

Issue 1/2025

Out of frame Conflicts without visibility

Deadline for abstracts: 10 September 2024

One of the most problematised circumstances in peace and conflict research is that certain conflicts, conflict types and conflict dynamics are less present and invisible. The general public talks about these conflicts as „forgotten“ conflicts and (sometimes) laments the consequences.

But it starts with the categorisation: What counts as a conflict in society and which conflicts are „forgotten“ as a result? Why are some conflicts widely discussed and others pushed out of the limelight? Which (economic, political and social) interests and who are responsible for this? Conflicts are therefore not invisible per se, but are (consciously or unconsciously) made invisible. Their visibility can also vary in terms of time and place.

What leads to conflicts not receiving individual, media, political or even intervention attention? For whom do conflicts seem forgotten or „forgettable“, for whom not? Which lines of conflict become recognisable in society, but also in peace and conflict research itself?

How do the degree of violence of a conflict, its (political) geography, the number of victims or external interests play a role here? Which forms of violence are not considered relevant, and which databases and indices therefore „produce“ which forms of visibility? What consequences do such - more or less - systematic „invisibilities“ have for the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the discipline, and what are the consequences for the concrete handling of conflicts and for local peace processes?

For issue 1/2025 of „Science and Peace“ (W&F), we are placing these questions at the centre of the issue. Contributions can deal with one of the possible questions below (not exhaustive).

All contributions should be based on a case study of conflicts and conflict dynamics that are currently little discussed in the German-speaking media and also in peace research.

Specifically, we are interested in contributions which:

- Analyse the role of war and conflict journalists, their (editorial) decision-making processes and their influence on conflict visibility and perception.

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- How is the visibility of conflicts „used“ politically and what effects does a greater or lesser degree of visibility have on the room for manoeuvre of the conflict actors involved? How do geopolitical interests and the intensification of a global system of confrontation play a role here?
- What role does the degree of asymmetry in a conflict play in whether it can become visible?
- What role do diaspora groups play in raising awareness of conflicts (advocacy work)?
- How do conflicts get onto the agenda of the international community of states and arenas? What exclusion principles or marginalisation strategies do political actors have here? How does a conflict become „UN-relevant“?

- Theoretical and practical reflection/criticism of scientific concepts, perspectives or approaches that contribute to the invisibilisation of conflicts on the basis of their epistemological interest. Which biases are epistemic? How do colonial continuities and other forms of violence based on power and domination manifest themselves?
- Which conflict types, issues or escalation levels are easier to lose focus of? Are there differences between conflicts of values, power or interests?
- Which (sub-)elements of a conflict are lost or „forgotten“, while others remain in focus („forgotten in the conflict“ or marginalised „edges“ of the conflict).
- Does the duration, history and previous intensity of a conflict influence its visibility and intensity of processing at a given point in time?
- Reflection on the methodology of so-called conflict or war databases and their influence on conflict visibility and perception.

- Do early warning, prevention, intervention and aftercare fail in the case of „forgotten“ conflicts - or to a different extent than in the case of more visible conflicts?
- Are „forgotten“ conflicts also unresolved conflicts? Or can they harbour greater potential for peace, as they are, for example, less interwoven with other interests?
- Analyses and assessments of the challenges in practical peace work due to less attention for „forgotten conflicts“: opportunity or risk?

W&F is an interdisciplinary peace studies quarterly. We welcome contributions from all fields of peace and conflict research, quantitative conflict and war research, peace work and peace education, and peace journalism. We also explicitly welcome contributions from students, young researchers and non-academic researchers.

Please send us your **abstract of max. 8,000 characters by 10 September 2024** to redaktion@wissenschaft-und-frieden.de.

After approval the contributions should be completed no later than 15 December 2024.

Please direct any questions to: David Scheuing (redaktion@wissenschaft-und-frieden.de)