies, El Colegio, Mexico, Rita Manchanda, South Asia Forum for Human Rights, New Delhi, Adriana Climate Change and Achim Kemmerling and Sushobhan Parida. The panelists explored the main manifestations of conflict in the Global South and how issues like terrorism, climate change, extractivism, can increase the risk of armed conflicts in the world especially in countries located in the Global South. Further, they also discussed the main actors who can exacerbate the conflict or those who can solve the conflict.

Panel 4: Thursday, 30 September 2021

The fourth panel examined the manifestations of violence in the Global South(s). It was chair by Clever Chikwanda and the panelists included Martin Ewi, Institute for Security Studies Africa, Pretoria, Angelika Rettberg, University of Los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia and Sabine Kurtenbach, German Institute for Global and Area Studies, Hamburg, Lucas Rezende and



Rafael Villa Department of Political Science, University of São Paulo and Hanna Pfeifer and Abdalhari.

This panel illustrated and identified the general and particular patterns of violence in the Global South (s) by examining various case studies. The core idea was to identify possible shifts in forms of violence and whether and how such patterns of violence transcend geographical boundaries. The panelists also underlined some of the patterns of violence which are unique to the Global South (s) or are these remnants of the histories marked by colonialism and imperialism.

Panel 5: Friday, 1 October 2021

In continuation with the previous panels on manifestations of conflict and peace, the fifth panel looked at the manifestations of Peace in the Global South(s). The panel was chaired by Henri Myrntinen, RAFT Myanmar, Yangon and included Jalale Getachew Birru, Willy Brandt School of Public Policy, University of Erfurt, Nicolas Lemay-Herbert / Babatunde Obamamoye, Department of International Relations, Australian National University, Canberra, Ruth Murambadoro, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Jonas Wolff, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF), Frankfurt and Birte Vogel, Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI), University of Manchester as panelists.

This panel highlighted how the discourse on peace in the Global South(s) has evolved and shifted from conflict resolution to conflict transformation. It also explored and highlighted the innovative and novel methods of peacebuilding in the Global South (s) and how have they contributed to transforming intractable conflicts. The panelists brought to the discussion some of the specific approaches which reflect the scholarly thinking and practical realities from the Global South(s).

Panel 6: Friday, 1 October 2021

The sixth panel discussed the questions related to manifestations of justice in the Global South. The panel was chaired by Jalale Getachew Birru (Willy Brandt School of Public Policy, University of Erfurt). The panelists were Steve, Henri Myrntinen, Farooq, Pablo and Karen.

The presenters in the panel highlighted the multiple meanings of justice in the Global South (s) and how they might/might not be similar to those in the Global North (s). What are the focal points of contestations in justice/injustice in the Global South (s), often leading to conflicts on the basis of gender, caste, class, ethnicity, environment. The identified focal points must be substantiated with case studies and how they further the evolution of various manifestations of justice.

Final Panel: Friday, 1 October 2021

The final panel identified the Way Ahead for Global PACS and how to de-colonize and forge a Global Peace and Conflict Studies. Chaired by Pablo Ramos, this panel included Oliver Richmond / Patrick Tom (University of Manchester) Susanne Buckley-Zistel / Alexandra



Engelsdorfer / Kristine Avram (Centre for Conflict Studies, Philipps-University Marburg), Edward Kaweesi (School of Social Sciences, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda) as panelists.

The papers in this panel identified how we can forge a new and more inclusive agenda for Peace and Conflict Studies by identifying challenges, possible synergies between the Global North (s) and the Global South (s). The possibility and ways to enunciate innovative approaches and identify engagements with multiple perceptions leading to a Global Peace and Conflict Studies was also examined and discussed.

Appropriation of Results/Publications

The conference was an integral part of a long-term network project initiated by Solveig Richter and Siddharth Tripathi and was a modest attempt to synthesize the academic debate on perspectives from the Global South that started in 2018. The structure of the conference thus reflected the results of the initial conference in 2018 and the increasing scholarly interest in North-South dialogue since then. The conference brought together all authors in a two-day workshop and is the next important step in a long-term process to deeply anchor concepts and perspectives from the Global South in the academic discourse of peace and conflict studies to develop a truly Global Peace and Conflict Studies. It builds on the initial results and initiatives but goes beyond it in the following way:

1. Synthesize the academic debate and the respective research discourses of the previous years since 2018 and thus strengthening the joint contours of a Global PACS.
2. Increase academic exchange and initiate more collaborative research projects South-South and thus also pick up the emerging academic discussion on epistemological hierarchies between scholars from the Global South.
3. Strengthen the transfer of this synthesized knowledge into the wider academic debate directly through the publication of the handbook.
4. Put Germany as a possible pioneer country at the centre of the political discussion on how to overcome structural inequalities in the discipline of peace and conflict studies between the North and South and formulate recommendations.

The conference primarily served as the final author's workshop for the "Handbook on Peace and Conflict Studies: Perspectives in the Global South" which seeks to bring a reflective, synergetic and trans-regional cutting-edge research in Peace and Conflict Studies. This handbook includes both practitioners and academics from the North(s) and the South(s) leading to a new participatory and reflective discourse on peace and incorporating horizontal methods for conflict analysis and conflict resolution, resulting in a broader, horizontal action of building peace. Thus, both theoreticians and practitioners in a position of building North-South or South-South knowledge will have a handbook that speaks in a more direct way to



their experiences and conceptions of peace and conflict. The handbook is scheduled to be published by the early 2023.

The conference was attended by panelists who are all authors of the handbook. More than 60% of panelists can be defined in the broadest sense as scholars from the Global South including but not limited to scholars and practitioners from India, Myanmar, Colombia, South Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda apart from scholars based in the Global North. Authors and panelists from the Global North were chosen who have demonstrated an interest in intensified exchange (e.g. by research stays in the South in the past) or significantly studied developments in the Global South (proven by publications). We specifically encouraged and initiated co-authorships for the papers between scholars from the North and South as well as South-South collaborations which also paves the way for further cooperation between the panelists and presenters.

One page abstract: Summary of objectives, the process and the important scientific results

The key objectives and outcomes of the workshop can be summarised into three subheadings incorporating an inclusive peace and conflict studies.

a) Reflective: The workshop discussed and familiarised the participants with a systematic and comprehensive reflection on the state of the art of research on and in the Global South(s) in the field of peace and conflict studies. It included both a wide-range of high-profile scholars from the North who discussed ontological and epistemological foundations in their own approaches (e.g. local turn) with regard to the Global South(s) and renowned scholars from the Global South(s) offering a broad introduction into scholarly thinking and concepts emanating there. It was a conscious effort to include local understandings of peace and peacebuilding that establishes a creative distance from established, often top-down frameworks. The workshop through the handbook thus intended to push for a more systematic integration of perspectives from the Global South(s) by linking existing but still dispersed and fragmented lines of argumentation into a coherent debate.

b) Synergetic and Trans regional: Beyond a mere reflection on the state of the art, the different panels of the workshop commensurate with the chapters of the handbook examined original and synergetic arguments linking theoretical, conceptual and empirical knowledge from all regions covered in the handbook. Thus, the workshop not only brought together and facilitated North-South contributions (e.g. in co-authorship) but it also incorporated original chapters written by scholars as a results of emerging South-South research projects. The objective was to include locally developed traditional knowledge and complement existing and broadly recognized research approaches for the analysis and transformation of conflict.



c) Cutting-Edge: All the presenters were part of thorough discussion on cutting-edge ideas and emerging research concepts for the development of a more inclusive and broad-reaching Global Peace and Conflict Studies. This section which is also important for the handbook was fully dedicated to bringing innovative research ideas to the scene in order to shape and pave the way for a more globalized research agenda and a new language in Peace and Conflict Studies. By this, we intended to serve as a reference point for upcoming collaborative research projects and initiatives in the field. The workshop discussed the possibilities of continuing the collaboration between the scholars and after publication of the handbook, the editorial team will organize outreach workshops in main universities in the respective regions and will support smaller workshops by contributing authors in their own home universities