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GENEALOGY OF BEHAVIOURIST PEACE RESEARCH

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Abstract

This paper presents the behaviourist "non-normative" Peace Research (PR) tradition with two objectives. One objective is to locate this field in relation to closely related fields of research. PR specificity is: the dependent variable of peace and conflict when compared with Political Science and International Relations; the normative concern with the causes of war when compared with Strategic Studies; and the rejection of the "practicality" of research and a restraint on normativity when compared with Peace Studies (defined as peace research, peace teaching and peace action) and Conflict Resolution. Also, PR is considered here as one of the sub-fields of International Security Studies. The second objective of the paper is to present the history of PR. Since its creation in the 1950s, with a focus on inter-state conflict as an alternative to Strategic Studies, PR had two defining periods: one in the late 1960s labelled as the "socialist revolution", with the conceptualisation of peace as more than the absence of war (positive peace) and a challenge for normativity in research; and a second period in the 1980s that brought the broadening of the referent object to intra-state conflict and liberal peace, and the emergence of other social sciences dedicated to the study of issues in, or close to, PR, broadly defined as security with some of them adopting a normative stance in research. The epistemological community of PR kept its behaviourist approach in spite of these two normative challenges, and its distinctiveness and unity is much due to its method.

Keywords

Normativity; Peace Studies; Peace and Conflict Studies

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GENEALOGY OF BEHAVIOURIST PEACE RESEARCH ¹

Ricardo Real P. Sousa

Introduction²

This paper presents more than 60 years of Peace Research (PR) evolution and has two main objectives. The first objective is to identify major changes to what PR studies and how it is studied. This is done with reference to the behaviourist PR approach, which is considered as the backbone of this paper.³ We share King et al.'s (1994) perspective that the characteristics of good research include: making descriptive or explanatory inferences on the basis of empirical information; research that uses explicit, codified and public methods to generate and analyse data whose reliability can be assessed; qualitative and quantitative methods that are necessarily imperfect and, therefore, the conclusions are uncertain; and the "unity of all sciences consists alone in its method, not in its material" (Pearson, 1892, p. 16). These characteristics minimise the normative bias or influences of the researcher on knowledge.

There are three defining periods in PR.⁴ PR starts in the late 1950s in the aftermath of the behaviourist revolution that is characterised by a focus on the causes of inter-state violent conflict (deadly conflict normally associated with war) researched through behaviourist approaches, with the predominance of Political Science.

In the late 1960s peace is conceptualised as more than just the absence of war by distinguishing between war (violent conflict), negative peace (the absence of violent conflict, but where non-violent conflict is present) and positive peace (the removal of structural or cultural violence, absence of violent and non-violent conflict with non-violent means of conflict resolution) (Galtung J. , *Violence, Peace and Peace Research*, 1969). This is a period with a predominance of Political Science and Economy where there is a claim for the use of normative approaches in what has been labelled the "socialist revolution" (from 1968 to 1978) (Gleditsch N. P., 2008).

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² I would like to thank comments by Luís Moita, Carlos Branco and two anonymous referees; any remaining errors are my own. The term "genealogy" in this article refers to the study of the origins and development of Peace Research and is not used in the sense that Michel Foucault uses it, which is as a historical approach to research with an underlying critique of the present.

³ See David Easton (1965) for a classical definition of the behaviouralists approach.

⁴ Gleditsch (2008) identifies four periods in PR: the pre-history before 1959; the behavioural revolution between 1959 and 1968; the socialist revolution between 1968 and 1978; the wilderness years between 1979 and 1989; the post-Cold War years and liberal peace; and a question mark on the topic of the "clash of civilizations" since 2001.



In the late 1980s PR broadens its focus to intra-state conflict and liberal peace and is challenged by a set of new disciplines that study peace and conflict and more broadly defined security through different ontological and epistemological approaches. Broadly speaking, from the 1980s onwards a distinction can be made between the behaviourist PR committed to rationalism and positivism and the new disciplines following reflectivism and post-positivism. In this period PR is multidisciplinary.

Table 1: Periods of Peace Research

	Late 1950s–late 1960s	Late 1960s–late 1980s		Late 1980s onwards	
What is studied <i>(dependent variable)</i>	Inter-state (nuclear) conflict	Inter-state conflict	Positive and Negative Peace and structural violence	Inter- and intra-state conflict	Liberal Peace
How it is studied <i>(method of research)</i>	Behaviourist	Behaviourist	Behaviourist and Normative	Rationalist Positivist (behaviourist)	
Disciplines	Political Science	Political Science and Economics		Multidisciplinary	

The second objective of the paper is to identify the main characteristics of PR vis a vis closely related fields. PR is considered distinct from Political Science and International Relations (IR) due to its exclusive focus on the dependent variable of peace and conflict.⁵ The main distinction between PR and Strategic Studies is the former's normative⁶ concern with the causes of war. PR's distinction from Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution is its restraint on the "practicality" and normativity of research. Finally PR is considered as one of the sub-fields of International Security Studies (ISS).

The article starts by identifying PR's distinction in relation to other fields, then each of the three periods of PR identified in Table 1 are presented. The article concludes with a brief overview of the contemporary focus of research in PR.

Positioning Peace Research

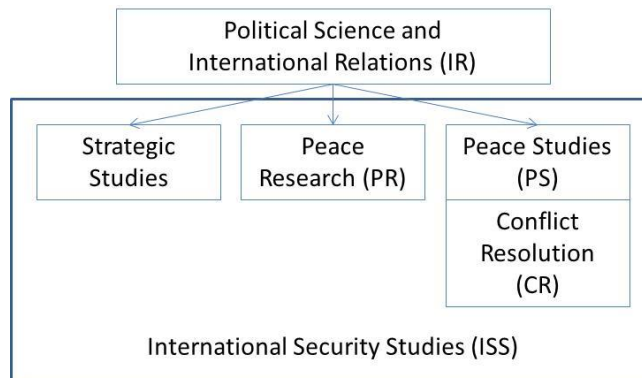
The academic boundaries of PR are not easily drawn, especially in relation to closely related areas of research: Political Science, International Relations, International Security Studies, Strategic Studies, Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution.

⁵ The dependent variable is the phenomenon being under research that is "dependent" on other factors to explain it – the independent variable(s).

⁶ This normativity (values the researcher brings to the research) occurs at the level of selecting the research question and not in the research method, which is neutral. In this way it is different from the normativity of the "socialist revolution" or of post-positivism and reflectivism, as presented ahead in the paper, which are more critical and reflective with researchers identifying values and preferences in research questions as well as research methods.



Picture 1: Positioning Peace and Conflict Studies⁷



Political Science is a core discipline with a focus on politics: the exercise of power within and by the state. But it is with its sub-discipline of IR – also referred to as International Politics – that the first academic discipline is created in order to systematically study the exercise of power between states, in particular the causes of conflict and prospects of peace. The Woodrow Wilson chair of International Politics created in 1919 is a landmark reference in the establishment of IR as an academic discipline. PR is an offspring of IR that emerges in the 1950s as an alternative way of thinking to the dominant field of Strategic Studies.⁸

Political Science, IR and PR are multidisciplinary, have common epistemological approaches, recognise agency for both state and non-state actors, can use the same levels of analysis (micro, macro, meso levels) and share similar issue areas (economics and politics, global governance, terrorism, international organisations, among others).

The main distinctive feature of PR in relation to Political Science and IR is that peace and conflict is a main dependent variable, even if it has different conceptualisations and proxies for peace and conflict. In Political Science and IR there can be other dependent variables, such as finance and economics, development, sustainability, environment, justice, ethics, civil society or democracy. An additional distinction is that Political Science deals primarily with intra-state processes and IR deals primarily with inter-state processes, while PR deals with both.

The scope of the two leading journals in PR are illustrative of this focus. The American-based *Journal of Conflict Resolution (JCR)* calls for papers on “the causes of and solutions to the full range of human conflict . . . [with a focus on] conflict between states and within states, but also explores a variety of inter-group and interpersonal conflicts that may help in understanding problems of war and peace.”⁹ The European-based *Journal of Peace Research (JPR)* has “a global focus on conflict and peace-making . . . [and] encourages a wide conception of peace, but focuses on the causes of violence and conflict resolution”.¹⁰

Strategic Studies became institutionalised post-Second World War based on the classical realist approach of war studies, military strategy and geopolitics. The main actor is the

⁷ Because PS and CR share the questions that structure ISS (see below) they are represented as part of ISS.

⁸ See Viotti and Kauppi (2012) and Dunne et al. (2013) for reviews of IR theories.

⁹ <http://jcr.sagepub.com/> consulted on September 5, 2016.

¹⁰ <http://jpr.sagepub.com/> consulted on September 5, 2016.



state and the statesman primary objective is to secure the survival of the state – state sovereignty - which is pursued through diplomatic or military means. The main threat to the state is not internal but external and is a result of the fact that states live in an anarchical world system characterised by the absence of a supra-national authority to regulate the conflicting interests of states.

At its inception, PR shared many characteristics of Strategic Studies, in particular its focus on inter-state conflict and the use of a behaviourist approach. The main distinction between the two is the different normative underpinnings. Strategic Studies dealt with the issue of achieving victory or avoiding defeat mainly through the use of military force, while PR deals with the issue of identifying the causes of conflict.¹¹ In the early days of PR its focus on peace per se is influenced by Marxist concerns with structural social injustice, but it would later become primarily characterised by influences from liberal traditions and democratic peace theory.

Table 2: Peace research and related traditions

Strategic Studies <i>(1950s onwards)</i>	PR <i>(1950s onwards)</i>	Peace Studies <i>(1970s onwards)</i>	Other social sciences <i>(1980s onwards)</i>
Game theory, formal models, mathematics	Mainly economics and politics but also other social sciences Conventional constructivism from the 1980s onwards	Sociology, psychology, anthropology, politics, economics, conflict resolution, trans-disciplinary	Critical constructivism, the Copenhagen School, critical studies, feminism, human security, strategic studies, post-colonialism, poststructuralism
How to win or not lose a war?	What are the causes of war?	How to transform war into positive peace through research, teaching and action?	What forms of power relations exist (and how to overcome them)?
Non-normative, positivist, rationalist		Normative, post-positivist, reflectivist, participative action research	Normative, post-positivist, reflectivist,
Focus on explaining the phenomenon in order to be able to predict and control it		Focus on understanding or reconstruction of the phenomena, its critique and transformation, and restitution and emancipation.	

ISS (or security studies) is a sub-field of IR that emerged after the Second World War and is characterised by three novelties: a conceptual shift from war and defence to security (broadening the set of relevant political issues); a concern with Cold War issues and in particular nuclear weapons; and the relevance of civilian expertise (physicists, economists, sociologists or psychologists) in studies of war. During the first decades of the Cold War ISS could be distinguished from IR by its focus on the use of force in international relations as consubstantiated in the field of Strategic Studies. From the late 1960s onwards the agenda of ISS broadens and security increasingly becomes not only about politics and the military – the “use of force” – but also about economics, the

¹¹ For this reason, it is called “Peace Research” instead of “Peace and Conflict Research”.



environment and society. ISS' main distinction from IR becomes its focus on the concept of international security (Buzan and Hansen, 2009).

Buzan and Hansen (2009) identify four questions that structure ISS: whether to privilege the state as the referent object; whether to include internal as well as external threats; whether to expand security beyond the military sector and the use of force; and whether to see security as inextricably tied to a dynamic of threats, dangers and urgency. All these concerns are closely matched with the concerns of PR. Defined this way, ISS is an "umbrella label to include work of scholars who might refer to themselves as being in . . . 'peace research', or various other specialised labels" (Buzan and Hansen, 2009: 1). Therefore, PR is a sub-field of ISS alongside other approaches to security.

PR is also intrinsically conceptualised and associated with peace action and peace education, a triad referred to as Peace Studies (PS). PS is defined as related to

the human condition in general, concerned with our fulfilment... as humans through positive peace, and the reduction of suffering... through negative peace, regardless of how the causal chains or circles and spirals, or what not, spin or weave their ways through the human manifold (Galtung J. , 2010, p. 24).

PS can be characterised by: transdisciplinarity in integrating different disciplines of social sciences (for instances sociology, psychology sociology, political science, economics); trans-level by relating micro, meso, macro, mega levels of analysis; trans-border, where no geographical region or system should dominate; empirical but equally critical and constructive in solutions; and practical, implemented by scholars and practitioners (Galtung J. , 2010; Galtung J. , 2008).¹²

PS' origins can be symbolically associated with the ground-breaking work of its "father", Johan Galtung, which was started in 1958. But normative work on peace and its promotion precede this decade, particularly within religiously inspired scholarly work and action.

PS scholars and practitioners engage in experiential, participative action research that "affirms the primary value of practical knowing in the service of human flourishing" (Heron & Reason, 1997, p. 1) and they have a compromise with transformative emancipatory action for the realisation of human potential. Emancipatory action follows a non-violent approach, either in the form of principled pacifism such as with Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, or in the form of pragmatic pacifism as identified in Gene Sharp (1971) (Oliveira, 2016).

The aims and scope of the journal of *Peace and Change* are illustrative of the focus of PS:

¹² Two of the organizations that combine at least two corners of the research triad, teaching and action (consultancy), are TRANSCEND (the Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research), founded by Johan Galtung, and INCORE (the International Conflict Research Institute).



*Peace and Change publishes scholarly and interpretive articles on the achievement of a peaceful, just, and humane society. International and interdisciplinary in focus, the journal bridges the gap between peace researchers, educators, and activists. It publishes articles on a wide range of peace-related topics, including peace movements and activism, conflict resolution, nonviolence, internationalism, race and gender issues, cross-cultural studies, economic development, the legacy of imperialism, and the post-Cold War upheaval.*¹³

Some scholars would consider Conflict Resolution (CR) as a sub-field of PS. Generally speaking PR, PS and CR share the normative commitment that solutions to the causes of conflict are to be found through non-violent means – “peace by peaceful means”. Therefore, conflict, and particularly violent conflict, is considered the malady to be eradicated, both as an end and as a means.

CR as a field of study started around the same period as ISS and PR. In the 1950s and 1960s scholars start studying conflict as a specific phenomenon in international relations, domestic politics, industrial relations, communities and families and individuals.¹⁴ Research or practice in CR is conducted by, or is much closer to, the actual actors of the political process – very often in long problem-solving workshops or mediation initiatives. Since its inception CR has been defined as: multilevel; multidisciplinary, multicultural, analytical and normative as well as theoretical and practical (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, & Miall, 2011).

The practical and normative foundations of PS and CR for the transformation of war into sustainable peace are in tension with behaviourist academic considerations over scientific method. Peace and conflict scholars would also become split over these issues in the “socialist revolution”. Behaviourist PR scholars recognise that academic research should be relevant to world affairs, but at the same time that knowledge can only be reached following specific scientific requirements that guarantee objectivity and cannot be compromised by the practicability or applicability of knowledge. Generally speaking, these scholars focus on identifying the causes of war firstly as a contribution to knowledge and only after with a concern for its subsequent use in public policy. In the early years of the *JPR* there was a requirement for articles to have a final section with policy recommendations, but the requirement was soon abandoned because the policy produced had little relevance when considering that it was not the focus of the article but a sub-product (Wiberg, 2005). Also, behaviourist PR scholars consider that normative considerations over what is good and bad should be circumscribed – if considered at all – to the choice of subject (the research question) and that the research process should be neutral to political influences. Finally, PR scholars opt for a multidisciplinary that follows the established scientific methods of research of each discipline instead of the transdisciplinarity advocated in PS.

¹³ [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1468-0130/homepage/ProductInformation.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1468-0130/homepage/ProductInformation.html), accessed September 27, 2016. The journal *Peace and Conflict Studies* is also defined along the same lines as the definition of Peace Studies.

¹⁴ For an account of CR’s evolution see Kriesberg (2009) and Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall (2011).



Normative PS and CR scholars (and practitioners) consider that one can never be politically neutral and value judgements over what is good and bad underpin not only the research question but also permeate through the research process. Because researchers are bound to have values, they have some individual responsibility for the practical implications of the research. Therefore, the researcher is morally bound to be practical, which may mean engaging in policy prescriptions and, in some cases, policy implementation.

It is this normativity and concern with research applicability or practicality that most distinguishes PS and CR from PR. See Table 3 for a resume of the distinctiveness of PR.

Table 3: Distinctiveness of Peace Research vis a vis other approaches

	Peace research	Political Science/ International Relations	Strategic Studies	International Security Studies	Peace Studies	Conflict Research
What it studies:						
Peace and Conflict	x	x	<u>x</u>	x	x	x
Other focus		<u>x</u>				
How it is studied:						
Neutral/objective	x	x	x	x		x
Normative/subjective		x		x	<u>x</u>	x
Practice					x	<u>x</u>

Note: Neutral/objective refers to the focus of the research on "how things are". Normative/subjective refers to the focus of "how things should be". Underlined crosses identify the distinctiveness of the approach in relation to PR. For Strategic Studies the underlined cross with a dot in "Peace and Conflict" refers to different concerns about the same dependent variable. We follow Buzan and Hansen (2009) characterisation of ISS.

Late 1950s to late 1960s

PR's inception is associated with the development of an epistemological community of scholars, in both the US and Europe, which systematically studied peace and conflict through a behaviouralist approach.

By the 1950s and 1960s the behaviouralist approach had enough advocates for it to be considered that a "second great debate" within IR was occurring, which opposed "traditionalist" and "behaviouralist" approaches.¹⁵

Traditional scholars followed the approach of classical political philosophy based on historical interpretations, legal philosophy or theories of causality related to unobservable dynamics of human nature. Scholars are considered as inevitably normative in research, used mainly qualitative methods and there was no requirement for theories to be validated by empirical evidence.

Behaviouralist scholars defended a more objective, neutral (non-normative) and empirical research that could rationally account for the "observed" behaviour of states (or other actors). They defended the adoption of methodologies from the natural sciences, in particular its focus on hard theory, quantification and identification of

¹⁵ The main references of the debate are the critique of behaviourism by Bull (1966) and its defense by Kaplan (1966).



causality. This was considered as the “scientific” revolution, which gained expression in realist and liberal IR traditions as well as in PR.

One of the theoretical developments of the behaviourist approach was to conceptualise three levels of analysis to identify the causes of war: the individual, the national state and the international system (Waltz K. N., 1959; Singer, 1961).

The individual level focuses primarily on human nature and on individual political leaders and their belief systems, psychological processes, emotional states and personalities. The nation-state (or national) level includes factors such as the type of political system (authoritarian or democratic, and variations of each), the structure of the economy, the nature of the policymaking process, the role of public opinion and interest groups, ethnicity and nationalism, and political culture and ideology. The system level includes the anarchic structure of the international system, the distribution of military and economic power among leading states in the system, patterns of military alliances and international trade, and other factors that constitute the external environment common to all states (Levys, 2011, p. 14).

The PR epistemological community was mainly Western (North America, West Europe and Japan) with the two most significant initiatives coming out of Michigan in the United States and Oslo in Norway.¹⁶

At the University of Michigan in the United States Kenneth Boulding and a group of academics founded in 1957 the multidisciplinary, empirically focused, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*,¹⁷ started in 1959 the Centre for Research on Conflict Resolution; and in 1964 the Correlates of War (COW) project started, headed by J. David Singer and Melvin Small, which begins to systematically collect data on inter-state and extra-systemic conflict.¹⁸ The COW project would set the standards for much of the empirical work in the area of conflict developed ever since.

In Oslo, Norway, the Peace Research Institute Oslo is established in 1959 and the *Journal of Peace Research* is founded in 1962. Johan Galtung was an instrumental founder of both and his work in the 1960s would conceptualise “peace” in a way that can be considered to have led to the first challenge in PR and the birth of PS.

The choice of “conflict” in Michigan and “peace” in Oslo reflects the controversy surrounding the word “peace”. Not only were “Peace” movements seen, at the time, as upholding Soviet interests, but “peace” also was perceived as detached from the “hard

¹⁶ For a more complete review of the emergence of institutional initiatives in this field see Buzan and Hanse (2009).

¹⁷ Emanating out of the Center for Advanced Studies in Behavioural Sciences established in Stanford in 1954. From 1971 onward the journal is based at Yale University.

¹⁸ The interstate datasets are first published in 1972. Previous work collecting quantitative data on conflict had relied mostly on individual initiatives such as Sorokin (1937), Wright (1942) or Richardson (1960). Extra-systemic conflicts refer to colonial wars of independence.



politics” of conflicts. Institutes established ever since would opt for a focus on peace and/or conflict, often reflected in their designation.

Late 1960s to late 1980s

In 1969 Johan Galtung redefined the concept of positive and negative peace (proposed in 1964), introducing the distinctive concept of structural violence. Negative peace is defined as the cessation of direct violence (war resulting from violent conflict by actors), while positive peace is defined as the removal of “structural violence” – a concept close to social injustice where violence is not actor oriented but resulting from the structure of the social system. Initially focused on economic inequality, structural violence would also come to be associated with violence in social and cultural systems. Furthermore, achieving positive peace does not mean only the cessation of conflict but also the management of conflict through non-violent means.

Table 4: Negative and Positive Peace and War

Positive Peace	Negative Peace	War
Non-violent conflict		Violent conflict
Social Justice	Structural violence	Direct violence

Source: Based on Pfetsch and Rohloff (2000, p. 382)

This is a significant conceptual shift from the traditional focus on conflict to a focus on the conditions of peace. The referent object is changed to human collectivities (instead of states), allowing for an analysis of conflicts not only at the inter-state level but also at the intra-state and trans-state level. Also, it focuses not only on the military sector as a source of violence but also on economic sectors. This conceptualisation establishes a link between the classical liberal idealist tradition and the Marxist tradition (Buzan & Hansen, 2009) and has been labelled as the “socialist revolution” in PR (Gleditsch N. P., 2008).

The concept of negative peace is criticised for still being defined in relation to conflict (as the negation of conflict) and for being of a less urgent character than war. While the concept of “structural violence” in positive peace is criticised for being too broad and loosely defined (Boulding, 1977).¹⁹

The concept of structural violence was “an academic tool to shift focus away from the exclusive attention given to East-West conflict towards North-South conflict.” (Gleditsch, Nordkvelle, & Strand, 2014, p. 148). This reflected shifting concerns in Europe where post-Second World War concerns with economic reconstruction and growth were followed in the 1960s by concerns over justice, autonomy and equality, also in relation to the post-colonial world (Kriesberg, 2009). This political period, sometimes referred to as “1968”, is characterised by the US war in Vietnam, the USSR invasion of Czechoslovakia and civil society movements – in particular student protests in the US, Europe and some Eastern European countries (Wiberg, 2005).

The scholarship following this approach was mainly located in Europe, labelled as the maximalist or structuralist European approach, and some work would go into the

¹⁹ The concept of structural violence would be applied in several areas: development studies, imperialism, domestic conflict, environment, human rights and economic exploitation (Buzan & Hansen, 2009).



operationalisation of “structural violence” for empirical and statistical validation, among them Wallesteen’s (1973) research relating trade structures with war structures (Wiberg, 2005). In North America, scholars maintained a focus on studying (the causes of) war, labelled as the pragmatist approach.

The broadening of the referent object would be reflected in the *JCR* and *JPR*. The *JCR* enlarges its focus in 1973 to not only deal with interstate war and nuclear (deterrence and disarmament) issues but also justice, equality, human dignity, ecological balance and intrastate conflict (Russett & Kramer, 1973). In the *JPR*, structural violence and positive peace would gain a significant expression in the 1970s and 1980s (Gleditsch, Nordkvelle, & Strand, 2014).

Structural violence was also an epistemological shift by Galtung, abandoning the initial non-normative, behavioural and empiricist “invariance seeking” orientation, concerned with “what reality is” (adopted until 1958), in favour of a normatively oriented “invariance breaking” research, concerned with the search for another reality - “the potential”. In structural violence, violence is defined as the cause of the difference between “the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is” (Galtung J. , 1969, p. 168). This normative commitment anticipates the new epistemological approaches that emerge in the 1980s with reflectivism and post-positivism, and it particularly influenced feminist studies and critical theory (Pureza, 2011).

This epistemological change occurs in the context of a plural-peace activist movement, that is some groups influenced by Marxism (mostly of a Maoism inclination), which considered the neutral tone of behavioural science unacceptable (Gleditsch, Nordkvelle, & Strand, 2014). By the end of the 1960s, peace activists would be divided not only in methodological issues but also in substantive positions. Some peace researchers and idealists recognised the legitimacy of Soviet concerns while traditional IR and PR scholars focused on the maintenance of liberal democracies. In both Europe and the United States, a debate emerged over the possible use of overt conflict in situations when marginalised groups challenge the status quo in search for a more just and lasting peace following the revolutionary Marxism-Leninism (Rogers & Ramsbotham, 1999). For some the use of violence was in contradiction with what PR meant – that is the transformation of war into non-violent political processes – even if only reaching a “negative peace”. North-South structural violence was the non-violent emancipatory compromise proposed in this debate, a characteristic of the evolutionary Marxism of social democracy.²⁰

The normative challenge would divide peace and conflict researchers to this day into two epistemological communities with little cross-fertilisation. “Non-normative” positivist researchers (following the behaviourist tradition) – here defined under the umbrella of PR – are more associated with the Peace Science Society (founded in 1963 by Walter Isard) in the United States and the International Studies Association and journals like the *JCR* and *JPR*.

More normative researchers and activists, here defined in the umbrella of PS, are associated with International Peace Research Association (established in 1965) and journals like *Peace and Change*, *Peace Review* or the *Journal of Social Justice*.²¹

²⁰ For more details see Schmid (1968).

²¹ The defining events of this split occurred over the position of scholars on the Vietnam War debated in two conferences, one in 1968 in the United States and another in 1969 in Copenhagen (Gleditsch, Nordkvelle, & Strand, 2014). The Peace Studies section is created in International Studies Association in 1972.



Although both approaches have led to research and teaching programmes in academia, the scientific orientations of PR's behaviourist approach lead to its recognition within scientific research evaluations, while the normative PS is less recognised scientifically but more recognised at a grassroots level.²²

The conceptual and normative challenges in the "socialist revolution" of the 1970 lead to a period of conceptual overstretch. Gleditsch (2008) characterises PR in the 1980s as the "wilderness years" – weak methodologies and peace being anything – a "black hole" where "no social problem . . . does not have its legitimate place within peace research" (Tromp, 1981, p. xxvii).

Late 1980s onwards

With the novelty of the Cold War gone and the realisation that humankind had learned to live with the threat of nuclear war, in the 1980s PR was further questioned. The mainstream concept in PR during the Cold War defines the state as the referent object, is mainly concerned with the use of force and focuses on external threats to be dealt with through emergency measures studied through non-normative positivist, rationalist epistemologies (Buzan & Hansen, 2009).

The broadening of PR in the 1980s relates mainly to the nature of threats, considering internal alongside external threats. Other types of internal violence are considered, like democides, and the *JPR* expands its focus to terrorism, police and paramilitary repression, and to issues of injustice in the division of labour both internationally and nationally. *JCR* reflects an interest in intrastate conflict, including it within the scope of the journal, and the COW project publishes its first intra-state conflict dataset in 1982.

In the post-Cold War era intrastate conflicts become the most relevant type of conflict, with a peak of occurrences in 1991. Two debates are illustrative of the research focus, one on the initiation of civil war and another on the nature of war.

The debate on the initiation of civil war opposes the feasibility of conflict hypothesis to the grievances of groups' hypothesis. The feasibility hypothesis suggests that civil war is more likely to occur if it is financially and military feasible, with factors of economic greed also found to be significantly associated with the initiation of civil war (Collier, Hoeffler, & Rohner, 2009). The grievance hypothesis suggests that horizontal inequalities²³ are a significant predictor of rebellion (Buhaug, Cederman, & Gleditsch, 2014), building on the longstanding research linking conflict to ethnic groups.

The debate on the nature of civil war relates to the distinction between "old" and "new" wars (Kaldor, 1999).²⁴ Old wars were: fought by regular armies over geo-political issues or ideology, aimed for the control of territory, and were financed by states. While new wars involve more state and non-state actors (regular armed forces, private security contractors, mercenaries, jihadists, warlords, paramilitaries); are fought in the name of identity (ethnic, religious or tribal); are not characterised by battles but by territorial

²² The 2015 SCImago Journal Rank that measures the scientific influence of scholarly journals lists *JPR* and *JCR* in the top quartile, while of the three normative journals mentioned only *Peace Review* is listed in the fourth quartile.

²³ Where inequality, social exclusion and poverty occur in tandem with identity or regional boundaries.

²⁴ Other classifications include: wars among the people (Smith, 2005), wars of the third kind (Holsti, 1996), hybrid wars (Hoffman, 2007), privatisation of wars (Munkler, 2005) or post-modern wars (Hables Gray, 1997).

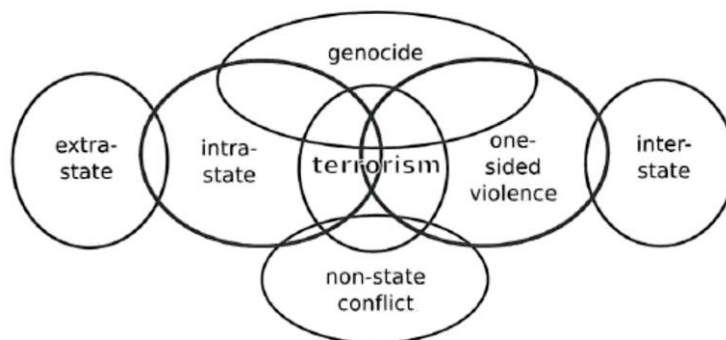


control achieved through population displacement; and are financed through a myriad of different sources of revenue secured through continued violence (looting, pillaging, “taxation” of humanitarian aid, diaspora support, kidnapping or smuggling of oil, diamonds, drugs or people) (Kaldor, 1999; 2013).

Dataset projects followed the changing patterns of civil wars and technological advancements in data gathering. Among others, The Minorities at Risk project, initiated by Ted Gurr in 1986, provides information on politically active ethnic groups and the University of Uppsala in Sweden developed the one-sided violence dataset in 2007²⁵ and non-state violence dataset in 2012²⁶ – both closer to “new” war characteristics – adding to the established state-based violence dataset (intra-state)²⁷ first released in 2002, which is closer to the concept of “old” wars. Although state-based conflict continues to be the most deadly type of conflict, other types of violence have become more recurrent. For instance there is a stable increase in the number of ongoing non-state based conflicts, with its ratio in relation to state-based conflict increasing from 1.07 in 2011 to 1.4 in 2015 (Melander, Pettersson, & Themnér, 2016). See Picture 2 for a typology of armed conflict.²⁸

Data coding has become ever more disaggregated due to new technologies: in terms of the identification of the actors involved; geographically going below the state level to be geo-coded to the village level; and temporarily moving from the year unit to the individual days of events – the Uppsala Conflict Data Program’s Georeferenced Event Dataset is a prime example (Sundberg & Melander, 2013).

Picture 2: Typology of armed conflict



Source: Eck (2008, p. 35)

The economic agenda of PR proposed by the “socialist revolution” in the 1970s is partly taken over in the field of Development Studies and International Political Economy, and

²⁵ Where violence by the state or non-state groups targets civilians.

²⁶ Where violence occurs between non-state groups.

²⁷ Where violence occurs between the state and non-state groups.

²⁸ Extra-state conflicts are wars of colonial independence. There are a series of other violent events in conflict that are not identified in the picture: riots, violent demonstrations, repression, indirect violence against civilians, organized crime, gang wars, warlordism, banditry, assassinations (Eck, 2008).



in the 1980s PR becomes characterised by the apprehensions of political science (Gleditsch N. P., 1989).²⁹

The study of peace within PR is mostly represented by research on liberal peace, where it is proposed that democracy and justice are essential for sustainable peace within and between nations. The idea is that democracies are more responsible to citizens who are less keen to engage in inter-state wars than their leaders and that democracies have mechanisms to deal with intra-state conflict in a peaceful manner. The democratic peace theory debate was opened with the proposal that democratic states are unlikely to go to war with each other (Doyle M. W., 1983; 1986), but 20 years on the debate is still not settled (Doyle M. , 2005; Rosato, 2003).

Broadly speaking, PR outlived the end of the Cold War (associated with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989) and its focus would adapt to the new reality. The *JPR* in the 1990s and 2000s would focus on the classical issues such as the reduction of armed violence and shifts attention from inter-state to intra-state civil war, other forms of internal conflict and the democratic peace debate. In the 2000s, in both the *JPR* and *JCR*, there is a growing interest in human rights, democratic peace and peacebuilding/peacekeeping, and both journals kept publishing game theory and formal modelling. The focus continues to be on conflict with articles in 2000 with the word "conflict" having above-average citations and the word "peace" being less cited than the average in the *JPR* (Gleditsch, Nordkvelle, & Strand, 2014).

A new debate that attracted significant attention, both in academia and in the public sphere, was if with the end of the Cold War meant that the liberal democratic peace agenda had become the "only game in town" to the point of being identified as an "end of history" moment (Fukuyama, 1989), or if the sources of conflict would now come from a "clash of civilizations" (Huntington, 1993) based on religious and cultural identities.

A development of the 1980s, and of the post-Cold War era in particular, is the increase of epistemological approaches in the social sciences. Two main dichotomies grouped the different approaches: the rationalist versus reflectivist and the positivist versus post-positivist.

Kehoane (1988) proposed a distinction between the rationalist and reflectivist approaches. Rationalist approaches use rational choice theories to explain the behaviour of actors based on their individual preferences. Reflectivists argue that rationalist accounts fail to identify the context-dependent aspects of decision making. They considered that the behaviour of actors is the product of "conjuncture": the historical combination of material constraints, social patterns of thoughts and individuals initiatives. The reflectivist approaches account for these factors and consider that individual and social reflection and learning lead to changes in preferences and even shape views of causality.³⁰ Unlike rationalism preferences are not assumed to be fixed; values, norms and practices will vary in time and across cultures. Therefore one needs to take into account changes in "consciousness". "Reflexivity" in social action means that there is a bi-directional relationship between cause and effect in which neither can be assigned causes or effects. It is considered that there is a need not only to explain and

²⁹ For an extensive literature review on civil war from an economic perspective see Blattman and Miguel (2010).

³⁰ Reflective approaches comprehend: interpretative approaches based on historical and textual interpretations, materialist historico-sociological approaches following a Marxist tradition, political theory based on classical political philosophy and international law.



measure the behaviour of actors but also to understand the intersubjective meanings and discourses that informed actors' choices.

Lapid (1989) would bring to the forefront the subject-object problem of social sciences. In social sciences the separation between the researcher (subject) and phenomena (object) is much less clear than in the natural science. In social sciences, human beings create theories about themselves and the positivist behaviouralist aspiration for a neutral researcher detached from the phenomenon is considered impossible to achieve. Instead Lapid highlights the post-positivism approach where the proper unit of analysis in social science is paradigms, constituted by a triad of the phenomenon (empirics), analysis (theory, hypothesis, explanations) and the thematics (assumptions, epistemological premises). At the centre of the triad is the social-intellectual-ethical scientist (Hooker, 1987, p. 10; Lapid, 1989, p. 240). Following from these constituted and constitutive roles of the scientist, there should be a focus on the premises and assumptions of the research: the perspectives the scientists adopt when they construct phenomena. Positivist empiricism (observable regularities) is in this way challenged in different degrees by post-positivism in that: a) empiricism is to be subordinate to the perspectives adopted by the researcher; b) perspectives should not be bound by their possible empirical verification; and c) perspectives may have a normative capacity to create the empirical realities envisioned by it. This preponderance with perspectives over empiricism means that objectivity and truth are relative, dependent on the socially and historically situated paradigm, the perspectives of the researcher and the diverse methodological approaches that can be used.³¹

Rationalist approaches, committed to rational choice theory, normally have a positivist stance – search for objective causal-effect mechanisms that are empirically verifiable. Such is the case of behaviourist PR scholars. Reflectivism approaches normally have a post-positivism stance, closer to normative PS scholars.

The new epistemological approaches of the 1980s onwards would be applied to the study of peace and conflict, leading to new fields of study within the broader umbrella of ISS. Linguistics highlights the importance of language and discursive representation of the object of analysis. Post-structuralism underlines how all phenomena exist only through a discursive representation that is permeated by power relations. Feminist theory, which emerged in 1980s, was inspired by the women's liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s and highlights the dynamics of patriarchy. Critical theory builds on the normative approach proposed by Galtung in the "socialist revolution" (Pureza, 2011). In particular, critical security studies challenges realism's military-focused, state-centred and zero-sum understanding of security, which is to be replaced by a project of human emancipation (Collective, 2006). Constructivism (both conventional and critical) brought to the forefront the relevance of ideas, culture, norms and identities, adopted by Critical Security Studies and the Copenhagen School. Post-colonialism focuses on power relations between the "West and the rest" and shares the Marxist conception of "structural violence". Human security broadens the concept of "structural violence" to link security with development (Collective, 2006). The Copenhagen School identifies how there is a "securitization" process in which an actor constitutes, through discourse, an issue, another actor or phenomenon as a threat to a referent object (state, society, individual).

³¹ This post-positivism relativism and methodological pluralism puts into question the Kuhnian version of scientific progress (Kuhn, 1962) where scientific revolutions lead to the adoption of a new (better) paradigm that replaces an older one. Instead post-positivism argues for a diversity of equally legitimate paradigms.



With the exception of conventional constructivism, to a more or less extent the new approaches have in common a normative commitment to research: to expose power relations and identify a more just and human peace.³²

These epistemological developments also had an expression in PR, mainly in the concern with the security of humans at a societal, group and individual level (besides the state level). These expressions can be seen as focusing on intra-state conflict and topics such as ethnicity, democide and politicides, non-state violence and, in some cases, the study of the security of individuals made possible by the availability of disaggregated data.

The most significant event since the end of the Cold War is the 2001 September 11 attacks, which had a significant impact on the agenda of Strategic Studies, ISS and PR even if part of their agenda continues unaffected. The centrality of the state and rationality assumptions were questioned by the relevance of networked non-state actors. Politically, it empowered in the West realist perspectives of security (closer to Strategic Studies) in detriment of liberal internationalism. It reopened discussion on the use of force, reinforced the 1990s debate on the transformation of war and the processes of war and fighting and led to increased concerns about nuclear proliferation. Specifically, US foreign policy (and of the countries in the coalition involved in the war in Iraq) were scrutinised mainly from post-structuralist, feminist and post-colonialist scholars with a focus on the discursive conceptions of security and the new Western technologies of war-making. But many of the issues of the research agenda remained unchanged: the causes of war; regional security; great power politics; technology of war; or classical issues such as arms racing or deterrence (Buzan & Hansen, 2009).

The 1990s saw a continuation of the institutionalisation of PR and, broadly speaking, most institutes survived the end of the Cold War. PR is now characterised by a broad network of researchers, schools and journals with a higher degree of theoretical and epistemological specialisation.

Conclusion

PR survived two epistemological challenges, the “socialist revolution” and the reflectivist and post-positivist challenges, and outlived the end of the Cold War. In its 60 years of existence it adapted its referent object and evolved its methods within a behaviourist approach to feat the reality of the phenomenon under study as well as methodological and technological developments.

At the beginning of the new century conflict is principally at an intra-state level but, overall, the world has more peace than in the preceding century, a peace based on the liberal model (Gleditsch N. P., 2008).

Behaviouralist PR, as illustrated by the *JPR*, came to become: multidisciplinary (involving fields like political science, sociology, geography or economics); doing analysis with more disaggregated units like time, space, institutions, actors and issues; engaged in

³² In conventional constructivism the agency for order and peace is significantly associated with the state (its main referent object), with limited recognition of institutional or individual agency, and adopts a “soft-positivist” epistemology. Therefore, conventional constructivism is an exceptional case of a reflectivist approach, which is positivist. Conventional constructivism is concerned with explaining the link between the social constructions of identity (frequently associated with ethno-linguistic groups), the political mobilisation of that identity and civil violence (Sambanis, 2002). Critical constructivism affords agency to collectivities (the main referent object) and adopts a narrative and sociological post-positivist epistemology.



forecasting models; significant empirical quantification; and is concerned with scientific transparency through replication (Gates, 2014).

Analysis of inter-state conflict has, in some cases, adopted a multi-method research design (game theory with case studies and quantitative tests) and moved away from the systemic level to the dyadic level of interaction between states, incorporating societal-level variables (for instances regime type, the political security of elites, public opinion) to explain decision making. Theories of international conflict became more complex due to the: difficulties of identifying the right level of analysis; developments in theoretical game models, in particular the ones incorporating incomplete information; incorporation of sequencing in decision making leading to war; and the need to deal with endogeneity issues (Levy J. S., 2000).

Research on peace as the prime referent object has been less present in PR with the exception of studies on liberal peace, democratic peace or capitalist peace. Research focuses on the causes, duration and endings of civil wars, post-war reconstruction, contributions of institutions to peace and other forms of violent conflict such as terrorism, coups, communal violence, political repression or crime. This is analysed with increasingly sophisticated statistical methods and disaggregated analysis.

PR's "non-normative" behaviourist approach is its main distinctive epistemological characteristic – alongside its focus on peace and conflict – one that continues to congregate the work of researchers in a growing epistemological community.

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