‘Compliance control is largely absent from global health’

Gail Lythgoe and Christian J. Tams on the WHO as a ‘sophisticated’ but ‘thin’ framework of health governance and a debate on expert rule

‘Social inequalities become more apparent’

Clemens Eisenmann and Christian Meyer on wearing face masks during the Spanish influenza, Covid-19 diaries, forgotten pins and a constant breaching of everyday expectancies on global level

‘Child labour has long been regarded as natural’

Nina Schneider investigates child labour opponents in the Americas and zooms up from a biographical (private) and national level to a global perspective.


Migration Debates in Brazil: Christine Unrau writes a reflective travelogue, p. 15.

New fellow projects from Amya Agarwal, p. 18, and Catherine Hecht, p. 20.
Editorial

Dear Readers,

I very much hope that you are all safe, healthy and doing well, both professionally and privately, under the changed circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic. This issue of the Centre’s Quarterly Magazine deals with various aspects of the pandemic, from global health governance to implications for international conflict and peace.

Gail Lythgoe and Christian Tams analyse the WHO regime for global health governance and identify its main structural shortcomings in the interplay with other levels of governance. Clemens Eisenmann and Christian Meyer show how new practices like wearing a face mask challenge established interactional infrastructures and make social inequalities more apparent. Tobias Debiel and Johannes Vüllers review the Peace Report 2020, highlighting its assessment of implications of the Covid-19 pandemic for peace and human rights, including the expectations of the German government in particular. In the interview, the Centre’s Co-Director Tobias Debiel elaborates on current trends in peace research in Germany and highlights challenges for the future.

Nina Schneider and Christine Unrau sketch out their current research projects at the Centre. Nina Schneider highlights the scientific and social relevance of the topic of child labour in her historical analysis of ‘Child Labour Opponents in the Americas in Global Perspective, 1888–1938’. Christine Unrau focuses on the transformation of emotions as a pathway to societal change in her research on ‘Pity and Fear: Sentimental Education and Sentimental Propaganda in the Refugee Crisis’.

Further you can read about research projects of current fellows at the Centre and find reports on the Centre’s first online Käte Hamburger Lecture with Professor Orfeo Fioretos (Temple University), this year’s annual conference on ‘Communicative Power and Global Cooperation’, and our upcoming conference in October on ‘“Urgency” and “Responsibility” in Global Cooperation’.

Have a nice summer and stay healthy!

Matthias Schuler
Executive Director

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ISSN 2628-5142 (print)
ISSN 2629-3080 (online)
Multi-level Governance of Global Health: Lessons from Covid-19

Gail Lythgoe and Christian J. Tams

Many of us are experiencing Covid-19 as a resurgence of the state in our daily lives. The state is able to carry out activities that, at least in liberal Western democracies cherishing lean government, seemed impossible; it can bring economies to a halt, lock down and quarantine people, and close borders, even in Europe. States are at the forefront of our attention, and dramatically so, squeezing out international actors like the EU, UN or its specialized agencies. Commentators view Covid-19 response as ‘The Nation-State strikes back’, ending a decade of ‘anti-internationalism’.

This brief comment suggests a different perspective. We propose viewing the response to Covid-19 as a multi-layered regime of governing public health in operation. This regime integrates different levels of decision-making, from the global to the local; and states, rather than striking back, have always been central to it.

In the following we sketch out key features of this regime. Our focus is on the WHO and its governance framework, which we describe as sophisticated, but purposefully ‘thin’, informed by an ethos of governance by expertise. In the Covid-19 response, both features - sophistication and ‘thinness’ - are displayed. Contrary to a popular perception, the response does not mark a radical departure from pre-Covid-19 governance: for better or worse, we see a regime in action as envisaged and designed. Yet our ‘agnostic’ take is not an endorsement of the status quo. To bring that point home, we conclude by considering reform options post-Covid-19.

A sophisticated framework for global health governance

‘Sophisticated’ and ‘thin’ best describe the WHO framework for health governance. Established in 1946, following a century of inter-state collaboration against diseases, the WHO is the central institutional hub for global health governance with significant regulatory competence: Articles 21 and 22 of its Constitution grant the World Health Assembly quasi-legislative powers to adopt binding regulations. Among these, the 2005 International Health Regulations (IHRs) stand out as ‘the core instrument for regulating disease outbreaks with an international dimension’ (von Bogdandy and Villarreal: 6). They impose binding legal obligations upon states, supplemented by non-binding instruments, notably the 2011 Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework.

The ‘core instrument’s’ ambitious aims - ‘to prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international spread of disease’ (Article 2, IHRs) - are to be attained mainly through coordinating state responses. As in other fields of global governance (transnational crime, environmental protection), capacity-building is key: states are obliged to develop core public health capacities, including for example to detect, assess, notify and report ‘events’, and are obliged to develop and implement plans of action to ensure these core capacities are present and functioning (Article 5, 13, and Annex I, IHRs). Information-sharing is central, too: Articles 6 and 7 require states to share all relevant information with the WHO. States must establish National Focal Points and Contact Points for communicating and sharing information with the WHO (Article 4, Annex 1, IHRs). The functioning has been aptly described as ‘a hub-and-spoke model, where an international organization co-

The 72th session of the World Health Assembly (WHA) was held in Geneva, 20–28 May 2019.
ordinates the response to international health emergencies, even if states are the prime movers’ (Benton Heath: 7).

Occasionally, the ‘hub’ does more than coordinate. Notably, the WHO Director-General can declare a ‘public health emergency of international concern’ (PHEIC) and the outbreak of a pandemic. The relevance of these declarations is not easy to assess. Under the WHO framework, they do not result in heightened state obligations. However, they reflect the WHO’s power to frame the discourse, and regularly trigger national responses: in that sense, they are best seen as global ‘governance by information’ (von Bogdandy and Villarreal: 11).

In the WHO’s toolkit, ‘governance by information’ is supplemented by ‘governance through recommendations’. In its Article 18, the IHRs list measures states can adopt, including measures that have dominated the recent discourse, such as quarantine, contact-tracing, and travel bans. As recommendations, the WHO’s identification of suitable responses are non-binding; they may carry authority and states use them to justify domestic measures. However, the limits of WHO decision-making are clear: states not following recommendations are placed under a relatively modest duty to explain their conduct; moreover, Article 43 clarifies that states can impose stricter measures.

Finally, the WHO framework recognises the implications of public health measures on individual freedoms and cross-border trade, though it stops short of developing a fully-integrated system: Article 31 of the IHRs requires states to respect the ‘dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms’ of travellers affected by health measures; while Article 2 emphasizes the need to avoid ‘unnecessary interference with international traffic and trade’. These general formulae are supplemented by more precise rules flowing from other governance regimes, such as the WTO (eg limiting quotas) or international human rights treaties.

**The WHO as a thin governance regime**

While its framework is sophisticated, the WHO’s role in the fight against global diseases is thin. More than other institutionalized governance regimes, the WHO is designed to work with states, not against them - and only rarely by constraining them. While rule-making is centralized to a remarkable extent, the WHO’s toolkit in two important ways is limited. The first limitation is obvious: operational decisions remain the prerogative of national health authorities: ‘The WHO does not wield any police powers. Its Director-General is not the World Surgeon General. The WHO cannot impose “lockdowns”, nor distribute hospital beds globally, or even prescribe medical treatments to individual patients’ (von Bogdandy and Villarreal: 6).

But there is another aspect to the WHO’s thinness: its sophisticated regime works without developed enforcement mechanisms. Duties to report and explain are formulated, but their fulfilment largely left to states. While compliance control dominates governance in other fields (ie human rights, disarmament, or climate change), it is largely absent from health. To illustrate, there are no WHO treaty bodies competent to assess compliance, no general monitoring mechanism, no system of inspections; and the provisions for binding dispute settlement (see IHRs, Article 56) are a dead letter. The regime is based on the ‘optimistic premise … that, once expert science directs the way, all will follow its lead’ (Benvenisti: 6).

**The regime in action: sophisticated but thin Responses to Covid-19**

The Covid-19 response illustrates the sophistication and thinness of the global health regime. It is not difficult to find evidence of the WHO framework in operation. At a general level, the IHRs structure the response to Covid-19: the WHO is the obvious centre for coordinating responses, and for sharing information about infections and responses. The national focal points (mandated by the IHRs) facilitate the alert system and implement responses.

The WHO has certainly made use of its available powers. On 30 January 2020, the Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, declared a PHEIC; on 11 March 2020, Covid-19 was declared a pandemic. The WHO issued recommendations, which (with the notable exception of its advice against travel bans, to be discussed below) have tended to reflect the gravity of the situation: from late January 2020 onwards, this included advice to states to implement isolation and quarantine, and to close schools and non-essential workplaces. Judging from the German experience (to take just one example), these recommendations appear influential: hence regulations on quarantine measures for travellers entering Germany relied on the WHO’s guidance – suggesting that, governing by information, the WHO framed the discourse.

None of this suggests that the WHO got it right: it could have declared a PHEIC earlier. Although, in recommending restrictive measures, the WHO may have helped normalise far-reaching interference with personal liberties. It is too early to assess the impact of the WHO’s performance during the crisis. But its sophisticated regime appears to have operated as envisaged by the WHO Constitution and IHRs.

At the same time, the response to Covid-19 highlights the limited depth of the regime. That the WHO is not
intended to be the ‘world’s surgeon’ is clear: ‘front-line’ medical work is provided within domestic health systems. Less obviously, the response also highlights the flexibility built into the global health regime. Three aspects illustrate the point.

First, in responding to the WHO’s recommendations, states asserted their decision-making authority. While the WHO initially advised against it, many states imposed travel bans. Van Bogdandy and Villareal note ‘the widespread disregard by Member States’ - which may have led the WHO to adjust its recommendation subsequently.

Second, the WHO has struggled to respond to alleged violations, by states, of their obligations. Whether China did in fact, as required by Article 6 of the IHRs, promptly notify the WHO of ‘events that might constitute a public health emergency of international concern’ is a matter of contention, notably between the US and China. What is clear, is that the WHO has difficulty holding states accountable for reporting failures.

Third, moving out of the WHO regime, the response also illustrates the deliberate flexibility of the international legal frameworks that interact with public health, including trade and human rights. These grant states significant powers to derogate from obligations during emergencies. states made ample use of these powers: by early May 2020, 10 states derogated from the European Convention on Human Rights; 12 states did the same under the Inter-American human rights framework. As significantly, WTO members submitted a total of 190 notifications related to Covid-19. And there have been over 40 temporary export restriction notices of critical medical supplies such as PPE, to the World Customs Organisation.

To view all this as the return of the nation-state, re-asserting powers during crises, is one view; but it misses a central point: domestic decision-making power has always been central to the regime of global health governance. In going beyond recommendations and derogating from international treaties, states are making use of the system’s flexibility. And if states get away with violating obligations, they benefit from earlier decisions to create a system without sanctioning mechanisms.

Beyond thin governance? Global health governance post-Covid-19

The real question, we suggest, is not whether states are striking back against the global framework, but whether this framework - functioning as one could expect - needs to be re-designed.

This debate is only just beginning: criticism of the WHO’s handling of the Covid-19 pandemic is accompanied by calls to tackle the institution’s structural problems, from under-funding to the reliance on member states conducting self-assessment of IHR implementation. But reform requires state action: the global health regime is thin because states wanted it to be so – choosing to give it a coordinating role, or, during 2004-05, watering down more ambitious drafts of the IHRs. The response to Covid-19 exposes the limits of thin governance by expertise, which relies primarily on coordinating state action - but calls for reform are often at odds. Some want the WHO to ‘embrace politics’; others warn that the quest for a more political agenda will undermine the WHO’s ‘leadership in global health’, which is based on ‘its scientific, medical, and public health capabilities’. There are no easy answers to this debate. However, perhaps Covid-19 is a wake-up call for an organisation that for decades, has cultivated an ideal of expert rule: ‘The most important structural shortcoming of the IHR is the lack of enforceable sanctions’, noted the IHR Review Committee in the wake of the Swine Flu: a decade on, perhaps it is time for this shortcoming to be addressed.

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Usually, we expect life to be ordinary, that tomorrow we can continue to do the same things we used to do in the past, like riding a bus, going to work, doing shopping, meeting friends, picking up the kids from school, and so on (cf. Sacks 1984). In these ordinary affairs, we generally do not fundamentally question how to greet a close friend, how to move through a public space, or how to stand in a subway or bus. The interactional infrastructure (‘routines’) that we rely on to accomplish these activities is taken for granted and familiar to us.

However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic we now observe a constant breaching of our everyday expectations on a global level. Our most basic interactional infrastructure has become destabilized. In this text, we will elucidate some of these challenges, focusing on one new practice: The wearing of a face mask. In doing so, different dimensions of the interactional infrastructure of local and global cooperation will become evident.

During the Spanish influenza of 1918–1919 wearing face masks was introduced as a novel public health practice and ‘gained considerable popularity as an emblem of public spiritedness and discipline’ (Tomes 2010: 56). Tomes (2010: 59) also recounts failures, like the Mayor of San Francisco letting his mask dangle in public. A newspaper from 1918 reports: ‘The average man wore the mask slung to the back of his neck until he came in sight of a policeman, and most people had holes cut into them to stick their cigars and cigarettes through’ (Cohn 2020). While face masks vanished quickly in the US, they persisted in Japan and became – especially in the 1990s – embedded as a general protective practice and part of everyday routines, similarly in Thailand, Vietnam and some other East Asian countries (Burgess/Horii 2012). A study about Hong Kong highlights how positive connotations of mask-wearing during the SARS outbreak 2003, like civic responsibility, have later shifted to stigmatizations, correlated with a person’s negative attitudes (Siu 2016). After having been a sign of protest in 2019, in 2020, ‘in response to the crisis, Hong Kongers spontaneously adopted near-universal masking on their own, defying the government’s ban on masks’ (Tufekci 2020).

Newly emerging practices of mask-wearing not only concern civic responsibility, the problem of covering the face in public for political reasons, or governmental responsibilities to give proper examples of ‘social distancing’, but also the troubles involved in getting accustomed to unfamiliar body techniques and practices. Potentially wrong uses of face masks make their preventive benefits highly controversial, so that in Australia ‘the routine use of face masks in the community is not recommended’ by the Australian Department of Health.

Katila, Gan and Goodwin (2020: 17) have shown that in some public political encounters during Covid-19, ‘tactile practices for maintaining social bonds are so deeply rooted that they are prioritized over ‘following the rules’ of hygiene and health, even in this high-stakes situation.’ Video footage of politicians shows
several situations where new rules were breached by the same individuals who had announced them minutes earlier, pointing towards the recalcitrance of everyday bodily practices.

Practical troubles involved in learning new practices are particularly challenging in everyday interactions. Duck and Rawls (2020: 7) point out that ‘grocery stores became a public focal point for learning social-distancing and mask-wearing practices, and for observing coordinated action being worked out in real time as stores adjusted their policies to COVID-19.’ The following ethnographic observations are written by a customer of a supermarket in Southern Germany (April 2020), who had left his house after three weeks of quarantine, wearing a face mask for the first time.

Entering the shop, at the bakery display I say hello and point towards a pretzel: ‘I’d like this one, with less salt, please.’ The woman quickly packs a different piece. ‘No, sorry, I meant that one’, I say, pointing again towards the desired item behind the glass. She chooses a new one, swiftly replacing it. ‘Uhm, no …’ She sighs behind her mask, I add ‘Uh… the one without salt’, which apparently she hadn’t heard me say before: ‘You could have told me from the beginning’. Glimpsing at some sweat beads on her forehead, I start thinking about how difficult it must be for her to work with the mask and apologize. I continue to the vegetable section, wondering how the interaction has gone wrong. Slowly realizing that she wasn’t able to see me smiling with a friendly face, while I wasn’t able to read her clues for getting annoyed. Even hearing was affected by the mask.

How to choose a ripe avocado, that hasn’t gone bad, without palpatating it? Forcing myself to put it in my basket, I manoeuvre through the narrow corridors of the shop, trying to keep my distance, waiting for people to pass. While trying to make sense of the directional and distancing signs on the floor, I notice, the mask is impairing my vision: I’m wearing it too high over my nose. How to correct it, since it shouldn’t be touched after having been in contact with different objects? I decide to leave it, struggling to figure out the best directional approach to the queue. A little strained, at the open end of the new plastic wall, I start packing my goods, insert my bank card and type in the pin. Wrong, apparently. I try to adjust the angle of the cash machine. Since it is blocked by the improvised plastic wall, it doesn’t move, and the wall also limits positioning myself. Tilted to the side, I lean over even farther, trying to see the numbers, while looking over my mask. Wrong again. Only one more try. I can’t think straight – the 4 digits seem gone. The salesperson understandingly offers a solution: ‘Don’t worry. You can leave your goods here on the side, there is a bank over there.’ I am grateful for her help and outside, take a quick breath of air – without the mask. Having adjusted the mask and standing in front of an ATM, I have no troubles to remember my pin. Embarrassed, I return to the shop, where the salesperson, despite the long queue, kindly downplays my failure helping me to save face: ‘No worries, these are difficult times for all of us.’

The account highlights some of the new interactional work that essential personnel are faced with aside from endangering themselves, being unable to retreat to ‘home office.’ These new interactional and embodied challenges are not only related to their own work and protective equipment, but also include dealing with failures, insecurities, and bewilderments of customers. They provide re-assurance and guidance to slow, disoriented, confused and ‘difficult’ customers. They engage in mutual facework in times when wearing face masks confuse counterparts in reading emotions. In this sense, the bakery interaction shows how dependent co-present situations are upon the established and trusted interactional infrastructure for accomplishing mutual understanding and cooperation (cf. Goodwin 2017).

Modifications such as vision impairment not only affect the perception of directions and tasks of coordination, but, as Garfinkel (2002) has shown with inverted lenses, also unveil that cognitive processes depend on practical being-in-the-world. Once the mask was adjusted the ‘forgotten’ pin was easily recovered by routine typing movements of the fingers on the visible number field.

Accordingly, in transcultural (‘microglobal’) interactions, new practical conditions also produce clashes...
between different implicit presuppositions and assumptions of normality, as an example of an ethnographer who had grown up in China demonstrates. She reports, how she was wearing a mask – accustomed to the practice – with ease at home, but struggled, when, at the end of March, her American roommates asked whether it would make her feel safer if they also wore masks in the kitchen, wondering whether she was imposing her standards upon them. However, evaluations are changing. Masks, perceived as judgmental or inadequate one day, and difficult to acquire and creatively homemade the next, have transformed into a symbol for showing care and civic responsibility, being commodified and controversially politicized henceforth. The way these meanings develop depends on their practical and public uses in social interactions.

Therefore, when the interactional infrastructure of established embodied forms of cooperation becomes precarious, various forms of social inequalities become more apparent. A diary writer from Switzerland who is visually impaired notes her problems to assess the ‘right’ distance from other people. What might not be obvious at first is her trouble recognizing the signs given off by others that indicate the directions in which they are going. She is worried what the people in her village might think, when she is not initiating the sidestepping correctly, seeing her perhaps as arrogant. Thus, she decided to always carry her blind person’s cane. Masks also interfere with speaking and hearing, and persons relying on lip-reading are impaired in their interactional possibilities.

Furthermore, the interactional infrastructure of mask-wearing relates to moral evaluations of reciprocal perception in transcultural situations. In the beginning of March, one diary writer – seeing for the first time in her life a Chinese-speaking woman wearing a mask in Switzerland – reports how she caught herself looking at her with doubt. This was joined by others: ‘She got looks from all the people around her and quickly removed the mask.’ Mask-wearing was at first identified as something ‘Asian’ and oftentimes entangled with sinophobic sentiments regarding the ‘Chinese virus’, as Trump calls it. Another example refers to stores in Washington D.C., where Duck and Rawls (2020) observed how customers refused to accept instructions on corona regulations by Black low-wage essential workers, hence making forms of (implicit) racism visible.

Thus, the Covid-19 crisis does not only make taken for granted infrastructures of everyday life visible and produces new challenges as well as practical solutions for global cooperation on the interactional level. It also introduces new practical resources and modalities for the perpetuation of social inequalities that might be worth being questioned.

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In the Shadow of the Pandemic: Four Trends Based on the Peace Report 2020

Tobias Debiel and Johannes Vüllers

The Peace Report 2020 identifies the consequences and risks of the corona pandemic for peace and human rights. It postulates expectations demanding the German government to cooperate closely with the EU in order to reassume international responsibility.

The Covid-19 pandemic has dominated the world events in recent months. Indeed, the effects are being felt globally. They are endangering the cohesion and stability of numerous societies. Meanwhile, other threats to peace are overshadowed by the pandemic and have disappeared from public perception. The Peace Report 2020, published by leading German peace research institutes, addresses both aspects: It identifies the new challenges posed by the pandemic and calls for medium- and long-term issues, such as climate change, to be kept high on the political agenda. In view of the increasing geopolitical rivalry between the USA and the People’s Republic of China, it is clear that Europe must solve the crises in a spirit of solidarity and partnership or risk losing its international influence.

Our starting points for this contribution are the analyses of the Peace Report 2020 and corresponding discussions with German parliamentarians and ministry staff. Building on this, we highlight four trends which we believe are central to the interface of peace and development policy in 2020. In July of this year, the German government, with its simultaneous presidency of the EU Council and the UN Security Council, has the unique opportunity to influence future developments in Europe and the world during this challenging situation.

1 Socio-economic disruptions as a result of the pandemic

The far-reaching measures many countries have introduced in response to the pandemic pose difficult socio-economic challenges for weaker states. Especially the particularly poor are affected, whether they work as day labourers or live in slums and favelas. It is foreseeable that the health systems in weak states will be overstretched. Moreover, additional economic disruptions can contribute to a perceived lack of prospects in large parts of the population. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 400 million jobs have been cut worldwide since the beginning of the crisis. If state institutions fail to cope with the crisis, it could result in an increase of everyday violence.

The German government has recognized that it must make a sustained commitment as part of an EU aid package. At the same time, solidarity is needed not only in Europe but also globally. Thus, we need European measures, such as those demanded by German Development Minister Gerd Müller for Africa and the Middle East. In view of the additional financial requirements, military expenditure needs to be put to the test. For example, German spending has increased by 12 percent to 47.9 billion euros – even though Russia’s military expenditure is declining.

2 Strengthened trends towards ‘democratic backsliding’

In many countries, restrictive lockdowns have considerable repercussions on the freedom of assembly and opinion. It is to be feared that the trend of ‘democratic backsliding’ or autocratization, observed in recent years, will be intensified and deepened. The aim of stopping the spread of the virus often leads to serious

1 https://friedensgutachten.de/ (30.06.2020). The editors of the Peace Report are: Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), Peace Research Institute Frankfurt Member of the Leibniz Association (HSFK), Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH), Institute for Development and Peace at the University of Duisburg-Essen (INEF).


infringements on basic civil rights. Particularly at risk are democratic rights in states in which governments were already putting basic democratic values at risk prior to the pandemic.

Covid-19 has admittedly halted a mega-trend for a few months: the significant increase in mass protests in the last decade. However, the anti-racism protests in the USA and numerous Western industrialized countries, triggered by the violent death of George Floyd, have shown that the interruption will be temporary. Dissatisfaction with excessive or inadequate pandemic control can even lead to an increase in protests. The same applies in the event of economic disruptions, which are likely to affect the most vulnerable social classes. These developments will pose a major challenge for years to come, specifically for already weak states. Unfortunately, the German government currently lacks strategic guidelines on how it should react to protest movements and the political upheavals they trigger.

3 Germany should play the role of an ‘honest broker’

Fighting in the ongoing wars continues, despite the UN Secretary-General’s call for a global ceasefire. Global crisis diplomacy needs to be revived after being limited to a skeleton service due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the past decade, Germany has been involved in conflict mediation only very selectively, for example in the Iran nuclear agreement or the Ukraine crisis. The Libya Conference in January 2020 proved that the German government has international stature when diplomatic forces are pooled. This impetus must be continued, especially with regard to the conflicts in Libya, Syria and Yemen.

At the same time, the Federal Government will only be able to strengthen its position as an honest broker if its arms export policy meets high standards. However, the German government approved a new record level of arms exports in 2019 amounting to more than eight billion euros. Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt, three countries that are heavily involved in Libya, received a significant number of arms from Germany. The human rights situation in those three countries urgently requires a change in arms export policy.

4 Climate change is a risk multiplier for violent conflicts

The verifiable effects of climate change on violent conflicts have so far been limited. However, the fact that climate change is a stress factor and risk multiplier in situations that are already conflict-prone is undisputed, a relation that will likely intensify alongside global warming. This is particularly true in regions where living conditions are already poor and institutional structures fragile, notably in sub-Saharan Africa or Afghanistan.

Early warning and crisis prevention systems as well as the analysis of peace-relevant impacts of climate change ought to be further developed, particularly in cooperation with regional organizations. It is important to strengthen local structures, for example in the event of impending violent conflicts between pastoralists and farmers or in the dispute over water resources. Germany should use its chairmanship of the UN Security Council to work out adaptation strategies for climate fragile regions in collaboration with their respective representatives. In addition, domestic economic stimulus measures must simultaneously follow the dictates of climate compatibility and be accompanied by a reduction in emissions.

The Peace Report

The Peace Report is the annual publication of BICC (Bonn International Center for Conversion), the Leibniz Institute Hessian Foundation for Peace and Conflict Research (HSFK/PRIF), the Institute for Development and Peace (INEF) and the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH).

Since 1987, the Peace Report has been analyzing current violent conflicts, identifying trends in international foreign, security and development policy and providing policy recommendations.

With its clear recommendations, the Peace Report transfers scientific findings into practical instructions for action. Interdisciplinary teams of authors from political science, sociology, ethnology, physics and area studies work together on the chapters, bringing different perspectives to bear.

The topics are divided into five annually recurring subject areas: ‘Armed Conflicts’, ‘Sustainable Peace’, ‘Armed Dynamics’, ‘Peace and Security Institutions’ and ‘Transnational Security Risks’. In the additional chapter, ‘Focus’, a topic of current conflict events is examined in greater depth. The Peace Report is funded by the German Foundation for Peace Research.

The Peace Report is published in German by transcript-Verlag. The print version (ISBN: 978-3-8376-5381-0) is available free of charge (open access), also at www.friedensgutachten.de. An English version of the statement (‘Stellungnahme’) can be found on pages 14–23.
The peace movement of the 1980s has shaped and motivated peace research in Germany. Does this still play a role today?

The normative orientation actually played a prominent role in the first decades. It is still relevant today, but more in the sense of a minimal consensus. This includes the primacy of constructive conflict management, the gradual transformation of structures of violence, and the acceptance of enforcement measures at best as ‘ultima ratio’ and within the framework of international law. Some topics of the 1980s, such as nuclear deterrence or disarmament, lost importance in the 1990s and 2000s. However, they are currently regaining importance due to increasing geopolitical rivalries and the cancellation of arms control agreements, such as the 1987 Treaty on Intermediary Range Nuclear Forces (INF).

What has happened to German peace research since the end of the Cold War, how do you assess this development?

Peace research has become significantly more professional and internationalized in recent decades. It is still characterized in Germany by qualitative methods, but at the same time there are some strong locations with a quantitative focus, such as Konstanz. The future probably belongs to the multi-method mix that has, for example, been pursued in Duisburg peace research, particularly in the areas of state collapse, non-violent resistance and social protests.

Should peace research advise politics?

Definitely yes. In Germany there is a successful mix of basic research and application-oriented research. The Peace Report is a prominent example of policy competence in political Berlin. We need something similar at European level. Peace research can only influence policy-makers if it acknowledges the actual logic of political practice. On the other hand, reflection and also fundamental criticism of structures of violence are needed. Insofar, policy advice is a balancing act.

Where will peace research focus in the future?

I would like to highlight three challenges: The devastating wars and conflicts in the Near and Middle East have shown that we need to link classical civil war research more closely with the analysis of regional and international great power politics. Secondly, the increasing dependence on internet and communication technologies poses the danger of external destabilization: civil, democratic and military infrastructures must become more resilient to cyber threats. Last but not least, climate change must be kept in mind. It represents a risk multiplier that is likely to affect the poorest and war-torn regions of the world in the future.

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The topic of child labour is of high scientific and social relevance. According to the most comprehensive and recent International Labour Organization (ILO) study on child labour, an estimated total of 218 million children, aged 5-17, were involved in employment worldwide.\(^1\) Covering results from 2012 to 2016, the report reveals that about 152 million of these children are not working voluntarily but are victims of child labour; almost half of them – 73 million – in hazardous child labour. Hazardous child labour, as established by the ILO Convention No. 182, includes the four worst forms of child labour deemed intolerable: slavery; prostitution; drug trafficking; and hazardous labour that is harmful to children.\(^2\) While it is true that child labour is most common in Africa, Asia and the Americas, it is also a problem in Europe.\(^3\) In absolute terms, most victims of child labour (72.1 million) can be found in Africa followed by Asia (62.1 million), the Americas (10.7 million), Europe and Central Asia (5.5 million) and the Arab States (1.2 million). In terms of prevalence, Africa takes the lead with 1 in 5 children found to be engaged in child labour (19.6%). In other regions, the percentage varies between 7% and 3% – 7.4% (or 1 in 14) in Asia, 5.3% (or 1 in 19) in the Americas, 4.1% (or 1 in 25) in Europe and Central Asia, and 2.9% (1 in 35) in the Arab states. 58% of working children are boys, who also account for 62% of children in hazardous labour. Overall, the number one sector for child labour is agriculture (71%) (including fishing and herding and both for subsistence and commercial reasons), followed by services (17%) and the industrial sector (12%), which includes mining.\(^4\) Both the ILO and UNICEF have warned that in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, child labour will increase due to a rise in poverty. Studies suggest that in some countries, a poverty rise of one percentage point may lead to a 0.7% increase or more in child labour.\(^5\) Overall, combating child labour remains a pressing task for global cooperation.

Historically, children have always worked, from antiquity to present day. It was only in the nineteenth century, in the wake of industrialization and its discontents, that some protagonists emerged and started to systematically denounce child labour. Child labour – hitherto considered as necessary, desired and natural – gradually turned into a social problem. In Britain, protagonists like Lord Shaftsbury started to mobilise support for child labour regulation. By the 1920s and 1930s, most countries had passed first national child labour laws. While much of the existing literature on child labour and the struggle for its regulation adopts national perspectives, focusing particularly on Britain, the United States (US), and other regions of the so-called ‘Global North’ or ‘West’, comprehensive and comparative child labour histories of the so-called ‘Global South’ are scarce.\(^6\) What is lacking is a system-
atte investigation, comparison, and entangled history of key protagonists across the globe, their diverse and ambiguous motivations and interests, and their campaigning strategies, both within and, most importantly, across societies. If views about children and child labour varied within and across regions, how and why did child labour develop into a key concern in various places, and ultimately a global concern, between the 1880s and 1930s? Who were the protagonists that elevated the issue of child labour to a public concern and subject for state regulation in so many countries across the globe? Anti-child labour activism involved a variety of individuals worldwide, yet the question of how and to what extent they cooperated nationally or interacted as a broader movement remains understudied.

My project ‘Child Labour Opponents in the Americas and their Campaigns in global perspective, 1888-1938’ seeks to bridge this gap. Funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), it aims to provide the first global history of diverse, locally grounded, yet nationally and often globally connected child labour opponents in the Americas, their motivations, and campaigns at the turn of the twentieth century, the heyday of a struggle for the enduring federal regulation of child labour in many parts of the world. Drawing on 17 archives from the US, Brazil, and Switzerland, it examines a more loosely institutionalised global network mainly composed of members of civil society and professionals. Their cooperation in form of manifold legal, conceptual, and policy exchanges paved the way for the first national child labour laws to be introduced in most countries by the 1920s and 1930s. It also paved the way for supranational campaigns against child labour, in particular by the ILO from 1919 onwards. Their activism may be described as polycentric; having multiple actors including non-state actors, a lack of clear hierarchy or arbiter, and operating across various scales including the local, national, and global sphere.7

My research explores the ambit of exemplar anti-child labour protagonists by asking: To what extent did they operate on a local, national, or global level, and if so, what was their distinctive contribution on these different scales? It investigates how selected activists were both the receptors and initiators of globalising policies, ideas, and discourses. Departing from a bottom-up perspective (local and national involvement)

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and zooming out to a global viewpoint, it explores the tension between individual contributions and collective action by comparing child labour opponents from different societies and tracing their manifold entanglements. Focusing on the period between the 1880s and 1930s, the study seeks to answer the following question: Does it make sense to speak of child labour opponents across the world as a global movement or of multiple movements with shared characteristics and a similar timing?

The study adopts a distinctive analytical and narrative design. Like a camera, it scales up from a biographical (private) and urban level to the national, and global stage (child labour abolition as a global movement). Rather than merely accumulating knowledge about national actors, these exemplar activists and their achievements are set in a broader context. Combining the method of qualitative comparison and entangled history with a biographical and media-focused approach in an innovative way, it studies 7 localised yet nationally and globally entangled anti-child labour activists who operated in Rio/São Paulo (Brazil) and New York City (US).

My exemplar child labour opponents include the philanthropist Jacob A. Riis (1849–1914), child rights activist Florence Kelley (1859–1932), and photographer Lewis W. Hine (1874–1940)—all based in the US; and the Brazilian Minors’ judge, Mello Mattos (1864–1934), medical doctor, Moncorvo Filho (1871–1944), and industrial leader, Jorge Street (1863–1944). In addition, addresses the US and Brazilian labour movements at large (in the case of the US, in particular, the trade union leader Samuel Gompers) and children’s own agency. One of the protagonists, Lewis W. Hine, worked for the National Child Labour Committee (the first nation-wide anti-child labour organisation in the US) and left an impressive archive of between 5,000 and 7,000 pictures (estimates vary). Meanwhile, these photographs have become global icons against child labour.

An historical study on global cooperation has been scarce at the Centre and my project seeks to bridge this gap. It also seeks to advance the Centre’s research thematically (child labour) and empirically (drawing on primary sources from 17 archives worldwide) as well as methodologically (combining a comparative and biographical approach with entangled history and media history; and zooming up from the biographical to the global level). Studying global anti-child labour opposition—I hope—may help spread optimism; child labour was successfully combatted.
‘Not just anyone can enter our house’, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro declared as he withdrew Brazil from the Global Compact on Migration, thereby echoing a metaphorical reference to the nation as a house in need of protection against intruders which has been widely used by right-wing populists. In spite of this rhetoric of closure, Brazil still plays a central role in the reception of refugees in the Americas, especially since the deterioration of the Venezuelan crisis. Besides Venezuelans, Brazil also hosts refugees and forced migrants from Colombia, Haiti, Angola, Syria, Lebanon, the Congo and many other countries.

In this context, civil society organizations play an important role, as do many universities which contribute to the academic consortium dedicated to Sergio Vieira de Mello, for example through access to higher education, facilitated recognition of diplomas, Portuguese language courses and legal clinics. Another important pillar of refugee integration is constituted by the advocacy work and support of NGOs.

As I could observe during a research stay at the Federal University of ABC in the São Paulo metropolitan area, some protagonists have developed an elaborate concept of raising awareness for refugees’ situation. One example is the NGO ADUS, founded in 2010 and located at the historical city centre of São Paulo. ADUS, in Latin, means ‘access’ or ‘way’ and that is exactly the organization’s goal: ‘Pave refugees’ and forced migrants’ way into a new life in Brazil. They combine advocacy work and direct support in an interesting way: While their main focus is on providing support for refugees’ integration into the job market, they also organize language classes in Spanish or French taught by refugees, as well as intercultural workshops.

At the same time, they emphasize the necessity to reach as many Brazilians as possible and counter prejudice against refugees and forced migrants. As ADUS director Marcelo Haydu pointed out during my visit, it is essential that this exercise of changing people’s minds does not recur to strategies of victimization. Apart from the lack of agency for migrants that victimization entails, it would also be prompted with the question ‘What about Brazilians?’, given that there are regions in the country where hunger is still a daily reality. The focus, according to Marcelo, should be on retrieving Brazil’s own history as a destination of immigration over the centuries, as well as emphasizing that refugees are simply persons. What happened to them could happen to anyone.

Interestingly, the ADUS director also pointed out that for him, the task of presenting the personhood of refugees while emphasizing their agency and voice,
requires a lot of resources and should therefore be mainly undertaken by governments. In that regard he pointed to a social media campaign led by the Dilma Roussef government in 2016/2017, at the initiative of CONARE (Comitê Nacional para os Refugiados), an interministerial commission dedicated to refugees. While the texts and images were well done, they never went beyond the digital sphere, a fact that attests to the ‘half-heartedness’ and lack of commitment to the issue of refugees also on the part of the former government.

So in 2017, ADUS, in cooperation with other partners, promoted the project *Refugiados. Um lar chamado São Paulo* (Refugees. A home called São Paulo). It was held in the Shopping Centre ’3’, on Paulista Avenue, in the city centre of São Paulo between March and May 2017 and featured various events such as musical concerts and shows. The core of the project, however, was constituted by an exposition of large format black and white photographs of refugees who had arrived in São Paulo over the previous years and had been in contact with ADUS. The frontal portraits, which were shot by photographer Felipe Grespan, had their own aesthetics, reminiscent of those that were part of conceptual artist Jochen Gerz’s exposition *The Gift*. Gerz’s project featured black and white portraits of ordinary citizens, including homeless people, of San Francisco (US), Le Fresnoy (France) and Dortmund (Germany). In both artistic projects, the images offered to the viewer’s gaze the close-ups of individuals with their facial expression, which articulated moods or feelings, but – with the exception of some details of their clothing – no further contextual elements. So, contrary to familiar images which show refugees either during the hardship of their journeys or in dismal conditions after their arrival, the São Paulo exposition abstracted from these contexts. While some facts and figures on refugee and asylum in Brazil were provided, the focus lay on the individuals.

This can also be read as a shift from refugees’ past to their present moment as one of openness and opportunity. It also resonates with statements by refugees who say they are ‘tired’ of telling the stories of their flight, because it can be re-traumatizing and leave them ‘tokenized and disempowered’. By contrast, the exhibition, as already expressed in its title, focused on what the refugees had in common in the present, namely that they had found ‘um lar’ – a home – in São Paulo.

There is a parallel between the title and aesthetics of the exposition and a music video for the song *New Home* by the reggae/balkan/folk band Bukahara: While the song tells the story of leaving one’s home and finding a new one, the video clip portraits persons from various places, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, South Korea, Syria, Azerbaijan and Brazil, who sing along in front of dark green canvasses. Only in the last section of the video, the camera zooms out and reveals a bigger picture of where and how they found a new home, some in a nicely furnished apartment, some in their own little corner stores, some in more precarious and humble surroundings. Some, importantly, have not (yet) found a home at all and are stuck in refugee shelters.

This approach constitutes an alternative to pragmatist philosopher Richard Rorty’s concept of ‘sentimental education’ (Rorty 1993: 122), according to which...
sympathy with distant others can only be aroused through ‘sad sentimental stories’ (ibid: 118). As attested to by the iconic images of Alan Kurdi and Valeria Ramirez, such visual narratives can in fact be very powerful, but at the same time raise questions of hypocrisy, political instrumentalization and voyeurism, especially when black and brown bodies are exposed in unceremonious ways.

As Bukahara and ADUS show, stories that move need not necessarily be sad and images need not be shocking. Of course, the (potential) happy end stories can also be criticized for various reasons: They may involve an aestheticization of suffering, spare the viewer the confrontation with the harsh reality which causes flight and even increase the ‘salutary power’ of what Didier Fassin (2012: 252) called ‘humanitarian reason’. ‘Salutary power’, in this context, refers to a certain relief which may follow from an exclusive focus on individuals which obscures the view for the structural and systemic injustices that cause suffering. If seen through this lens, the context of the exposition, inside a shopping mall, could be seen as further evidence for the commercialized or ‘feel-good’ form of consciousness for refugees’ plight, which is adopted as a lifestyle rather than a conviction (cf. also Heins/Unrau 2018). While all this cannot be ruled out in principle, the exposition by ADUS should not be mechanically charged with nurturing hypocrisy. After all, it puts refugees – and not self-stylized helpers – at its center. Also, it is only one aspect of the support and advocacy work that ADUS is doing. Finally, and more generally, fears of being charged with hypocrisy should not prevent anyone from speaking out – and acting – on behalf of others: Hypocrisy, as Judith Shklar (1984: 57) reminds us, is not the worst of vices. Cruelty is, such as the one involved in closing one’s doors to those who have a need and a right to be let in.

References


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Imprint

Global Cooperation Research - A Quarterly Magazine
Vol. 2, No. 2, July 2020
ISSN 2628-5142 (print)
ISSN 2629-3080 (online)

Published by
Universität Duisburg-Essen
Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Cooperation Research (KHK/GCR21)
Schifferstr. 44
47059 Duisburg (Germany)
Tel: +49 (0)203 379-5230
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Editor, concept, layout: Martin Wolf

Authors contributing to this issue: Amya Agarwal, Angela Benkhadda, Tobias Debiel, Clemens Eisenmann, Catherine Hecht, Gail Lythgoe, Sabrina Pischer, Nina Schneider, Matthias Schuler, Christian J. Tams, Christine Unrau, Johannes Vüllers

Published quarterly
Webspace: www.gcr21.org
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Clash of Imaginaries in Conflict and Resistance: Bonds of Shared Pain versus Strategic Partnerships

Amya Agarwal

The evolving and promising scholarship on the alternative study of global cooperation moves beyond the state-centric and structured discourses, entailing an inter-disciplinary approach. Multiple studies in this direction show the possibility of studying unstructured forms of cooperation through a political-sociological lens. The focus on both practices and reflexivity of actors helps in addressing the gaps in the traditional understanding of cooperation through a state lens. Furthermore, the idea of imaginaries provides a foundation to understand how these alternative pathways are shaped.

During my initial months as a fellow at the Centre for Global Cooperation Research, I was first introduced to the concept of imaginaries and its potential to create alternative pathways of global cooperation. Taylor’s idea of the social imaginary particularly found relevance to my research on the development of common ethics and practices in resistance and conflict. The formation and organization of affective communities are based on ‘the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations’ (Taylor, 2004). Likewise, solidarities and alliances between actors in conflict and resistance are based on expectations and anticipations of a shared vision for the future. While some of the future imaginaries grounded in conflict and resistance practices are concrete and easily discernible, there are others that are more nuanced and implicit. To explore these contrasting imaginaries, I discuss on the one hand, the shared imaginaries of resisters in Kashmiri and Palestinian conflicts. In doing so, I address the commonalities in the imaginaries with respect to three key aspects: post-conflict life, shared experiences of pain; and shared religious goals. The temporal proximities and affective solidarities across resistance movements resulting out of shared pain and resonating experiences of oppression and marginalization are highlighted in this study. Such implicit bonds create an envisioned alternative that is not a part of the superimposed and practical imaginations but a utopia devoid of pain and oppression.

On the other hand, the research gives a contrasting view of the shared post-conflict imaginaries of the states involved – India and Israel – that shape the pathways of their cooperation. These pathways are founded on an attempt to erase alternative imaginaries and hegemonize their shared vision. The research looks at the behaviour and mutual learning of the state actors - in terms of counter-insurgency practices, training methods and psychological warfare from the perspective of resistance movements. These actors are fairly attentive to the similarities between the two contexts, and indeed their strong strategic partnership as well as their cooperation on counter-terrorism are primarily driven by that understanding.

Both the respective imaginaries are suggestive of the performative effects of the reflexivity of the actors involved. In focussing specifically on the practice and finding the meanings of contrasting imaginaries embedded within them, this work attempts to make an important theoretical intervention in debates about global cooperation. Further, ethnographic mapping of the transmission and translation of ideas and things from one context to another also provide methodological nuance to the expansive literature on global cooperation.

Bonds of Shared Pain: Kashmir and Palestine

In July 2015, I was struck by the number of times ‘Gaza’ and ‘Palestine’ were referred by my interviewees in Kashmir. In addition, graffiti on walls that read ‘We stand with Gaza’ encouraged me to delve deeper into the perceived commonalities. Some interviewees responded saying ‘they are miles away but suffering just like us.’ The (perceived) shared pain of continued oppression and marginalization, along with a similar religious and post-conflict vision, highlight the temporal proximities among people in both these conflicts. The resistance movements also represent shared goals of territorial autonomy and statehood, where people’s involvement and participation are rooted in ethno-nationalist and religious-political frameworks.
The circulation of ideas and practices of resistance in Kashmir and Palestine are suggestive of implicitly shared imaginaries of freedom. In 2008, for instance, the conflict in Kashmir saw a new kind of weapon: stones. Stone-pelting spread widely among young resist- ers in that year and has ever since been an important weapon of choice. The inspiration came from Palestine, where stone-pelting had become a regularized practice since the first intifada. However, this is not the only practice that the conflict in Kashmir borrows from Palestine. The graffiti on the walls, street art, slogans, and other forms of the ‘weapons of the weak’ demonstrate a remarkable similarity between resistance in Palestine and Kashmir. The mobility of practices can also be extended to motherhood unfolding as a significant political act in both these conflict spaces, where women help in reclaiming the masculinity of men - by deploying their femininity in a manner that celebrates militant masculine values and encourages notions of martyrdom. This research adopts pain and practice as approaches to explore shared cross-border imaginaries. Unlike Anderson’s idea of limited imaginings of finite boundaries that are proclaimed, this part of the project is a contemplation of the unspoken and tacit imaginaries held by porous boundaries (Anderson, 2006).

**Strategic Partnership: India and Israel**

The post-conflict imaginaries of the Indian and Israeli states are, on the one hand, part of the larger limited and sovereign imaginings of a nation respectively. The ‘legitimacy’ of their goals allows these states to validate and hegemonize their vision over alternative imaginaries of the resisters. On the other hand, their strategic partnership and cooperation on counter-terrorism practices also represent collective imaginaries that produce collaborative action. ‘The collective imaginaries of the future are an important motivation for joined action.’ (Mische, 2009). This is visible in the deepening of the alliance between India and Israel aiming at fighting an existential threat posed by the common enemy - ‘fanatic Muslims’. India is not only the top buyer of Israeli arms, but also participant of joint counter-terrorism military exercises with Israel. Israel trains Indian special forces who are then deployed in India’s Northern territories including Kashmir (Pandit, 2019). After the revocation of Kashmir’s autonomous status and territorial sovereignty (maintained through article 370 and 35-A) by the Indian government on August 5, 2019, some collaborative events between India and Israel highlight the overlapping ideology of Israeli and Hindutva forces against the same ‘enemy’. In addition, the successful establishment of Israeli domination over Palestinians is treated as an important example for India to follow. In this regard, the replication of the Israeli model in Kashmir was explicitly called for by India’s consul general in New York, Sandeep Chakravorty in November 2019 (Al-Jazeera, 2019).

The motivation of the states to cooperate and take collaborative action against ‘Muslim terrorism’ suggests the presence of a mutually beneficial shared image of the post-conflict future. This image has to do with quelling resistance to absorb Kashmir and Palestine within their national imaginings respectively. Unlike the implicitly shared vision and action of the resisters, state actors are able to legitimately coordinate and take joined action in pursuit of their shared goals. Through the study of these contrasting and clashing imaginaries, my research aims to understand the significance of shared anticipation (both implicit and explicit) and the nuances in cross-border collaboration and cooperation.

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Dynamics of Salient Social Identities, Status Dimensions, and Contestation in Multilateral Diplomacy

Catherine Hecht

In what ways are principles underpinning international order(s) evolving? Vibrant debates among scholars, practitioners, and the public have taken place on this topic in recent years. Drawing on empirical evidence from the history of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, my current projects at the Centre offer insights into two pieces of this larger question. First, how and why has the salience of certain social identities of UN member states, i.e. states’ characteristics and efforts as communicated by leaders, varied in this venue over time? Second, how have patterns of contestation evolved in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and what are potential implications for global cooperation? Rather than taking changes in great and rising powers’ domestic and foreign policies as a point of departure, this research examines changes in the discourse among all UN member states, which generates a complementary and different picture.

Diplomats often communicate aspects of their states’ positive social identities, yet the attributes they choose to showcase vary over time. While we have a general sense of the characteristics of states that are valued in international societies (Larson et al. 2014; Towns 2010; Pouliot 2016; Hurd 2011; Hecht 2016, 2020), we can benefit from comparative, longitudinal evidence illustrating how the relative salience of different social categories, or status dimensions, has evolved in multilateral venues. I study trends in the domestic-level characteristics that state representatives themselves communicate to be valued, with reference to their own states, rather than how they are viewed by more powerful states, international organizations (IOs), or others.

Why is it important to understand the salience of specific dimensions, or bases, of social status in multilateral venues over time? Certain international status dimensions potentially contribute to improving inhabitants’ well-being and quality of life. For example, if a status dimension based on ‘social development’ is highly salient in the UN system, this can encourage states (and other actors) to enhance domestic efforts to eradicate poverty, fulfil basic needs, and improve health care, education, and social protection programs, especially for disadvantaged groups. Moreover, this increases pressure on industrialized states to comply with related international commitments, including providing (or maintaining) 0.7 per cent of GNI for official development assistance.

In previous research, I developed a new method for measuring the salience of a status dimension in a multilateral venue over time and examined factors contributing to shifts in the salience of democratic governance in the UN General Assembly (Hecht 2016). Through manually-coded content analysis of UNGA General Debate statements over several decades, I illustrate changes in the frequency and content of state representatives’ aggregate expressions of aspects of their states’ social identities. For example, what percentage of UN member states showcases a certain accomplishment or goal in a given year (e.g. percentage of state’s energy derived from renewable sources, state’s territory covered in national parks, or universal health care)? A current project analyzes UNGA General Debate speeches between 1982 and 2019 to compare and explain trends in the salience of six categories which diplomats have often invoked, i.e.: as states that (domestically) fight poverty and pursue social development, take domestic-level action to protect the environment, pursue or achieve economic development, are governed democratically, protect human rights, or empower women.

Preliminary findings suggest that there is sometimes rapid change – and sometimes unexpected stability – in the prevalent ways in which leaders present their states’ domestic-level characteristics. Newer international status dimensions have emerged with high salience, i.e. protecting the environment, pursuing social development, and empowering women. These social categories correspond with multilateral agendas (e.g. Sustainable Development Goals) which aim to contribute to greater equality among states and individuals.

Yet even as new social categories have become more salient, they have not, thus far, pushed away previously salient social categories and related agendas. Social psychological research on social identity and self-categorization provides valuable insights into intergroup relations and factors shaping the salience of social categories (Ellemers 2017; Turner 1987; Hogg and Abrams 1998). The COVID-19 pandemic has arguably elevated the salience of protecting the health of inhabitants. Social identities related to states’ health
care capacities (e.g. low death rates, effective health policies and crisis responses), simultaneously co-exist alongside traditional and newer salient social categories. Demonstrating leadership by example on a range of salient issues in international relations, rather than the increasingly discredited approach of lecturing, helps to avoid claims of double standards or hypocrisy.

A related project examines changing patterns of contestation in the UNGA and implications for global cooperation. Scholarship on contestation has emphasized the relevance of social contexts and discursive challenges aimed at (de-)legitimation (Wiener 2014; Müller 2011; Pouliot 2016; Zürn 2018). Recent research on the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe examined how a salient status dimension evolved, together with patterns of status-related contestation, during the organization’s history (Hecht 2020). Patterns of contestation and discourse vary from one multilateral venue to another, in part because of differences in international organizations’ membership compositions, institutions, norms, decision-making processes, and histories of intergroup relations.

International Relations scholarship and media accounts have often documented increasing contestation against international norms and multilateral institutions in recent years. However, studying the content of discourse of the entire community of states in the UNGA General Debates reveals a counter-intuitive finding: the overall percentage of states engaging in contestation decreased in some issue areas between 1982 and 2018 in this venue. I examine changes in the frequency and content of contestation in several issue areas over time, against: international macroeconomic and trade policies; development assistance; international support for democracy and human rights; occupation, colonialism, or intervention; the UN Security Council; and insufficient inclusiveness in international decision-making processes. Trends and explanations vary in the selected issue areas. How might the inclusive features of the UNGA and current UN agendas (e.g. sustainable development) affect these trends? Under which conditions have states adopted strategies of social mobility and social creativity? It is important to understand trends in the frequency and content of contestation, as well as the salience of (aggregate) social identities as communicated by the full UN membership, because the world’s large number of small and medium-sized states are integral to processes of (de-)legitimation of norms, leadership, and institutions for global cooperation.

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The Centre’s second annual conference ‘Communicative Power and Global Cooperation’ organized in collaboration with the Main Research Area ‘Transformation of Contemporary Societies’ at the University of Duisburg-Essen was held on June 22nd 2020. The conference aimed at exploring the intersections between communication and cooperation as important elements in global politics as well as transnational and global governance. Questions on how such communicative power is achieved or produced, whether it is (il)legitimate in the age of digital media, how it is expressed through the arts and, lastly, what this means for global governance were addressed in four panels by thirteen speakers. Despite the current Covid-19 pandemic, the event’s virtual format did not limit the debates, but, living up to its main focus ‘communication’, sparked interdisciplinary and productive discussions in each of the panels.

Sigrid Quack, director of the KHK/Centre for Global Cooperation Research, set the stage by introducing the thematic focus of this year’s conference and its four panels:

**Achieving and producing communicative power**
- chaired by Volker Heins

**Illegitimacy of communicative power in the digital media age**
- chaired by Nina Schneider

**Communication in arenas of global cooperation**
- chaired by Maren Hofius

**Communicative strategies in practice – narratives in art and media**
- chaired by Jens Steffek

The session on ‘Achieving and Producing Communicative Power’ gave an introductory overview on what communicative power actually is and how it functions distinct from structural, material and positional power. Starting off the panel by exploring how different forms of communicative power compete for public attention through the media, Jens Loenhoff suggested that the understanding of communicative power will shape both global and international cooperation. Another approach, presented by Jo Reichertz, elaborated on how communication does not focus as much on messages or understanding, as it does on action. Putting a major emphasis on the relationships behind communicative power, Reichertz’s assessment highlighted that stronger relationships lead to more robust communicative impact. Lastly, Katja Freistein provided an example on how visual communication can establish power and indicate deep-seated knowledge of hierarchies in global cooperation. A lively discussion on the ‘magic of words’ and their actual power followed, concluding that the relationships behind communicative power as well as the power of language are deeply intertwined and very complex.

The first thematic panel focused on the (il)legitimacy of communicative power in the age of digital media and, following the conceptual overview in the first panel, offered specific empirical analyses. Jan Aart Scholte examined whether and how perceptions of discourses are associated with legitimacy beliefs towards multistakeholder governance in a case study on the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). His findings highlighted that justificatory discourses appear not to be of significant importance for legitimacy. Stephan Scheel took a close look at the process of border and migration management digitalization and its violent logic of efficiency. The role of political communication in autocratization, a presentation held by Máté Mátyás, showed the co-movements between media governance and media market structure. The panel’s final presentation by Johanna Vogel discussed how trust is a necessary condition for the transformation of societies towards the goals of Agenda 2030 and how it can and needs to be cultivated in the digital space. The panel concluded with comments from the audience who discussed communicative power in digital spaces in regard to each of the presentations.
Focusing on communication in arenas of global cooperation, the second panel opened with Salvador Santino Regilme’s talk on the communicative power of illiberal populism, which investigated how China provides alternatives, undermines the position of the US and appears to become more supportive of the multilateralism discourse, challenging the role of the US in global cooperation. Moreover, Catherine Hecht presented a piece that explores discursive trends in the general debates of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) over time. Her findings indicate that, especially in the fields of economic order (macroeconomic and trade policies) and international development assistance, a decrease in contestation can be observed in the UNGA. In his talk ‘Communication for Climate –How Communication (Dis-)enables Cooperation in the Climate Negotiations’, Maximilian Högl enquired which factors enable cooperation with regard to global common goods and highlighted the importance of personal relations and informal communication as facilitators of negotiation processes in global cooperation.

Following, the last panel examined the practice of different communicative strategies with a focus on narratives in art and media. The artworks Monument by Manaf Halbouny (Dresden, February 2017) and Europa Tot. Der Tod und das Geld by Justus Becker and Oguz Sen (Frankfurt, 2016), examined by Christine Unrau, underlined the importance of communicating critique through art which allows us to think of better strategies in terms of sentimental education to counter the accusations of moral blame. Patricia Plummer who presented an analysis on life writing in the post 9/11 world questioned the interest of the global audience for memoirs, which happens to be a Western genre that serves as a platform for non-Western authors. Drawing on the concepts of life writing and of archive, she tried to understand what underpins the attraction of the genre. The role of conceptual artists in political communication was further explored by Frank Gadinger, who offered an outlook on how interdisciplinary collectives of artists, journalists or moviemakers can find new ways of political communication and re-interpret their role to strengthen their communicative power.

The conference was concluded with closing remarks by Volker Heins and Jens Loenhoff. First, Heins reflected on how global cooperation is assumed to be inherently benign and meant to solve global problems. However, scholars focusing on global cooperation showed that certain types of cooperation can also be part of the problem. As a social phenomenon communication - not only in an interpersonal manner, but also through institutions, media, and technology - has to be taken into consideration as a decisive element in global cooperation as this conference showed. Jens Loenhoff added that not all questions surrounding the relationship of communication and cooperation were fully answered, but the discussions paved the way for future research: How can communicative power be conceptualized as an analytical resource for those different fields of research? How can we resolve the apparently paradox that communicative power creates identities, which themselves create communicative power? Also, the issue of digitalization holds major importance: How does it support communicative power?

Sabrina Pischer
Demonstrating how not to struggle but successfully manage the complexities of the Covid-19 pandemic, the 36th Käte Hamburger Lecture premiered as an online event. It featured Orfeo Fioretos, Associate Professor of Political Science at Temple University in Philadelphia, and his talk on ‘Struggling with Complexity: How Governments Fail to Limit Fragmentation in Global Governance’. Fioretos investigated how governments deal with the increasing complexity in global governance caused by international institutional proliferation. He highlighted the need for an interdisciplinary approach to IR as well as the value of analyzing not only successful initiatives but also abandoned pathways to global cooperation.

In her introductory remarks, Christine Unrau, research group leader at KHK/GCR21, underlined the particularities of the new format. With an appeal for a stronger transdisciplinary approach to the study of global governance and praise for the unique interdisciplinary constitution of the Centre, Fioretos opened his lecture, which focused on a ‘footnote in history’: The failed G7-initiative to limit institutional proliferation from 1975. Situating the case study in its historical context, Fioretos stressed the rapid increase of international complexity and fragmentation in the decades after the Second World War, leading up to the initiative. According to Fioretos, the reasons for governmental attempts at limiting or even reversing institutional proliferation are numerous: High administrative burdens, incomplete governance structures, and redundancy not only cause financial costs but also negatively affect legitimacy. Yet, the number of international organizations has only grown. As archival research of this problem has so far been sparse, Fioretos aims to bring a new perspective to the field with his approach.

Fioretos’ account of a 5+1 summit on economics and monetary concerns in Rambouillet, France, demonstrated how the delegations from the US, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, and Italy shared their worries about institutional proliferation, which resulted in a declaration to limit further growth of international governance complexity. However, the initiative was later dropped and shelved in the 1976 meeting in Puerto Rico by the same group. This suggests that governments found a way to contain the costs of complexity through informal institutions while discovering the potential benefits of complexity. The second part of Fioretos’ presentation focused on the key takeaways from this. He emphasised that the value of this case study is not limited to learning about the case itself or the historical development of the G7. Rather, it provides an opportunity to probe theories and expose the presence or absence of mechanisms. Focusing on an abandoned pathway can also help to counter selection-bias, as most research deals with successful cases.

In her comment, Maryam Zarnegar Deloffre, Associate Professor for International Affairs at the George Washington University whose Senior Research Fellowship at the Centre has just come to a close, argued that this was not a case of a failed attempt at limiting global governance fragmentation. In her assessment, it was rather a case of cooperation and pragmatic problem-solving. Opening the virtual floor to comments added to the debate about how a particular case study has to be seen within its context - for example the unique political landscape of the 1970s - and in relation to other cases - e.g. comparing the G7 to the G20 and other informal institutions. The last comment then turned to recent events, questioning the way politicians like Donald Trump perceive and affect global governance. The 36th Käte Hamburger Lecture thus provided a stimulating discussion about interdisciplinary research as well as abandoned pathways. Moreover, the format of a virtual public lecture proved to be a promising avenue for future GCR21 events, as it brought together voices from Duisburg, Philadelphia, Sweden, and other places across the world.

Angela Benkhadda
International Conference

‘Urgency’ and ‘Responsibility’ in Global Cooperation

5–6 October 2020

Käte Hamburger Kolleg/Centre for Global Cooperation Research (KHK/GCR21), University of Duisburg-Essen and School of Global Studies (SGS), University of Gothenburg

Online-Event via Zoom | Free participation, registration online

Global crises have become regular fare in contemporary society: around diseases (Covid-19, Ebola, SARS, Zika, etc.) as well as around climate change, cybersecurity, finance, human rights, migration, poverty, war and more. For all such transboundary challenges a headline message flows that ‘responsible’ actors should ‘urgently’ pursue global cooperation, with the implication that uncoordinated and conflictual approaches are foolish if not depraved. Taking impetus from Covid-19 and moving across other issue areas, this online conference examines how mindsets of ‘urgency’ and ‘responsibility’ (and their absence) work in global politics. The conference convenes international interdisciplinary panels of specialists in a variety of policy fields. We look not only at unfolding experiences around the Covid-19 pandemic, drawing on experts in global health governance, but also look beyond of the immediate moment to other ‘crises’ and consider what can be learned from a historical and comparative perspective. All, anywhere in the world, are welcome to join this global online conference. Please register online, and we will provide you with the relevant Internet link. We look forward to your participation.

Sincerely
GCR21 Event Management Team

The politics of global cooperation are often wrapped in appeals to ‘urgency’ (it is imperative now!) and ‘responsibility’ (it is our duty!). This conference explores when, how, and with what consequences ‘urgency’ and ‘responsibility’ are (and are not) mobilised around a range of global issues. Different panels look at pandemics, climate change, migration, cybersecurity, famine, human rights, and peace. The conference will help us to understand the uses and abuses of narratives concerning ‘urgency’ and ‘responsibility’ – and maybe contributes to better global cooperation as a result.

Jan Aart Scholte
Co-Director, KHK/GCR21

For latest updates on our events, please see our website.
You are invited to follow our livestreams and share your thoughts with our team on Twitter.
Andrés López-Rivera

Blurring Global Epistemic Boundaries: The Emergence of Traditional Knowledge in Environmental Governance, Global Cooperation Research Papers 25, Duisburg 2020

In the wake of the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, ‘traditional knowledge’ became a recurring theme in global environmental governance. The emergence of traditional knowledge in a governance field marked by global science begs the following question: how is it that a particular set of intellectual activities other than science came to be perceived as a form of knowledge whose attributes are valuable for governing the global environment? This paper aims to grapple with this question by tracing the emergence of the category of traditional knowledge in global environmental governance. The main argument is that traditional knowledge came to be conceived of as a cognitive resource with utilitarian and ‘glocal’ properties through a series of interventions on the part of public scientists and landmark environmental reports that blurred the boundaries between science and nonscience. Building upon the concept of boundary work in Science and Technology Studies, this paper puts forth ...
What follows is a list of new publications of the Centre’s current and former fellows and staff as well as authors from our wider academic network. We publish an updated list and invite you to inform us about your recent contributions to the field of global cooperation research. The published list represents a selection of titles that we feel are substantive contributions to the field.


Research Agenda
A detailed elaboration of the Centre’s research agenda is available on the Centre’s website:
https://www.gcr21.org/research/research-agenda

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The Centre’s website displays in a responsive design on your portable devices and provides a new section. ‘Opinion’ invites contributions to current topics and focuses - among others - on recent developments in the Centre’s policy fields: climate, peacebuilding, migration and internet.

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