

PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

AN INTRODUCTION

HO-WON JEONG

Peace and Conflict Studies

An introduction

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ASHGATE

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Foreword to the Series

On first encountering this three-volume series, the potential reader may at first wonder: Why do we need three volumes on peace and conflict? We will attempt to offer a succinct response to this question.

The broad scope of the three volumes reflects the tremendous progress that has been made in peace research in the last half of the Twentieth Century. Most significantly, our paradigms now include not only negative peace (stopping the shooting and bombing) but also positive peace, including economic well-being, human rights and environmental issues. In other words, we have now acquired a more global perspective on the causes of peacelessness. At the same time, we have broadened our concerns beyond peacemaking (i.e. conflict resolution and conflict management) to include peacekeeping, and most important, peace building.

Recently, I attempted to identify the major peace research trends in the last decade (Alger, 2000, 2) and proposed these seven: (1) Increasing efforts to combine a number of peace tools into comprehensive peace strategies, (2) Growing attention to the importance of pursuing multiple peace tracks simultaneously, (3) The growing tendency to take a long-term perspective, (4) Numerous recent works endeavoring to bridge theory building and practice, (5) Special attention given to efforts to cope with violent conflict between ethnic groups, (6) Growing literature on the need for what is often referred to as "post conflict" strategies, so as to sustain peace settlements, and (7) Increased emphasis on long-term strategies for prevention of extremely disruptive and violent conflict.

Unfortunately, most actions of those who are attempting to reduce disruptive conflict do not reflect recent advancements in knowledge. One problem is that recent research is widely scattered, often appearing in academic journals and books that are not widely accessible. Another difficulty is that peace building is a far more complicated task than most of us had earlier assumed. Relevant government roles extend far beyond foreign offices and the military, including departments concerned with economic and social issues. Furthermore, roles must be performed not only by government officials, but also by professions and groups in what we customarily refer to as 'civil society'. Recent research has identified peace

roles in diverse societal domains, including business, religion, education, media, ethnic communities, development assistance and local governance.

Coordinating these various roles, or at least making them more compatible, presents an overwhelming challenge to peace builders. On the other hand, there is a positive side to a multiplicity of peace roles in that peace builders now have many more options and resources than they did in times past. Certainly there are also significant implications for peace education. There is obviously a need for peace education curricula that takes a broad, systemic view of peace building. Although most involved in peace building will tend to perform only one role in a complicated social network, it is necessary for all involved to know the nature of the entire network, where they fit in the network, and how they are linked to, and interdependent with, other roles.

By bringing together widely scattered contributions to peace research, this series will make them more accessible. By assembling information on the activities, achievements and problems encountered by a diversity of peace roles, these volumes not only offer information on the latest research on the performance of these roles, but inform those actively engaged in these roles, as well as the general reader, of the ways in which these roles are interdependent.

Finally, this series provides rich resources for peace education courses. *Peace and Conflict Studies: An Introduction* can be used as a basic textbook in introducing peace studies to students with backgrounds in a diversity of disciplines. The other two volumes, *Conflict Resolution: Dynamics, Process and Structure*, as well as *The New Agenda for Peace Research* offer a diversity of supplementary readings in topics on which the instructor may wish to offer special emphasis. The readings in these two volumes, written from leading experts around the world, offer a feast of differing perspectives and emphases.

Chadwick F. Alger
May 2000

Foreword

We have in this book probably the first comprehensive exposition of peace and conflict studies. The sub-title *Introduction* to this 400-page book is misleading in the size context, but it is an important pointer to the fact that peace and conflict studies embrace all social studies, including economics and others that focus on institutions and structures with a view to their preservation. *Peace and Conflict Studies* seek to inject into these specialisations a human element that has been pushed aside as being of less importance than institutional preservation. This book points to the need for a more comprehensive study of human needs and aspirations.

In his writing, the author reflects his experience of teaching at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, which, as 'Analysis' in the title indicates, was established in an academic setting to bring attention to the nature of conflict resolution process. Conflict resolution and peace building are different from official interventions. Parties are brought together in an off-the-record, private setting, and discussions go on until all parties wholly understand the motivations and concerns of all the others. It is an extension of a psychoanalysis process. All parties begin to introspect and in due course can finally identify with each other, when they find that they share the same human needs and concerns. Negotiation, compromise, the threat of the use of power and enforcement processes become irrelevant. It is hard to believe without experiencing a conflict analysis process that parties meet each other, communicate, ask questions and get down to the real issues not previously articulated.

Being analytical in dealing with human behaviour applies to all social levels; from the family, to the work place, to community relations, to religious conflicts and to the global society. In the workplace, for instance, there can be conflict followed by an adversarial bargaining process. Wage levels are the usual subject for negotiation. An analytical approach would find that the usual demand for wages increases is a means of compensation for employees feeling that they are treated as non-human robots. In ordinary bargaining, agreement is reached, but another conflict can be anticipated. An analysis of the basic issues and appropriate changes in

management can resolve such conflicts and also lead to increased work output. So it is with conflicts at other levels.

This extensive and comprehensive book is, therefore, an important '*Introduction*' and will be a most valuable text, not merely for students in conflict analysis and resolution, but for international relations specialists, economists and sociologists generally. The book provides the substantive knowledge needed for conflict analysis and peace. Its emphasis on basic needs and non-adversarial problem solving framework provide the frame in which texts can be written for school children, parents, managers, lawyers and police, so-called 'intelligence' agencies, defence strategists and others who are at work within contemporary adversarial institutions and structures.

*John W. Burton
Bruce, Australia
May 2000*

Preface

The goal of this book is to reinterpret various theoretical approaches in peace and conflict studies as our knowledge and experience accumulate. During the Cold War period, the prevention of nuclear war attracted much attention, as conflict between the United States and Russia could have resulted in the annihilation of human civilisation. Despite the end of animosities between the two major nuclear powers, significant progress toward nuclear disarmament has not been made, with China, India and Pakistan strengthening their weapons capabilities. Violent ethnic conflicts in former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Somalia, Angola and other parts of the world have caused many deaths and destruction over the last decade.

In addition, extreme poverty and economic disparities have been seriously undermining the well-being of the underprivileged majority of the global population. This issue remains true despite the celebration of recent economic gains for the middle class in the U.S. and other industrialised countries. In some societies, women and children continue to be victims of social oppression and economic exploitation. Concerns for the environment that captured the public imagination in the 1970s have been obscured by the emphasis on free trade and economic growth.

Given the dominant interests of political elites and the superficial nature of public discourse, dramatic measures are not likely to be taken to mitigate the sufferings of those marginalised groups in the foreseeable future. Beyond minimal institutional adjustment and technical re-orientation, fundamental rethinking is required to develop an enlarged vision of peace to meet the above challenges. In revealing and assessing human practice, the old issues wait for re-conceptualisation, reflecting on our time and space. This book has been prepared in the hope of providing a knowledge base to critically analyse the deep causes of violence and conflict across social, political, economic and environmental dimensions. Most importantly, diverse strategies for peace building are illustrated and examined.

The book can be located in the rich intellectual traditions relevant to peace studies. Peace touches upon many different aspects of our life, and the realisation of peace is affected by a complex social environment. The pursuit of a nonviolent and just society is grounded in the empirical

understanding of existing problems. Peace theories have specific implications and meanings in interpreting a contemporary world, and they are less abstract and more pragmatic than traditional international relations theories which heavily focus on foreign policy decision making behaviour or the structure of an inter-state system.

The beginning of the new century is the quintessential moment to present a new book on peace and conflict studies which looks beyond a limited understanding of history. This volume can be used for peace and conflict studies courses at universities, seminars and workshops for peace activists and policy makers. It attempts to reflect the past achievement in our conceptual thinking, illustrate practice and explain many of the key concepts discussed in the field.

In preparing for this book, I owe great intellectual debts and personal encouragement to the previous generation of many distinguished peace scholars. In particular, this book benefited from the inspiration of Chadwick F. Alger who has been a role model of both intellectual humility and great scholarship. John W. Burton, whose thoughts laid a foundation for conflict resolution research, has been kind and generous to share new ideas and old wisdom. I am also very grateful to Hayward Alker and Anatol Rapoport for lending their insight and support to *Peace and Conflict Studies Series*. The late Paul Smoker, Elise Boulding, Louis Kriesberg, Michael Nagler, Glenn Paige, Michael True, Linda Groff, Luc Reyckler and Juergen Dedring have been supportive of my endeavour for peace research. Discussion with Christopher Mitchell and Richard Rubenstein has helped me gain the insight much needed for writing this volume.

Charles Snare made selfless efforts and provided critical comments throughout the book. I also appreciate editorial comments made in various parts of the manuscript by Charles Lerche, Karen Andrews and Brenda Lindsay. Gloria Rhodes invested her skills and talent for copy editing. Mary was a devoted helper and without her tolerance, I could not have found time to complete this project. Nimmy's warm and peace loving nature has been inspirational to me. This book is dedicated to my parents Woo-Yang Jeong and Phil-Soon Cha whose vision, enthusiasm and unconditional support led to the production of this work.

Ho-Won Jeong
January 2000

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Introduction

Our small planet faces various threats to human survival. Militarism, human rights abuses, poverty and economic inequity, the rapid growth in the world population, environmental degradation -- all have become our major concerns. Over the past two decades, peace studies themes have emerged from the search for an alternative world order, an emphasis on sustainable development and the promotion of human rights as well as the prevention of war. More specifically, peace research interests lie in uncovering the relationships between inequality, injustice and power asymmetry on the one hand and violence on the other.

The search for knowledge has to be linked to the exploration of new social and political practices at various policy-making levels. Systemic crisis can be handled by collaborative problem solving mechanisms in an interdependent world. Conflict resolution and nonviolence have been applied to many conflict situations from interpersonal to global levels.

In developing a coherent research programme, it is essential to conceptualise the meanings of peace in a way that will help the accumulation of knowledge in the field. The relevance of institutions and social relations to peace has to be examined in the context of historical evidence. For that purpose, strategies that have been adopted and practiced in the past need to be critically analysed and evaluated.

Peace research has not always been successful in the conceptual integration of human experiences. The reason for diverse approaches is ascribed, in part, to the existence of different perceptions of the world and to a lack of comparative evaluation of research paradigms. This book not only reviews and assesses various theoretical understandings but also helps formulate new interpretations of the changing world.

The Framework of the Book

In responding to challenges to synthesise different conceptions of peace and various theoretical approaches, this book consists of four sections. In Part One, meanings of peace are re-conceptualised in the context of what has been broadly understood in the field. Peace studies have engendered a new perspective that safeguarding national interests is not related to peace. Universal and global peace is not enhanced by the ambitions of national political elite, goals of state actors and policy objectives of international financial institutions. Conventional views of the world do not help us examine the nature of conflict that emerges from poverty and marginalisation. The unwillingness and incapacity of state institutions to respond to the basic needs of the population is one of major obstacles to peace. In dealing with threats to international security, the global community is required to take a fresh look at the range of collaborative actions, which would help transform the existing order.

The second part of this book identifies five approaches to understanding causes of conflict and violence. It includes organised violence such as war, violence against women, group conflict based on identity differences and dissatisfaction of basic needs, economic inequities and environmental degradation. Certain social and political settings operate in ways that aggravate economic and environmental sources of conflict.

In the third part, this volume looks at various strategies for achieving peace, and how these strategies have been applied to the real world. The conditions for overcoming violence can be improved by peace keeping, making and building. In order to reduce and prevent international violence, we need to look for alternative security mechanisms, non-adversarial methods of conflict resolution, sustainable development strategies and nonviolent action for policy changes. This section also illustrates that human life would not be improved without realising human rights, economic well-being, self-determination and ecological security.

Peace theories cover various kinds of problems in inter-personal, inter-group and international relations. In the last part, we will examine the integration of peace strategies at different levels of human society. In addition, primary inquiries will be directed toward integrating practices,