



# Latin America between Conflict and Reconciliation

Edited by Martin Leiner and Susan Flämig

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht



# Research in Peace and Reconciliation

edited by  
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in co-operation with

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With 4 Figures and 10 Tables

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Susan Flämig/Martin Leiner

## Reconciliation in the Middle of Dispute

### Introduction to the Series

In the last two decades, studies in Conflict, Peace and Reconciliation have undergone an important quantitative as well as qualitative evolution. In 2010, there were more than 100 different B.A., M.A., or other institutional programs that included these subjects worldwide.<sup>1</sup> The UNESCO database on Peace Institutes counts some 600 institutions in almost 90 countries. Without a doubt, these subjects draw increasing interest, especially among younger scholars, and due to the political transformation in many countries since the end of the Cold War, a lot of data has become accessible. The increasing interest can be attributed to the expanding field of research not only through system changes in Eastern Europe, the end of the military dictatorships in Latin America, the peaceful political transformation in post-Apartheid South Africa, but also the atrocities against human dignity in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda and many other places, the civil wars in “failing” states like Somalia or Congo, the UN-missions and the wars in the aftermath of 9/11. Very often, these scholars not only describe and explain their case or phenomenon of interest, but also put forth possibilities to overcome violence and avoid the mistakes of the past.

What about the scientific quality of this research? In December 2003, Gerald Steinberg from Bar Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, presented a critical paper at the UNESCO conference on “Educating towards a Culture of Peace”<sup>2</sup>. He offers a critical summary of his evaluation of Peace Studies Programs around the world:

“Peace education, like many other topics in the social sciences, is susceptible to the tensions between the academic objective of value-free analysis, on the one hand, and particularist as well as highly subjective advocacy, on the other. In many cases, social sciences have difficulty in coping with this tension, and this is particularly true for peace education.”<sup>3</sup>

1 This is an important figure, compared to the fact that the first Peace Studies Program was established in 1948 at Manchester College in Indiana (USA), an institution of the Church of the Brethren, and that for 20 years almost no other program existed in this field. Only in the late 1960s a broader academic interest in these studies can be observed.

2 “The Thin Line between Peace Education and Political Advocacy: Towards a Code of Conduct.” A revised version of this paper is available at:  
<http://faculty.biu.ac.il/~steing/conflict/Papers/UNESCOPeaceStudies.pdf>  
(accessed on Oct 1, 2010). We quote from this version.

3 Op.cit., p. 1.

In particular, Steinberg deplores the elimination of the ‘realist’ Hobbesian position from reading lists in Peace Studies Programs, the ideological influence of postmodernism and the tendency to incriminate unilateral countries like the U.S. and Israel.<sup>4</sup>

Besides these basic methodological and ideological problems, Steinberg also speaks about “the failure of peace studies to provide empirically useful analysis and prescription for resolving or managing ethno-national conflicts”.<sup>5</sup> He attributes this to the complexity of the subject, the tendency of many scholars to emphasize a particular approach and the “relative lack of systematic investigations and empirical evaluation of the relevant theories and models”.<sup>6</sup> “Most theories and models appear to be tautological in nature, without independent and externally measurable variables with which to determine the link between cause and effect or to measure success or failure.”<sup>7</sup> “Evaluative and comparative methodologies [...] based on empirically observable variables that are derived from the theories and models in the peace studies literature, are necessary to remedy this weakness in the field.”<sup>8</sup>

This critical evaluation from an Israeli ‘realist’ and empirical point of view certainly does not do full justice to the issue. Nevertheless, when it is situated within the history of peace research and confronted with the actual complexity of the field, it can be helpful to determine where we stand and what the future tasks of peace studies are. It also helps to determine the specific location of the new series we start with this book.

In general, we can distinguish three approaches in the field of peace research: firstly, research marked by innovative individuals, secondly, research in specific academic disciplines and thirdly, interdisciplinary research. The *first phase* started in the 1960s and 1970s. By this time peace studies was no more limited to the specific approach of the “peace churches” like the Mennonites or the Church of the Brethren and their seminaries. Peace Studies was chosen by scholars with clearly other religious and philosophical backgrounds and became a topic of wider interest at the same time. In this phase the discussions were nourished by innovative ideas of individuals like Johan Galtung, Dieter Senghaas and Alva Myrdal. Characteristically, these individuals were trained in several disciplines, like sociology, political science, history, economics, mathematics, philosophy or psychology. They engaged in practical peace work as well as academic research, and they also had the courage to develop new ideas in emerging fields of research, including those

4 It is an evident weakness of Steinberg’s article that he does not demonstrate the neutrality he requires of other scholars, especially when he talks about Israel and the U.S. Nevertheless, this weakness does not diminish the overall value of his critical observations, even if these are extreme views.

5 Op.cit., p. 5.

6 Op.cit., p. 7.

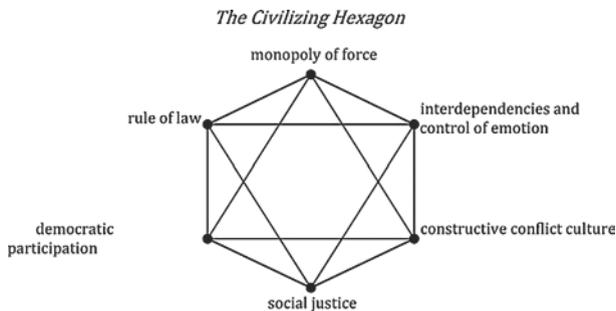
7 Op.cit., p. 8.

8 Op.cit., p. 7.

that did not directly belong to their own field of expertise.<sup>9</sup> These fathers and mothers of modern peace research used a transdisciplinary approach, which we will discuss below. They also took part in the founding of important academic institutions of peace research, like the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI, 1966) in Myrdal's case or the Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO, 1959) in Galtung's case. Galtung also founded the first academic journal devoted to the topic of this book, the *Journal of Peace Research* (1964). Senghaas directed a research group at the Peace Research Institute, Frankfurt (PRIF).

It was only more than three decades later that scholars like Galtung and Senghaas presented their definitive global theory of peace.<sup>10</sup> But it is very likely that these theories have been the horizon their work aimed at for a longer period. Transdisciplinary complexity and the embedding into a certain world view are two of the characteristics of these works.

The “civilizing hexagon” of Dieter Senghaas illustrates the transdisciplinary complexity of these and other contemporary theories in the field of peace research. Senghaas distinguishes six factors capable of strengthening or weakening opposing parties in a conflict situation:



Terms like “social justice” and “constructive culture of conflict” show that Senghaas, unlike Steinberg, integrates normative aspects in his work.

- 9 Cf. the development of a new values theory by Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge: “The Structure of Foreign News. The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crisis in Four Norwegian Newspapers”, in: *Journal of Peace Research* 2 (1965), p. 64–91. Senghaas has worked on economic aspects of underdevelopment and even on the relation of music and peace. Myrdal was interested in questions of growth of population and the transformation of the family.
- 10 Cf. Dieter SENGHAAS (2004), *Zum irdischen Frieden. Erkenntnisse und Vermutungen*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp; Johan Galtung (1996), *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. Oslo: PRIO and London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Johan Galtung elaborates the religious and philosophical ideas that underlie his work. Many of his ideas come from Buddhism<sup>11</sup> and Daoism<sup>12</sup>, but more importantly he argues for a transcendence of all religious beliefs in order to find a more peaceful common approach to peace where all the religions can contribute valuable concepts.<sup>13</sup>

The *second phase* of peace research is characterized by studies that more clearly belong to one single academic discipline. Specialists of different disciplines managed to establish relevant topics and projects within the scientific community of their own disciplines. In political science, for example, concepts of peace-building were developed from the field of international relations. Social psychologists described the “psychology of reconciliation”<sup>14</sup> and legal scholars worked on concepts like justice, human rights and constitutional theory in order to contribute to peaceful development in different regions of the world. Institutes like the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP, founded in 1984) employ more than 70 specialists from different disciplines to engage in research on current as well as fundamental issues. In general, one can say that in the second phase the center of gravity of peace research shifted from Scandinavia to the U.S. In addition, there were many examples of empirical and historical research of good, sometimes even better, methodological calibre. Nevertheless the complexity of the problems in peace research, the ongoing historical development of many conflicts and the enormous costs to perform solid statistical field studies limited the possibility to establish a great number of empirically valuable studies in peace research. We only need to imagine how difficult it is to transform Senghaas’s hexagon into empirically observable variables and to validate them by field research. Thus, we can only agree with Steinberg’s observation that there should be more empirical studies.

In the *third phase* of peace research, empirical validation of theories has become less important than interdisciplinary combination of different theoretical approaches. Mediation, as an interdisciplinary methodology combining elements mainly from law and psychology, was an additional driving force behind the new interdisciplinary approach.

In recent years, scholars noticed that factors like culture, religion, collective memory, local traditions<sup>15</sup> and regional particularities play an important role

11 Cf. Ricard L. GAGE (ed.) (1995), *Choose Peace. A Dialogue between Johan Galtung and Daisaku Ikeda*, London/Sterling/Virginia, 79–95.

12 Cf. Johan GALTUNG (1996), *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. Oslo: PRIO and London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 43 ss.

13 Cf. Johan GALTUNG/Graeme MACQUEEN (2008), *Globalizing God: Religion, Spirituality and Peace*, Oslo: Transcend University Press.

14 Cf. now the comprehensive volume: Arie NADLER, Thomas MALLOY and Jeffrey D. FISHER (2008), *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Reconciliation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

15 For example, in different villages in Bosnia-Herzegovina conflicts between Serbs, Croats and Muslims evolved in different ways. Cf. Bar Simon Tor (2003).

in the evolution of conflict and peace. The same strategies for peace can succeed in one region and fail in another.<sup>16</sup> One lesson to be learned from this is that peace research should focus on the particular context of a conflict and then describe or explain the available data. In this endeavour, different disciplines should work together. A typical result of such an approach is the book *Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World*, which was published in 1999 by the U.S. Institute of Peace.<sup>17</sup> Twenty of the 25 contributions in the book are case studies of conflicts, like Northern Ireland, Burundi or Tajikistan.

In general, this is still the main approach today. Whilst the increasing number of institutions for peace in the 1980s had a lot to do with the “Peace Movements” in countries like Germany or the U.S. and the initiative of Christian Churches,<sup>18</sup> the 1990s witnessed a huge increase of research in different religious, secular and philosophical or political contexts. However, a rise in the number of institutes working on peace research does not necessarily lead to an improvement in quality of research. At least, the best academic institutions share the effort to become more scientific in methods and research and reject unilateral points of view or “political correctness” that eliminates important theoretical approaches. We should always seek to improve the historical, conceptual and empirical quality of peace research.

In the series that begins with the present publication we want to contribute to this interdisciplinary region-centered scientific research. We collect studies by experts and innovative young scholars from different countries and different disciplines, in relation to conflicts in different regions of the world. We plan to publish volumes in regard to the following regions: Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and Australia, the Indian Subcontinent, North Africa and Middle East and Europe, Ancient Soviet-Union and North America. A volume with theoretical texts will complete the series.

Most of the texts of the present volume have been presented at a workshop or summer school. In July 2009, with the help of the Volkswagen foundation, we could invite 35 scholars from Argentina, Chile, Peru, Guatemala, the US, the UK, South Africa, Hong Kong, Iraq, Japan, Germany, France, Switzerland, Austria, and Italy to discuss the transition processes in Latin America after the period of dictatorship in many countries.

Moreover, the present work represents a first step in an effort to move beyond the current dominating approach. The use of one or all of the following three perspectives could lead in this direction:

16 For example, the Sant’Egidio peace initiative was fairly successful in Mozambique, whilst in Algeria its effect was limited.

17 The editors were Chester A. CROCKER, Fen Osler HAMPSON and Pamela AALL.

18 In Germany, the Roman-Catholic “Institute for Peace and Theology” in Hamburg is an example of how peace research is established institutionally through the church. In a more practical way, and from the theological perspective of the Mennonite tradition, John Paul Lederach, among others, developed methods of intervention to foster sustainable peace.

## From a Local to a Comparative and Transcultural Perspective

There are universal aspects in all conflicts and in all peace-building processes. Often, starting from a focus on regional, cultural and particular traditional factors, these universal aspects have to be rediscovered. In contrast to a specifically modern perspective, we contend that the epistemological status of these universal aspects is open to change. Universal commonalities are no invariant factors that can be applied to every conflict in the world; they are rather something to be found after first having compared other conflicts in the world. The comparative perspective is of increased importance in our approach than in previous publications on the same topic. For instance, we want to investigate how people from South Africa, who are convinced by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), react to discussions in Chile about the necessary end of impunity. We want to study what people in Poland, who work on the history of German-Polish relations, think about the question of how to deal with the past in the relationship between Japan and Korea. What are the similarities, and differences between the massacres in Srebrenica and Kigali? We hope that comparisons of this kind can help to discover universal aspects and to describe the specificities of the different conflicts and peace processes in a more exact way. These comparisons can provoke new questions, open new trajectories for future research and help to find new practical ideas to improve peace-building.

In addition, we argue for a transcultural perspective. Cultures have never been closed entities. Colonialism, migrations, cultural and economic exchange has created a reality in which different cultures live together, new transcultural identities are formed and have become more common. It is obvious that in this respect the impasses of communitarian approaches must be overcome. Wolfgang Welsch's concept of transculturality<sup>19</sup> and similar approaches, also those preferring hyperculturality to transculturality<sup>20</sup>, become increasingly important. Addressing this issue we accepted the article on the Brazilian minority in Japan in the present volume.

19 Cf. Wolfgang WELSCH (1999), "Transculturality – the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today". In: Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash (ed.), *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*. London: Sage, 194–213.

20 Cf. Byung-Chul HAN, *Hyperkulturalität. Kultur und Globalisierung*. Berlin 2010.

## From Interdisciplinary to Transdisciplinary Research

Inspired by the classical texts of peace studies and by a desire to overcome an interdisciplinary approach that functions as a mere addition, we seek to pay tribute to the complexity of conflicts and thus promote transdisciplinary research. As there is no generally accepted definition of the term “transdisciplinary”, we have to explain in detail what we mean.<sup>21</sup> We will discuss the three major threads of transdisciplinarity in the German-speaking discourse.

The first question is: how to find unity between the different approaches of the different disciplines as well as the different perceptions of the practical experiences on the ground? The second question is: what to think about the value-oriented perspective and the philosophical and religious elements in the theories of scholars like Galtung or the Christian elements in the peace work of Mennonites like John Lederach?

Our starting point for the first question is the position of the German philosopher Jürgen Mittelstraß. For Mittelstraß, transdisciplinarity is a principle of how to organize science and scientific research. It does not imply a new methodology but a new level of cooperation. Whereas interdisciplinarity designs a concrete cooperation of several disciplines working on a particular topic, transdisciplinarity means a *continuous cooperation* of different disciplines. These disciplines accept changes in the orientation of their scholars and the boundaries of disciplines in the process of cooperation. This requires, more or less, four new orientations for research practices:

1. The unlimited will to learn from other disciplines and the acceptance to change the concepts and theories of one’s own discipline
2. The gain of interdisciplinary competence, up to the point where one can productively discuss the work of the other discipline
3. The capacity to reformulate the approaches of one’s own discipline in the light of interdisciplinary competence
4. The formulation of a common text in which the unity of transdisciplinary argumentation replaces the simple aggregation of different results from several academic disciplines.<sup>22</sup>

This understanding should be completed by what Mittelstraß calls a more practical transdisciplinarity as well as by attempts of some scholars who want to establish transdisciplinarity as a new method.

Even if it takes substantial effort to realize this kind of transdisciplinarity, the position of Mittelstraß could form a basic consensus for cooperative

21 Cf. Gertrude Hadorn HIRSCH et al. (ed.) (2008), *Handbook of Transdisciplinary Research*. Dordrecht: Springer/NL.

22 Cf. Jürgen MITTELSTRASS, “Methodische Transdisziplinarität”, in: *Technikfolgenabschätzung. Theorie und Praxis*. 14/2; June 2005, p. 18–23.

transdisciplinary research. However, the notion of practical interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity as methods should be developed further.

With Matthias Bergmann, the second important author in the German debate, we can distinguish between two processes: a process of problem-solving in the life-world (*Lebenswelt*) and a scientific process aimed at an increase of knowledge. They intersect in various ways, but they should be seen as two different processes.<sup>23</sup> It is obvious that practical processes of peace-building and academic processes of peace research offer various possibilities of mutual interaction, but it is also important to see the autonomy of practice and academic research. “Transdisciplinarity implies that the precise nature of a problem to be addressed and solved is not predetermined and needs to be defined cooperatively by actors from science and the life-world. To enable the refining of a problem definition as well as the joint commitment in solving or mitigating problems, transdisciplinary research connects problem identification and structuring, searching for solutions and bringing results to fruition in a recursive research and negotiation process. Transdisciplinarity thus dismantles the traditional sequence leading from scientific insight to action.”<sup>24</sup>

The main problem with Bergmann’s conception is, that the life-world is only associated with practical research, but it has to be related to the sciences as well. As Edmund Husserl showed in his book *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*<sup>25</sup>, science can only reduce the complexity of the life-world. It always remains dependent on the life-world.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, transdisciplinary research as a whole has to be aware of being embedded in the life-world. Practical lessons learned from the life-world form the common ground for the evaluation of all theories in transdisciplinary peace theory as well as practical peace work. In the life-world and the – still differently interpretable – experiences we find the unity between the different approaches of the different disciplines as well as the different perceptions of the practical experiences on the ground. All the different sciences are abstractions from the life-world. They can contribute to a common image by discussing the interpretation of the experiences in the life-world.

This perspective allows us to answer the difficult question of values in transdisciplinary research. Scholars like Edmund Husserl and Max Scheler showed that there is always a value-feeling in the life-world. Consequently,

23 Cf. Matthias BERGMANN et al. (2005), *Qualitätskriterien transdisziplinärer Forschung – Ein Leitfaden für die formative Evaluation von Forschungsprojekten*, ISOE Studententext, Frankfurt/M.: Institut für sozial-ökologische Forschung.

24 Urs WIESMANN et al. (2008), “Enhancing Transdisciplinary Research. A Synthesis in Fifteen Propositions”. In: Hadorn Hirsch et al. (2008), op.cit., p. 436.

25 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Edited by Elisabeth STRÖKER (1996), Hamburg: Meiner.

26 In a slightly different way, such dependence recently has been emphasized by Julian NIDA-RÜMELIN (2009), *Philosophie und Lebensform*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

value-free research is an abstract way of thinking and it should be integrated into a more complete vision. This is also the aim of another group of academics, the research group of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences directed by Gertrude Hirsch-Hadorn. This group tries to integrate social aspects like the common good of society into the concept of transdisciplinarity.<sup>27</sup> However, in our opinion, this idea does not give enough respect to the freedom of research and the individuality of every scholar. Research should not be limited by the definition of common good of a society, but by the researcher's individual understanding of peace, values and by the worldview of the scholar. In the context of discovery this individual value-oriented approach is the only possible approach, even if it does not appear explicitly. However, in the context of justification, the research has to integrate the experiences on the ground, and the results of this approach have to be argued for in different publics such as the scientific community. Only an approach that can translate its values into the values of other religions and cultures can be convincing in the globalized scientific community. At the same time an academic approach that can convince peace workers on the ground can be considered successful.

Transdisciplinary research, if not at the expense of the quality of disciplinary methodological research, can integrate values and worldviews. This encouraged us to integrate philosophers and theologians of different religious backgrounds into our program. A Buddhist understanding of peace seems to us as important as a Mennonite or an atheist one. The inclusion of these views is an important attribute of Christian peace research.

### Media- and Symbol-oriented Perspective

Conflicts and peace processes are deeply engaged in highly symbolic communication. National and religious symbols and their history play a crucial role in the understanding of the development of conflicts as well as of peace processes. Even during World War II cities like Leningrad and Stalingrad in the Soviet Union or Königsberg and Freudenstadt in Germany had to suffer more because of their symbolic meaning and not because of their strategic importance.

The media often amplifies this kind of symbolic communication. They inform and create the public and its perception of conflict or peace. Even certain acts of terror, for example, seem to be more important as communicative acts than as destructive acts. At least, this is the thesis of

27 Cf. WIESMAN et al. (2008), "Enhancing Transdisciplinary research. A Synthesis in Fifteen Propositions", op.cit., p. 436–441.

Andreas Elter's book *Propaganda der Tat* (2008), which examined the actions of the RAF in the 1970s.

This symbol and communication oriented interpretation of conflict and peace processes is another mark of our research that will be explored further in subsequent publications.

### The Hölderlin Perspective

Within the field of peace research, in Jena we follow a particular approach called the Hölderlin-perspective. The German poet Friedrich Hölderlin (1770 – 1843) gave his name to this kind of research, when he wrote on the last pages of his novel *Hyperion*: “Versöhnung ist mitten im Streit und alles Getrennte findet sich wieder”.<sup>28</sup> Our perspective is the antithesis to a widespread perception in the field of political science, where reconciliation is seen as an event that occurs only after the end of violent conflict, sometimes even many years later, after a successful peace-building process.

The latter view is a challenge to the idea of Christian theology that the fundamental reconciliation, between God and humankind, already has occurred. John Riches, a scholar of New Testament Studies, underlines this point, when he describes the particularity of the announcement of the Kingdom of God by Jesus:

Kingdom is not established only where other rulers have been overthrown; rather God's power erupts in the midst of oppression, forgiving and healing, and wherever that power is, there is cause for rejoicing. The world is not, that is to say, given to Satan, or to Caesar, until God will restore his rule over it by destroying the alien rulers. On the contrary, God is already present in this 'evil age', overcoming it by mercy.<sup>29</sup>

In Protestant Systematic Theology, it is quite common to adopt this point of view. Our small attempts at reconciliation only try to mirror, in a human way, God's act of reconciliation.<sup>30</sup> The German theologian Jürgen Moltmann closes

28 Friedrich HÖLDERLIN (1998), *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*. Michael KNAUPP (ed.). Vol. 1. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft. p. 760: “Reconciliation is in the middle of dispute and all things separated find each other again.”

29 John Riches, *Jesus and the Transformation of Judaism*. London 1980. 93 f.

30 In particular, Karl Barth's doctrine of reconciliation and his essays on political topics were marked by this perspective, which in principle presupposes the great reconciliation. Cf. Matthias GOCKEL/Martin LEINER (2008), “Kritik und Versöhnung – Karl Barth und die DDR”. In: Martin LEINER/Michael TROWITZSCH (ed.), *Karl Barths Theologie als europäisches Ereignis*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht. 79–119. Cf. also for a complete interpretation of the doctrine of reconciliation of Karl Barth: BENOÎT BOURGINE, *L'herméneutique théologique de Karl Barth: Exégèse et dogmatique dans le quatrième volume de la Kirchliche Dogmatik*. Leuven: Peeters 2004.

his book “Ethik der Hoffnung” (ethics of hope) by a chapter with the title “Und Frieden mitten im Streit” (And peace in the middle of dispute).<sup>31</sup> He explains this concept as follows:

Nach Eph 2 und Kol 1 hat Gott durch die Hingabe Christi ‘Frieden’ geschaffen zwischen Heiden und Juden, indem er ‘die Feindschaft tötete durch sich selbst’ (Eph 2.18) und Frieden verkündete denen, die nahe waren, und denen, die ferne waren. Im Kolosserbrief wird zu diesem konkreten Frieden zwischen Juden und Heiden die kosmische Dimension hinzugefügt, dass Gott durch Christus alles mit sich versöhnt hat, es sei auf Erden oder im Himmel, indem er Frieden machte durch sein Blut am Kreuz’ (1,20). In der menschlichen wie in dieser kosmischen Dimension ist es wichtig zu erkennen, dass der Friede von Gott schon gemacht ist, es also für Menschen darauf ankommt, zu erkennen und anzuerkennen, was objektiv sub specie eternitatis schon da ist, es sei in menschlichen Konflikten oder im Weltall. Gott war in Christus und versöhnte den Kosmos mit sich selbst’ (2 Kor 5,17). Das ist der ‘Friede mitten im Streit’: In der Tiefe der lähmenden und oft tödlichen Konflikte der Völker herrscht schon dieser Gottesfriede.<sup>32</sup>

In a Christian context, we integrate a Christian self-understanding into our research with a claim that the great reconciliation already has been achieved. This inspires our own practice of reconciliation.

Moreover, in the Hölderlin perspective we pay attention to the elements speaking for and perhaps even leading towards reconciliation in a conflict: internal and external groups and individuals who disagree with the conflict, common laws and customs, moments of economic cooperation, common feelings, correlations of acting and reacting etc. We are particularly interested in exploring how these elements develop in a conflict. What role do people who never wanted the conflict to become violent play in a peace process? Sometimes peace is made between the strong actors in a conflict, and the difficult work of people who were willing to end the conflict is not sufficiently acknowledged. This is true, for example, in the case of the 300,000 moderate Hutus who were killed in the Rwanda genocide and are almost forgotten. Or we can think of the German officers who tried to kill Hitler on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1944. Their plans did not fit the goals of the Allied powers. Their conservative and Prussian attitude was criticized even in the works of German historians, and for a long time the Christian motivation of many of them has not been understood adequately.<sup>33</sup> Sometimes people who are not willing to participate

In a similar way, Friedrich SCHLEIERMACHER spoke about the deep peace present in the middle of conflict, for example, in his Sermon for Christmas on Mt 10, 34.

31 Jürgen MOLTSMANN (2010), *Ethik der Hoffnung*. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus. 265.

32 Jürgen MOLTSMANN (2010), *Ethik der Hoffnung*. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus. 265. See also Timothy HARVIE (2009), *Jürgen Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope: Eschatological Possibilities for Moral Action*, Ashgate.

33 Cf. Martin LEINER (2004), “Zu theologischen Motivation des Widerstands gegen das ‘Dritte Reich’”. In: Martin LEINER/Hildigund NEUBERT/Thomas A. SEIDEL/Ulrich SCHACHT (ed.): *Gott*

in the escalation of conflicts play an important role in the peace process. Abraham Lincoln's position in the American Civil War is a case in point. This was also the case in South Africa and in some countries of Eastern Europe. Interesting questions in this context would be: Is there a better quality of peace because people not interested in the escalation of conflicts can really foster reconciliation? Or is it just the opposite, because the systemic change is too soft? Furthermore, what is the role of institutions that are not part of the violent conflict in the process of transformation? What are the results when the actors of peace are not the actors of a conflict?

With these four approaches, the comparative and transcultural, the transdisciplinary, media and symbol-oriented interpretations and the Hölderlin-perspective, we hope to contribute to the further evolution of peace research. The awareness of practical experiences and disciplinary quality should engender a better distinction between scientific from the nonscientific approaches in Peace Studies. A global perspective will bring together people researching ways to foster lasting peace and harmony in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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Susan Flämig/Martin Leiner

## Introduction to the Present Volume

The title of the book, Latin America *between* conflict and reconciliation, allows for two interpretations: One reading reflects the view that the region's past is not only shaped by fierce conflicts but also by attempts of fostering reconciliation in the middle of conflict, as some of our contributions show. The second understanding points to the reconciliation that is yet to happen and this is linked to the broader issue of justice. Most of Latin America has left their pasts of dictatorial regimes behind and the national elites like to see their continent as a zone of peace, compared to other parts of the world.<sup>1</sup> The transition of the political systems from dictatorial to democratic is predominantly considered as completed. Dealing with Latin America's past means dealing with the human rights violations of the dictatorships of the 1960s–1980s. Truth Commissions were an essential instrument of uncovering past crimes. However, in many cases the truth came without justice; and perpetrators were not held accountable. There were no far-reaching vetting processes and the reparations policy was rather restrictive. The impunity that prolonged and delayed regime changes has been harshly criticised within the human rights discourse. In the last 5–10 years, there have been serious efforts to bring perpetrators to trial, the Pinochet case being one of the most prominent examples. Prosecutions now also play an important role in the transitional justice processes in Argentina, Peru and Uruguay.

However, justice is not only a matter of judicial processes, but is closely related to the precarious social realities that many Latin Americans still experience. In El Salvador, for example, historic injustices were the root cause for the civil war of the 1980s. The establishment of a democratic system, however, did not diminish the vast social divisions in the country. Instead, many people still experience deep socioeconomic insecurity, in addition to a general feeling of insecurity caused by excessive violence that is symptomatic of many places on the continent.

The increase instead of a diminution of violence in democratic systems gave rise to more research. Whereas empirical findings prove the rise of violent and criminal incidents like assaults, homicide, kidnapping, rape, drug trafficking and human trafficking, theoretical explanations and classifications of the

1 HERZ, Monica (2010), Concepts of Security in South America. In: International Peacekeeping 17/5, 598–612.

phenomena vary. Some scholars have described a shift of violence from the political sphere to the social sphere. The violent dichotomy of dictatorial regimes and the regime opposition no longer exists. Instead, it seems like violence became ubiquitous in many societies. This perspective carries the risk that politicians blame societal circumstances for the violence and assume no responsibility. It does not take into account that violence, despite its changed appearance, is a product of political (in-) action. It also goes along with the widespread assumption that conflicts in Latin America (except Colombia) belong to the past. This, in turn, has made the continent significantly less attractive to Peace Studies. With the present volume we want to contribute to raising new awareness for the continuing conflicts in the region. At the same time, options to condemn and overcome new and old conflicts are analysed, and examples of encouraging work for reconciliation are presented.

The volume comprises two sections: The first part is a collection of studies of Latin American cases that approach the topics of reconciliation and conflict resolution within and in the aftermath of dictatorships and civil wars from different perspectives and academic disciplines. The second, less comprehensive part is dedicated to experiences with reconciliation, conflict resolution and migration from a global and comparative perspective. The book includes several contributions that reflect on the Hölderlin perspective of reconciliation in the middle of dispute (Freudenberg, Rojas, and Tombs). Some contributions aim to deepen our theoretical understanding of reconciliation. They explore the diversity of interpretations of the term (Lira and Loveman) and elaborate the specific benefit of reconciliatory approaches for sustainable peace (Flämig, Hasenclever and Sändig, Thesnaar). Other articles concentrate on particular conflicts (Chacón and Mucha, Nanteuil).

At the end of the civil war in 1992 El Salvador underwent major security reforms which are central in Susan Flämig's contribution. Particularly police reforms were designed to generate a new democratic and service-oriented security force that reunites former combatants from opposing parties in one institution. The failure of the reforms in the long term is, among other reasons, due to the disregard of individual and collective values and beliefs of the police, she argues. According to Flämig, the renunciation of violence among security forces will not be achieved through a mere technocratic reform process, but requires a deeper transformation and rehumanization of the police forces.

The life and writing of Bishop Oscar Romero is still a source of inspiration for many people inside and outside El Salvador. His work in the middle of violent dictatorship and within a church that was traditionally loyal to the regime is portrayed by David Tombs. He shows how parts of the Catholic Church adopted a more confrontational approach to the authoritarian state and thus challenged the church to reorientate itself to social justice concerns during the 1970s and 1980s. Although Romero did not explicitly speak about

reconciliation, his desire to build a church that unites a socially divided society indicates not only his commitment to liberation, but also to justice-based reconciliation.

Matthieu de Nanteuil's article is by far the longest in the book. Nanteuil develops his politological and sociological analysis of the situation in Colombia in great detail and offers valuable insights from the French-speaking perspective on questions of conflict and peace. Scholars like Michael Foucault, Emile Durkheim (division of work) and Georges Bataille play a significant role in his argumentation, as well as Zygmunt Bauman. Its central thesis is that the Colombian conflict cannot be fully understood without recognising the country's aspiration to belong to the Western liberal tradition. At the same time, the main political players in Colombia rely on the continuous existence of armed conflicts, including the various forms of violence that are part of it, so that it is very difficult to develop an "ethic of social ties."

Beyond outlining the most salient characteristics of Colombian society, Nanteuil analyses the internal "divisions of labour", which create a paradoxical relationship between Colombian society and modernity. He concludes with some perspectives for an alternative vision of Colombian society.

Mariana Chacón and Witold Mucha analyse the role of indigenous movements within the transitional process to democracy in Bolivia and Peru. Chacón and Mucha show how in past conflicts as well as in contemporary politics leaders claimed and claim to speak for "the indigenous population", although in reality it is about a diverse range of groups with different interests. A louder "indigenous voice" opens a path for better participation in the political process, as the case of Bolivia shows. In Peru, in contrast, the majority of the indigenous groups have not benefited from any political measures concerning their rights. The authors point to the persisting risk of political instrumentalisation of the indigenous identities.

Against the background of political reconciliation proposals discussed in Latin America, and particularly in Chile, in the 1990s, Elizabeth Lira and Brian Loveman illustrate the different meanings of reconciliation derived from various cultural, religious, social and historical traditions. They trace the trajectory of the concept from its origins in Judeo-Christianity to a totalistic and perverted use under the Spanish inquisition to a more justice-oriented understanding of reconciliation within a theology of liberation. According to the authors, the overlapping and sometimes contradictory notions of the concept are still apparent in the post-dictatorship discourse. Therefore, the term continues to be susceptible to political instrumentalisation.

The Chilean Labour Union advocated human rights within a legal system that was continuously restricted by the military government, as Hugo Rojas points out in his contribution. He also shows how the complaints presented to the International Labor Organization during the dictatorship not only served as a legal strategy, but also represented an important historical record. It proves the detention, torture and murder of thousands of Chilean workers,

whose cases were acknowledged by the National Commission on Torture and Political Imprisonment in 2004 on the basis of these documents.

Katharina Freudenberg explores the human rights work in the Evangelical Church of the Río de la Plata (IERP) during the dictatorship in Argentina. She shows how in the middle of violent crimes and human rights violations the church provided victims with pastoral, social and judicial support. This church was part of the Ecumenical Human Rights Movement (MEHD) that sought to raise awareness on the practice of “disappearances” and was based on a theology of liberation. Its work included active help for affected family members as well as a documentation of the cases which was invaluable after the end of the dictatorship.

Kanan Kitani’s article deals with a rather exceptional transcultural topic: the migration of Brazilians to Japan and their religious life. In a country with less than 1 % of the population being Christian, the mainly Catholic migrants represent a crucial Christian group in Japan. Kitani examines the churches at which the Brazilians gather, with a particular focus on their general low visibility in Japanese society, their influence on the Japanese religious sphere, and their important social role for migrants.

In contrast to many countries in Latin America, in South Africa, not justice but reconciliation was at the heart of the post-Apartheid public discourse. The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the debates that evolved around it gave impetus to more research about the topic. Christo Thesnaar looks at reconciliation from a pastoral perspective. He considers both reconciliation and healing as deeply theological issues and proposes a shift within Christian pastoral theology from resolution-oriented approaches towards a hermeneutic, understanding-seeking approach to healing. The article also illustrates that healing is not necessarily limited to an individual and spiritual dimension as often assumed in European and North American theology. Healing is also a collective process of restoring harmony and thus ensuring the functioning of a community.

The book concludes with Andreas Hasenclever and Jan Sändig’s contribution. They give an overview of the emergence of the peacebuilding concept in the international arena and place reconciliation within this context. The authors contrast liberal, institution-centred approaches to peacebuilding with communitarian, community-centred models. Communitarian approaches bring the importance of reconciling divided societies to the centre stage. The liberal peacebuilding agenda, thus, needs to be complemented by a pro-active promotion of reconciliation. Such an approach, labelled as hybrid peacebuilding framework, unites liberal institutions and local social realities.

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In the last decades, many countries in Latin America underwent a transition from dictatorship to democracy. Truth commissions were an essential instrument of uncovering politically motivated crimes and serious human rights violations. However, in many cases truth came without justice, perpetrators were not held accountable, and the reparation policy was rather restrictive. The contributions presented here address the issue from a transdisciplinary perspective and focus on the past shaped by fierce conflicts but also by attempts of fostering reconciliation. The book suggests that reconciliation is not only relevant in the aftermath of armed conflicts, but can happen in the middle of dispute. It is being acknowledged that violent conflicts fuelled by economic inequality, impunity, and lack of rule of law are still on-going in Latin America. Reconciliation, thus, also needs to embrace present issues.

With contributions by M. Chacón, S. Flämig, K. Freudenberg, A. Hasenclever, K. Kitani, M. Leiner, E. Lira, B. Loveman, W. Mucha, M. de Nanteuil, H. Rojas, J. Sändig, C. Thesnaar, and D. Tombs.

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