

The Collaborative Research Centre “Dynamics of Security” (SFB/TRR 138) and the Anthropology of Peace, Conflict, and Security (APeCS) network of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) are organizing the joint, interdisciplinary conference:

**Peace, conflict, and security in times of existential crises:
Critical, interdisciplinary, and public engagements**

21–22 March 2024, Marburg, Germany

Call for papers

Panel 9. The perceptions of the enemy

Convenors:

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This panel offers a multidisciplinary approach to the study of the Other during conflicts, specifically how the Other is being constructed as an enemy. Our aim is to contribute to the research on enemy making, the process by which individuals or groups develop hostile attitudes or view others as enemies, especially in the context of neighbouring ethno-national communities in intractable conflicts such as Israel-Palestine, Russia-Ukraine, Rwanda and the Balkans. While we know that this construction of the enemy is often supported by media, gossip (Das 1998) and even commercial interests, in the context of intractable conflicts it is still largely under-analyzed, under-theorized, and not well understood. Despite Arjun Appadurai’s hypothesis of treachery (1988) which argues that the worst kinds of violence in ethnic wars, there is not much scholarly attention to the topic. The scholarly literature suffers from three main problems.

First, contrary to the vast literature on ethnic cleansing, the scholarly body of literature on neighbouring ethno-national communities in intractable conflict is quite limited.

Second, ethnic conflict theories are rarely emotion based even though most of them use the concept of emotions to answer the puzzling question of why an individual may kill, beat, or humiliate another human being. The literature rarely accounts for the depth of feelings involved in the perception of those persons categorized as the enemy. Instead, the literature argues that distancing between soldiers and enemies is crucial in order to be able to kill adversaries—mostly by dehumanizing—either demonise or objectify—the enemies. Thus, despite Malešević (2022) research, the social dynamics of intimate, face-to-face violent confrontation is still largely under-analyzed, under-theorized, and not well understood.

Third, this literature is mostly concerned with the victims of violence and not the perpetrators. Hence, it does not consider narratives that justify or excuse morally troublesome behaviour or provide the motivations for it.

This panel aims to strengthen the understandings of enemy making by bringing together researchers from different disciplines and geographical regions. We invite submissions that delve deeper in the making of the 'enemy' Other, that develop theories around relationships between the self and other in the context of (ethno-national) violence and other subjects that relate to the questions raised in this call.

Abstract proposals of up to 300 words, accompanied by titles, names, bios of up to 100 words, and affiliation and contact details of authors should be sent to the convenors by **the 2nd of October 2023**. We expect to notify the selected participants by the 16th of October.

We also remind you that (limited) funding will be available to precarious scholars on a reimbursement of real costs basis. Also, for scholars from the Global South in need of a visa, the organisers can issue letters of invitation.