

Panel by the “Critical Peace Research” working group
(AK Herrschaftskritische Friedensforschung)

Title: *The Racial Silence? Whiteness and racism in peace research, activism and education*
Much has been said about inequality as a driver for conflict. Inequality *within* peace research as a driver for biased results, topics, angles and approaches remains, however, still barely addressed. Who are the dominant groups within peace research, activism and education? Who defines ›conflict‹ and ›peace‹? With this panel, we want to inquire into what Mahdis Azarmandi refers to as “The Racial Silence within Peace Studies” and thereby scrutinize our methodologies, theories and research practice with the following questions: How do whiteness and structural and epistemic racism within (German-speaking) academia, activism and education materialize in institutions and in knowledge production? What are the implications thereof for a discipline that aims at understanding conflict and building peace? What is needed to tackle postcolonial inequality in institutions of peace research and in activism? How can we as a discipline proceed, to become as diverse as the topics we are interested in, and what is our individual responsibility as researchers in this process?

Keywords: structural and epistemic racism, whiteness, decolonial perspectives, inequality

Format: To increase accessibility, we suggest a hybrid format. Contributors are: María Requena López (Forum Civil Peace Service), Christina Pauls (University of Augsburg) and Nicki K. Weber (University of Augsburg), and Philipp Lottholz (University of Giessen). The panel will be moderated by Juliana Krohn (University of Innsbruck). María Cárdenas (University of Giessen) will be the discussant.

Contributions

1 Racial Silence, Time and the Coloniality of Peace

The intention of this contribution is to interpret the racial silence as a fundamental axis of the ‘coloniality of peace’ and identify how the coloniality of peace operates within academia. I will explore this topic by focusing on conceptions of time in contemporary (liberal) peace philosophy. Positing that conceptions of time play a crucial role in the invisibilization of racism and colonialism, I am taking a closer look on what Rolando Vázquez calls the coloniality of time, in order to identify some of the the onto-epistemic assumptions that enable the racial silence, and thus stabilise the coloniality of peace. I scrutinise the Western conception of temporality and historiography that is based on a threefold hegemony which rejects the past, places the present as the only relevant mode of being (‘in peace’) and fosters an orientation towards the future on a developmental teleology. I relate this threefold hegemony to corresponding images of peace as transcendent (future-oriented), immanent (present-oriented) and precedent (past-oriented) and argue that addressing the racial and colonial silence, and thus disrupting the coloniality of peace, requires tackling the coloniality time and moving towards precedent notions of peace. Learning from contemporary decolonial activism,

I outline how resistances against the coloniality of peace draw from an active relationship to the past as a form of rebellion against modernity/coloniality's future-orientation.

Christina Pauls is lecturer and PhD candidate at the University of Augsburg, Chair for Political Science, Peace and Conflict studies. Her research interests are the coloniality of peace, decolonial interventions and decolonial theories in peace philosophy.

2 Still gazing into the distance? Unpacking geographic and cultural biases of peace and conflict research in the European context

The primary orientation of topics and geographic regions as well as synergies with international relations (IR) and area studies lie at the heart of a de facto 'overseas peace and conflict studies', as the field could be called nowadays. This state of affairs leads to the question, as to whether and how peace and conflict studies could overcome this gaze into the distance and start to appreciate and inquire into conflicts in Europe and the industrialised world more generally. The present paper seeks to answer this question in three conceptual steps: First, I identify potentials and achievements in the neighbouring disciplines of sociology, security studies and political science that foreground a more critical picture of the European (and German) context. Second, I show how conflict emanating from the unequal and exploitative integration of east European countries into the EU has been ongoing and, given a lack of critical research and commentary, has led to a deepened othering and orientalization of the affected societies. In a third step, I demonstrate the double subordination triggered by this intra-European civilization hierarchy through accounts of Roma and Turkish-origin minority community activism in the face of exclusionary and negligent conduct of authorities in both the Bulgarian and West-European migration contexts.

Philipp Lottholz is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Collaborative Research Centre/Transregio 138 "Dynamics of Security" and the Institute for Sociology, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany. His research focuses on political and social change in post-Socialist Central Asia and Eastern Europe, evolving trajectories of statebuilding, peacebuilding and security practices. Further interests are researcher safety, practice-based and dialogical approaches to knowledge production, and post- and decolonial thought. Outputs have been published in *International Peacekeeping*, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *Central Asian Survey*, and in the edited collections *Interrogating Illiberal Peace in Eurasia – Critical Perspectives on Peace and Conflict* (Rowman & Littlefield) and *Hybridity: Law, Culture and Development* (Routledge).

3 „Anti-racist & diversity-oriented organisational development: first steps of forumZFD and its Academy for Conflict Transformation“

Oliver Knabe is chair of the executive board of the forumZFD (forum civil peace service). He holds a M.A. degree in Political Science, Economics and International Law from the University of Bonn. Among others, he worked for the publishing group *Handelsblatt* in Düsseldorf/Germany, for the forum civil peace service in Belgrade/Serbia and worked freelance as consultant and coach with a regional focus on South Eastern Europe, for example for the CSSP – Berlin Center for Integrative Mediation. Since 1992 he is active in various local and international peace initiatives and projects.

Moderator: Juliana Krohn is doctoral researcher and university assistant at the Department of Philosophy at the University of Innsbruck where she coordinates the interdisciplinary doctoral program “Dynamics of Inequality and Difference in the Age of Globalization”. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on philosophical and literary-scientific expressions of the human-nature relationship and their relevance for anthropocentric understandings of peace, onto-epistemic violence, the coloniality of peace and decolonial theory. Together with María Cárdenas she is the spokesperson of the working group “Critical Peace Research” of the German Association for Peace and Conflict Studies.

Discussant: María Cárdenas is doctoral researcher and lecturer at the Institute for Sociology, Justus Liebig University Giessen, and research fellow for the Erasmus+ project *BRIDGES (Building Inclusive Societies)*. Her research interests include decolonial and anti-racist perspectives on peace research and practice. In her doctoral research she focuses on the decolonizing potential of ethnic(ized) top-level agency for conflict transformation and peacebuilding in Colombia. As youth and peace advisor, she develops a decolonized peace and youth project for the German Peace Society - United War Resisters (DFG-VK) in Frankfurt. Together with Juliana Krohn, she is spokesperson of the working group “Critical Peace Research” of the German Association for Peace and Conflict Studies.