

International Conference

Re-thinking Peace and Conflict Studies in a Postcolonial World

10-11 October 2025 / Tunis, Tunisia



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Merian Family Meeting

Knowledge Diplomacy and South-South-North Cooperation: Revitalizing Bandung for the 21st Century in the Merian Centres Network

12-13 October 2025 / Tunis, Tunisia

Including

MECAM's Rencontre Ibn Khaldun

**Decolonizing Knowledge: Power, Epistemic Asymmetries, and
Colonial Legacies**

ميكام
مركز ميريان
للدراسات المتقدمة
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MECAM
Merian Centre
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In The Maghreb

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Table of Contents

Re-thinking Peace and Conflict Studies in a Postcolonial World (International Conference) **(2)**

Abstract **(2)**

Programme **(3)**

Knowledge Diplomacy and South-South-North Cooperation: Revitalizing Bandung for the 21st Century in the Merian Centres Network (Merian Family Meeting) **(7)**

Abstract **(7)**

Programme **(9)**

Abstracts of Presentations **(12)**

Re-thinking Peace and Conflict Studies in a Postcolonial World **(12)**

Knowledge Diplomacy and South-South-North Cooperation: Revitalizing Bandung for the 21st Century in the Merian Centres Network **(18)**

Decolonizing Knowledge: Power, Epistemic Asymmetries, and Colonial Legacies **(25)**

Abstracts of the Roundtables **(26)**

Participants **(27)**

Re-thinking Peace and Conflict Studies in a Postcolonial World **(27)**

Knowledge Diplomacy and South-South-North Cooperation: Revitalizing Bandung for the 21st Century in the Merian Centres Network **(33)**

Decolonizing Knowledge: Power, Epistemic Asymmetries, and Colonial Legacies **(42)**

Re-thinking Peace and Conflict Studies in a Postcolonial World (International Conference)

Abstract

“Re-thinking Peace and Conflict Studies in a Postcolonial World“ is the concluding conference of the Postcolonial Hierarchies in Peace and Conflict network. The goal is to bring together researchers from the network, its partner institutions and local scholars to discuss themes of the network as well as recent developments in postcolonial studies. It focuses on two of the major outreach outputs of the network (a handbook on postcolonialism in peace and conflict and the Virtual Encyclopaedia) and issues of postcolonial dynamics of violence, security governance and transformative justice.

Over the course of two days, the conference explores the thematic pillars that have shaped the network’s work over the past years: the coloniality of violence and conflict, security governance beyond Eurocentric frames, the politics of knowledge and representation, and approaches to transformative justice. It features five academic panels, three roundtables, and a concluding keynote event co-organized with MECAM. These formats not only present research from within and outside of the Network, but also create opportunities for exchange, collaboration, and collective inquiry across linguistic, regional, and disciplinary borders.

Central to the conference is the presentation of two major scholarly outputs of the Network: the Rowman & Littlefield Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies, and the digital Virtual Encyclopaedia on Rewriting Peace and Conflict. Both initiatives represent the network’s commitment to diversifying and decentralizing knowledge production in the field. The handbook is the first comprehensive collection to centre voices and perspectives from the Global South(s), not just as subjects of inquiry, but as epistemic agents. The Virtual Encyclopaedia, in turn, offers a collaborative and multimodal platform for de- and postcolonial scholarship, expanding both academic and public access to alternative understandings of peace and conflict.

The conference is thus not only a space for academic exchange, but also a moment of collective reorientation – toward a peace and conflict studies that is attentive to power, grounded in plurality, and committed to epistemic justice.

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Programme

Thursday, October 9, 2025

- Arrival of Participants
- Dinner for Participants Who Have Already Arrived (*upon invitation only*)
 - **Time:** 18:45
 - **Venue:** Restaurant Dar Sleh (145 Rue de la Kasbah, Tunis 1006)

Day 1 | Friday, October 10, 2025

Venue: Hotel Carlton Tunis, 31 Ave Habib Bourguiba, Tunis 1000

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|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:30-10:00 | Introduction to the Conference / Hierarchies Network |
| 10:00-11:30 | ROUNDTABLE Presentation and Discussion of the Rowman & Littlefield Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Siddharth Tripathi• Susanne Buckley-Zistel• Tareq Sydiq• Fabricio Rodríguez Discussant: Mariam Salehi Chair: Adam Sandor |
| 11:30-12:00 | Break |
| 12:00-13:30 | PANEL Dynamics of Violence Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swati Parashar• Siddharth Tripathi• Izadora Xavier Chair: Siddharth Tripathi |
| 13:30-14:30 | Lunch Break |

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14:30-16:00 | PANEL Security Governance Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam Sandor • Jana Hönke • Tareq Sydiq • Darja Wolfmeier • Yazid Benhadda Chair: Imene Gannouni Khemiri |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | Break |
| 17:00 – 19:00 | ROUNDTABLE Rewriting Peace & Conflict: The Virtual Encyclopaedia as an Avenue to Pluralise Knowledge in Peace and Conflict Studies (https://rewritingpeaceandconflict.net/) Introduction & Moderation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miriam Bartelmann • Viviana García Pinzón Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gabriel Garroum Pla • Swati Parashar • Selbi Durdiyeva |
| 19:00 | Reception (<i>upon invitation only</i>) |

Day 2 | Saturday, October 11, 2025

Venue: Hotel Carlton Tunis, 31 Ave Habib Bourguiba, Tunis 1000

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|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:30-11:00 | PANEL Transformative Justice Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selbi Durdiyeva • Anna Lena Goll • Hanna Schnieders • Anika Oettler • Nessim Znaïen Chair: Massensen Cherbi |
| 11:00-13:00 | PANEL Contesting Hierarchies: Civil Society and Struggles for Peace Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christine Hatzky • Rirhandu Mageza-Barthel • Viviana García Pinzón • Sophie Falschebner |

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|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Chair: Merouan Mekouar |
| 13:00-14:00 | Lunch Break |
| 14:00-15:30 | ROUNDTABLE Looking ahead - Current Debates and Developments Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mariam Salehi • Susanne Buckley-Zistel • Merouan Mekouar • Andreas Mehler • Miriam Bartelmann Chair: Tareq Sydiq |
| 15:30-16:00 | Break |
| 16:00-17:30 | Postcolonial Hierarchies meets Merian Centres <i>This session is open for anyone who has been (or is currently involved) in the research activities of the Merian Centers or the Hierarchies network.</i> Hosts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anika Oettler • Benjamin Heidrich |
| 19:00 | Welcome Ceremony at the Residence of H.E. the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Elisabeth Wolbers (<i>upon direct invitation from the Embassy</i>) <i>Residence of the Ambassador, 6, rue du Lac Ichkeul, La Soukra</i> |

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MERIAN FAMILY MEETING

Knowledge Diplomacy & South-South-North Cooperation:

Revitalizing Bandung
for the 21st Century
in the Merian Centres Network

12–13 OCTOBER
2025

Tunis, Tunisia

CARLTON Hotel 31 Av. Habib Bourguiba Tunis, TUNISIA



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GIGA
German Institute for Global and Area Studies
Center for the Study of Global and Regional Studies



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Knowledge Diplomacy and South-South-North Cooperation: Revitalizing Bandung for the 21st Century in the Merian Centres Network (Merian Family Meeting)

Abstract

Inspired by the historical legacy of the 1955 Bandung Conference — though mindful of its limitations in practice — the Merian Family Meeting seeks to reimagine North-South academic relations and global knowledge production through the collaborative work of the Merian Centres. The meeting positions the Centres’ transregional and interdisciplinary cooperation as a platform to reposition knowledge from the Global South — not as a peripheral recipient, but as a central co-producer of global knowledge.

The core objective is to revitalize and expand South-South cooperation in research and academia while establishing a South-South-North architecture of Knowledge Diplomacy. This trilateral model aims to serve as a foundation for more equitable, sustainable, and genuinely reciprocal scientific partnerships.

The resurgence of *Knowledge Diplomacy* underscores the transformative potential of South-South-North cooperation in addressing global epistemic asymmetries. The Merian Family Meeting revives Bandung’s enduring principles—anti-colonialism, solidarity, economic collaboration, and cultural exchange—while critically reflecting on how these ideals can be meaningfully adapted to contemporary academic networks.

In an era of persistent epistemic inequality and Western-centric dominance, the call for epistemic decolonization remains urgent. This entails dismantling entrenched hierarchies of knowledge while fostering intellectual sovereignty in the Global South. The meeting will encourage reflection on:

- Strengthening regional research hubs,
- Elevating local and indigenous knowledge systems, and
- Fostering inclusive, multilingual academic communities.

The rise of new global actors—particularly BRICS countries—signals a shift in the international research landscape. The Merian Family Meeting will explore their potential to advance scientific collaboration beyond Western hegemony, supporting a vision of “Bandung 2.0”: a more connected, equitable, and pluralistic global knowledge order.

The Merian Centres embody this vision through their grounded presence in the Global South and their commitment to internationalizing the social sciences and humanities. Their interdisciplinary, transregional, and multilingual methodologies strive to create fairer academic networks that value indigenous epistemologies and regional perspectives.

This Merian Family Meeting marks a pivotal moment to consolidate these efforts and reaffirm the shared mission of the Centres: to shape a more just, inclusive, and impactful landscape for global knowledge production in the 21st century.

Core Themes of the Merian Family Meeting

- *Revisiting Bandung:*
Epistemic decolonization as a cornerstone for intellectual independence—reassessing historical lessons while redefining global academic discourse.
- *Emerging Powers and the Global South:*
Examining the role of new actors in fostering scientific collaboration that transcends Western hegemonies.
- *Alternative Knowledge Systems:*
Centering indigenous epistemologies and multilingual scholarship as pillars of inclusive knowledge production.
- *Regional Research Hubs and South-South-North Networks:*
Strategies for collaborative frameworks that strengthen knowledge infrastructures in the Global South and beyond.
- *Transregional Solidarity and the Future of the Merian Network:*
Best practices, challenges, and future directions for equitable knowledge cooperation.

Overall organization & coordination on site:

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Programme

Day 1 | Sunday, October 12, 2025

Venue: Hotel Carlton Tunis, 31 Ave Habib Bourguiba, Tunis 1000

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| 9:00-10:15 | Official Opening & Welcome Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00-9:15: Welcome by MECAM Directors – Amel Guizani & Julius Dihstelhoff • 9:15-9:30: Welcome speech by the Rectorate of Université de Tunis – Slim Driss & Emna Beltaief • 9:30-9:45: Welcome speech by Philipps-Universität Marburg – Evelyn Korn • 9:45-10:00: Welcome speech by the Ambassador of Germany, her Excellency, Elisabeth Wolbers • 10:00-10:15: Welcome speech by the Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education – Malek Kochlef Moderation: Julius Dihstelhoff |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | Thematic Introduction: Maghreb face aux mutations globales: enjeux géopolitiques, diplomatie du savoir et reconfiguration des coopérations Opening: Julius Dihstelhoff Presenter: Rachid Ouaisa |
| 11:00-11:30 | Break |
| 11:30-13:00 | MECAM's Rencontre Ibn Khaldun: Decolonizing Knowledge: Power, Epistemic Asymmetries, and Colonial Legacies (<i>Organized by GIGA</i>) Introductory Words: Clara-Auguste Süß Keynote speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manuela Boatcă • Soumaya Mestiri Moderation and comment: Raouf Farrah |
| 13:00-14:00 | Lunch Break |

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|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14:00-15:30 | PANEL I Reclaiming Bandung? Decolonizing Knowledge to Strengthen Intellectual Independence and South-South Cooperation Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christine Hatzky • Martin Fuchs • Antje Linkenbach • Georges Khalil • Tomaz Amorim • Chika Mba • Mamadou Diawara Moderation: Max Ajl |
| 15:30-16:00 | Break |
| 16:00-17:00 | PANEL II Emerging Powers and the Global South: Examining the Merian Centres as a Driver of Scientific Collaboration – Perspectives from MECILA (Brazil) and CALAS (Mexico) Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lucas Gabriel Christel • Sergio Costa Moderation: Rachid Ouaisa |
| 19:30 | Reception Closing Dinner at Palais Bayram (<i>upon invitation only</i>) TBC 6 Rue des Andalous, Bab Menara, 1008 Tunis |

Day 2 | Monday, October 13, 2025

Venue: Hotel Carlton Tunis, 31 Ave Habib Bourguiba, Tunis 1000

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|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00-10:30 | PANEL III How the Demise of the Liberal World Order Reshapes Global Knowledge Exchange: Geopolitical Challenges for the Merian Centres Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jaime Antonio Preciado Coronado • Laila Abu-Er-Rub • Isabelle Werenfels • Riadh Ben Khalifa • Sergio Costa • Andreas Mehler Moderation: Izadora Xavier |
| 10:30-11:00 | Break |
| 11:00-13:00 | PANEL IV Alternative Knowledge Systems in Africa: Strengthening Epistemologies and Multilingual Science – Perspectives from MIASA (Ghana) and MECAM (Tunisia) |

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|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grace Diabah • Cyrine Kortas • Imed Melliti • Moncef Abdejallil • Khaoula Matri <p>Moderator: Sonja Ganseforth</p> |
| 13:00-13:30 | Lunch Break |
| 13:30-15:15 | <p>PANEL V Science With(out) Boundaries: Policy, Hubs & South-South Collaboration in Global Research</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jochen Kemner • Jörg Gengnagel • Tomaz Amorim • Agnes Schneider-Musah • Mamadou Diawara <p>Moderation: Friederike Pannewick</p> |
| 15:15-15:30 | Break |
| 15:30-17:00 | <p>PANEL VI How to proceed? Strengthening Collaboration Among Merian Centres (open discussion)</p> <p>Short Inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nesrine Baklouti • Marko Scholze <p>Moderation: Luise Fischer</p> |
| 17:00 | <p>Closing Remarks by MECAM and Reception followed by optional participation in a DREAM CITY festival event (<i>upon invitation only</i>)</p> <p>Contact: Hiba Mednini</p> |

Abstracts of Presentations

Re-thinking Peace and Conflict Studies in a Postcolonial World

Exploring the coloniality of migration governance in the Mediterranean: a colonial genealogy of anti-migration “Information campaigns”

Benhadda, Yazid

Some migratory flows have long been considered a security “problem” in Europe. In facing this “problem”, Western liberal democracies have developed a vast arsenal of practices to organize and limit this phenomenon, from the establishment of border control to surveillance, etc. One of these practices is so-called “information campaigns”. Western governments have used different mediums such as videos and posters to target migration candidates, calling on them not to try to migrate “illegally”. However, this practice remains understudied in the literature, especially during colonial times. This paper aims to draw up a colonial genealogy of “information campaigns” by shedding light on the use of propaganda by the French colonial authorities in Algeria, in the immediate post-Second World War era. These propaganda campaigns aimed to discourage the embarking of “unwanted” Algerians for France. In this endeavour, I will draw on documents of the North African Bureaus (*Bureaux Nord-Africains*) – an institution created in the post-Second World War era to organize Algerian migration in France – collected in the French National Archives (*Archives Nationales*).

Transformative Justice, Colonial Reverberations of the Past in Present, and Beyond Coloniality of Liberal Peace

Durdiyeva, Selbi

Transformative Justice has been a reactive response to the problems faced in the over four decades of crystallization of transitional justice as a field that deals with the legacies of large-scale atrocities. Transformative justice as a concept saw a rapid proliferation in the scholarship with incremental change in practice, and as with its counterpart public international law, it proved to be not resilient in the face of modern coloniality and modernity’s advocates’ double standards, placing a burden on victims to achieve liberal peace. Taking the critique of transformative justice and its lack of focus on colonial reverberations of colonial structures and non-remnants in the present, not least manifested in the marginality of non-Western imperialisms in postcolonial debates, I argue that what is not seen is not necessarily not present, drawing on the example of multiple presences despite the global absences of colonial reverberations of the Soviet and Russian coloniality.

Ambiguous Narratives of (De)Colonisation: the Case of Cyprus

Falschebner, Sophie

Peace and conflict studies, along with dominant conflict management practices, often overlook the impact of colonising violence on peace processes – particularly in contexts “on the margins of Europe” (Rappas 2015). Using Cyprus as a prime example, I shift the focus to such frequently omitted (post)colonial cases characterized by ambiguity and in-betweenness. Drawing on narrative interviews across the divide, I center on the ongoing violence of diverse colonialism(s) in Cyprus as well as resistances to them, and foreground what Cypriots perceive, experience and narrate as colonialism. As I will demonstrate, how colonialism(s) are interpreted and which narratives about (de)colonisation are mobilized in resistance to power depends heavily on actors’ positioning within the conflict constellation, creating a multitude of contested and opposed narratives about colonial power, its impact, and avenues to peace and decolonisation. As a result, narratives about (de)colonisation in Cyprus simultaneously serve to challenge colonial hegemony, but also reinforce colonial hierarchies and mindsets. This highlights the need to critically examine how anti-colonial resistance may also reproduce violence and

exclusion, and to ask which inclusive visions of decolonisation and peace exist in protracted conflict contexts.

Disrupting and recreating the order of the violent city: spatialities of the urban protest in Colombia's 2021 National Strike

Garcia Pinzon, Viviana

Urban revolts have gained renowned interest in the literature on Latin American politics. However, the spatial dimension of these revolts remains underexplored. This paper provides a spatial analysis of large-scale urban protests, examining the case of Cali during the 2021 Colombian national strike. Between April and June 2021, Colombia experienced the largest wave of protests in its recent history, known as the "National Strike". Around 1.5 million people took to the streets, demanding social and political change. Known as the 'capital of the resistance' by those participating in the protests, Cali became the main epicentre of the National Strike. The repertoire of spatial mobilisation included blockades and occupations of streets, squares and parks. This not only disrupted the socio-spatial order of a city characterised by high levels of inequality, exclusion, violence and racism, but also gave rise to a new geography of contestation, with spaces, political identities and practices being given new meanings. While the protests started as a reaction to national politics, their dynamic and deep impact in Cali can be only be understood by reckoning their rootedness, their emplacement, in the city. Examining the protests from a spatial perspective reveals the connections between urban conflict and coloniality of power. The analysis brings together different strands of literature on social movements and contentious politics, urban politics, and political geography. Empirically, it draws on fieldwork-intensive research and spatial analysis.

Distributing the Sensible: Aesthetic Regimes and Postcolonial Authority in the ICC's Visual Performance of Justice

Goll, Anna Lena

This paper examines the International Criminal Court's #JusticeatWork digital campaign to explore how visual and affective strategies shape international criminal justice. Departing from spectacularised imagery, the campaign highlights the often-invisible bureaucratic labour behind courtroom proceedings through staff profiles that stage 'justice at work.' Drawing on affect theory and critical legal scholarship, the paper argues that the ICC mobilises emotions such as care, dedication, and vulnerability to legitimise its authority and manage public perception. It interrogates how the campaign constructs justice as expert-driven, stages neutrality and globality, and selectively visualises certain forms of labour and suffering while obscuring others. Through an analysis of the campaign's curated imagery and storytelling, the paper shows how the ICC's visual strategies do more than represent justice—they actively shape its meaning within a legal-aesthetic regime that controls what can be seen, felt, and imagined as legitimate justice.

Visions of Peace. Transitions between Violence and Peace in Latin America. Experiences from the knowledge LAB

Hatzky, Christine

would like to take this opportunity to present the most important findings and insights from our interdisciplinary CALAS Academic Laboratory "Visions of Peace. Transitions between Violence and Peace in Latin America" (2019-2021). Our research group has shifted from studying conflict and violence to peace studies in Latin America and the Caribbean, using an interdisciplinary approach that combines historical, literary, and cultural perspectives. We argue that effective research on peace processes in these regions requires interdisciplinary methods, focusing on civil society and cultural initiatives rather than traditional political science and state-centric views. This shift also addresses the rise of non-political or 'diffuse' violence

since the 1990s. Despite high levels of violence in the region, our work emphasizes the importance of studying ongoing peacebuilding and non-violent conflict resolution efforts. We suggest that peace and violence are historically interconnected, with peace being an active, transitional process that includes cultural, social, and political dimensions. Inspired by Brazilian liberation theology, we consider peace as 'relentless persistence' and a source of hope in an ever-changing world. Cultural peace is essential for challenging narratives that normalize violence. Post-conflict periods require justice, reconciliation, and reparations, often driven by civil society when states fail to meet their obligations. Ultimately, peace is an active process that shapes all aspects of human existence, not just the absence of violence. The synthesis volume of our research group was published in January 2025. David Díaz Arias, Christine Hatzky, Werner Mackenbach, Sebastián Martínez Fernández, Joachim Michael & Hinnerk Onken, *Peace in Latin America: Shifting paradigms in the studies of Culture, Society and Politics*, Routledge London, New York 2025.

North-South Linkages and Connective Histories: Germany's Peace Movement(s) Revisited

Mageza-Barthel, Rirhandu

Peace movements count among the emblematic social movements of our time. They advocate for different approaches towards sustainable peace and contest established politics that, in their view, detract from these. Whilst global peace remains an elusive goal, the topic remains politically salient. Even so, different movements and actors have varied conceptions and strategies that they propagate. Oftentimes, except for international peace organisations and campaigns, they are discussed as predominantly national and/or translocal groups. However, their attributes are far more entangled than suggested by state-centred analyses, and their reach is further than described. In particular, their North-South dynamics remain underexplored. The resurgence of the Global South in international politics invites novel perspectives in recent scholarship. Among these, connective histories stand out for calling into question the prevalent fragmented accounts of contemporary political organisation. One of the key contributions of the German peace movement has been in changing the country's political culture following the atrocities of World War II. In particular during its formative period, though, it remains controversial to what extent international influences informed its movement politics. The contribution thus explores these North-South linkages with regard to Germany's peace movement(s) and asks how these marginalised accounts can be recaptured once again.

Transformative Justice, postcolonial legacies and subnational disparities. The case of Colombia

Oettler, Anika

The 2016 peace agreement between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC-EP) was expected to end armed conflict and to pave the way for substantial reforms. The comprehensive agreement included transitional justice provisions, adding to an existing transitional justice architecture. The complexities of Colombian's drive for peace bring up particularly relevant insights into the prospects and pitfalls of transformative justice, which emerged as a new paradigm to deal with structural and socio-economic root causes of violence. The presentation takes a closer look at the Colombian case in which subnational disparities and postcolonial legacies became a major policy issue in times of political transition. Almost nine years since the signing of the peace accord was celebrated internationally as a landmark achievement, the presentation looks at the implementation record, highlighting unequal development in different parts of the country as well as deficiencies in the implementation of the provisions concerning rural reform, illicit drugs, and political participation.

On Famines, 'Slow Violence' and 'Necropolitics'

Parashar, Swati

How do we account for the injured, violated, exterminated, disappearing, mourning, lifeless, rotting and suffering bodies of mass starvation? Are bodily injuries only about blood and war, sudden deaths on a temporal scale? What about the slow deaths, displacement and the disappearance of bodies that occur in geographies of deliberate starvation in famines produced through wars and other kinds of state actions? This paper engages with the existing dilemmas of studying famines as acts of violence perpetrated by actors who need to be made accountable. It offers some explanations of why famines have not been treated as acts of mass violence perpetrated against vulnerable populations, and how we might think of them as part of the 'slow violence' (Nixon 2011) of necropolitics (Mbembe 2003).

Disrupting and recreating the order of the violent city: spatialities of the urban protest in Colombia's 2021 National Strike

Pinzón, Viviana García

This paper foregrounds the contested character of space amid massive protests and analyses the spatiality of the repertoires of mobilization and protests' transformative effects on space and space's meaning based on the case of Cali during the 2021 wave of protests. Colombia saw the biggest wave of protests in its recent history between April and June 2021 within the framework of the so-called "National Strike." Around 1.5 million people took to the streets demanding social and political change. While demonstrations in urban Colombia had conventionally taken place in historical places and squares in the cities' downtown, the epicenter of the 2021 protests were the neighborhoods, particularly in marginalized areas. The spatial repertoire of mobilization included blockages and the occupation of streets, squares, and parks. Whereas the protests took place in several cities across the country, they had a notorious impact in Cali. Labelled as the 'capital of the resistance' by the people participating in the protests, Cali became the National Strike's main epicenter. The blockages and occupations not only disrupted the socio-spatial order of a city characterized by high levels of inequality, exclusion, violence, and racism but also gave way to the emergence of a new geography of contestation with the resignification of spaces, political identities, and practices. These aspects constitute the focus of this paper. The analysis brings together different strands of literature on social movements and contentious politics, urban politics, and political geography. Empirically, it draws on fieldwork-intensive research and spatial analysis.

Emerging Security Arrangements in the Global South and Postcolonial Hierarchies

Sandor, Adam; Hönke, Jana

Kenyan police officers arrived in Haiti in 2024 as the first contingent of a new, Kenya-led Multinational Security Support mission. In Mali, private military personnel of the Russian Wagner Group have been fighting alongside the Malian Armed Forces since 2021. These are but two Global South security arrangements. This paper discusses how these growing arrangements contest but also sustain postcolonial hierarchies in contemporary security governance. Postcolonial hierarchies have been increasingly contested yet also particularly visible. While they have been analyzed in the context of North-South security relations, we argue that variegated forms of postcolonial hierarchies also operate in multiplying security arrangements in and of the Global South, including with Russia, China and 'South-South' security arrangements. The paper first discusses the prevailing focus on North-South relations in work that addresses postcolonial hierarchies in security relations while scholarship on South-South relations emphasises 'Southern' solidarities. Second, it proposes conceptual clarifications and develops how postcolonial hierarchies can be defined to make them analytically useful for empirical analysis of a larger variety of security arrangements. The third section empirically

illustrates postcolonial hierarchies in emerging Global South security arrangements: South-South cooperation in international peace and conflict interventions (trilateral and non), and emerging actors in a global market of force. We conclude by discussing what is at stake in the transformations of security arrangements we currently see in the Global South and discuss their implications.

Experiences of Climate and Environmental Activists in Costa Rica: A Contribution to the Theorisation of Global Justice

Schnieders, Hanna

Debates about global justice are often shaped by Eurocentric perspectives, focusing on subjects from wealthy states in the Global North. Theories tend to overlook the historical continuities of coloniality and imperialism, and the interwoven relations of oppression and exploitation linked to race, gender, class and disability. Drawing on feminist, postcolonial, and decolonial thought, I examine the methodological implications of theorising global justice. Specifically, I explore whether grounded normative theory and critical ethnography can help to challenge hierarchies within the research process. To ground global justice theory, I center the praxis of climate and environmental activists. While the climate justice movement unites diverse political struggles, the lived experiences of those working for justice have not yet been sufficiently considered in theoretical debates. My research focuses on these experiences, exploring how they can enrich and reshape discussions on global justice.

Negotiating Security Arrangements: How civil society influences security orders

Sydiq, Tareq

Since the reform of security arrangements in Pakistan, stemming from the colonial era, major political changes took place across the Pakistani state. Drawing from fieldwork conducted in the British Library and in Islamabad, this paper argues that the global security orders were implemented locally in negotiation with civil society actors. Their negotiating power influenced key components of these arrangements, but their influence was limited by global structures outside of their influence. With major changes to these global structures (end of colonial rule, Global War on Terror), opportunity structures emerged allowing them to better leverage influence over the outcome of security arrangements. Such reform, it seems, is not driven by non-state actor's agency, instead being necessitated because of structural changes – but civil society was capable of steering existing interests into pathways more suitable to their preferences. The ongoing conflict over how security orders remain in place, in various fields like the legal, economic or social one, highlights claims by non-state actors to be involved in the re-arrangement of security orders. Their appeal to other forms of global structures, such as democracy promotion, played a major role in facilitating changes, e.g. through the involvement of the National Democratic Institute. And the emergence of local party structures in frontier provinces, emboldening civil society actors, indicates that such claimmaking practices, once in place, are likely to increase rather than decrease.

Vocabularies of Violence: Colonialism, Populism and (an)othering across Global North and Global South

Tripathi, Siddharth

There is an ideational shift in worldviews in international politics from outward-looking to more inward-looking, necessitating a deeper engagement and analysis of contemporary world (re)ordering. At one level, these attempts contest the “liberal” conceptions of world order and, on another level, manifest in particular visions of the world (re)ordering based on ‘nativism’ and ‘civilizational discourses’. This paper examines how colonial imaginaries are replicated and performed in the ‘postcolonial’ present and how does that impact world making/ordering from the ‘Global South’? The research will focus on colonial continuities to identify patterns

and contestations of the conceptions of world order within the ‘Global South’ and the ‘Global North’. It will examine vocabularies, strategies and methods used by populist governments to identify similarities and differences (along with contradictions and ambiguities) across the ‘Global North’ and ‘Global South’.

Narrating Humanitarianism: Who Tells the Story of Aid?

Wolfmeier, Darja

This paper reflects upon the possibilities on decolonizing humanitarian aid through a historical lens. It examines how humanitarian aid organizations shape, control, and restrict access to their archival materials and create their own historical narratives. Using two case studies on archival access and humanitarian public archiving, it argues that aid work is not only logistical and financial, but also profoundly political. These examples show how archival silences, selective documentation, and Western-led narratives influence public perception and obscure the complexities of humanitarian interventions in the Global South. The presentation calls for a broader understanding of accountability in the aid sector – one that includes historical transparency, societal responsibility, and decolonial critique. It highlights the need for scholars and practitioners alike to question who controls humanitarian knowledge, how it is preserved, and to what end, ultimately challenging dominant Western self-images in global aid.

Militarization as conviviality – how women define and resist gendered everyday authoritarian violence and discipline in Brazil

Xavier do Monte, Izadora

The contribution uses Mecila’s conviviality framework to advance a gendered analysis of Brazilian militarization. Drawing on ethnographic vignettes, it examines how three distinct women’s movements in Brazil – mothers opposing state violence, women from the landless worker’s movement, and women in São Paulo’s urban student movement – perceive and resist militarization. Their perspectives diverge from traditional definitions of International Relations scholarship. Moreover, they provide critical insight into dimensions of militarization often overlooked by the “pluralist normative” framework and other anthropological approaches to urban violence in Brazil. The paper demonstrates that these movements’ interpretations of militarization align more closely with feminist perspectives. Building on these feminist interpretations, the paper conceptualizes militarization as conviviality, framing it as an everyday process with differential impacts on men and women. This process is both material and ideological, shaped by the influence of men with guns on politics, but also extending beyond and affecting women in specific ways. Recognizing these varied impacts is crucial to effectively challenge and oppose militarization within Brazilian society, its economy, and its politics.

Transformative justice, historiographical debates and political conflicts in post-Arab Spring Tunisia

Znaïen, Nessim

The purpose of this contribution is to invest the complex relations between the transitional justice process and Tunisian professional historians, during the years of operation of the Truth and Dignity Commission (IVD), between 2013 and 2019. The conflict between IVD, and most of the academic sphere became clear in the Tunisian public sphere and media over these years. It crystallized in two stages. First of all, from 2014, the IVD entered into competition with the National Archives for the recovery and the constitution of a fund of documents concerning the years of the dictatorship. Subsequently some members of the IVD, have taken a direct stand on certain historiographical issues, provoking the ire of some historians. Using fieldwork carried out as part of the ERC Tarica project (2017-2022), I will show how this conflict incarnated power relations, going beyond simple historiographical debates, to question the very role of

transitional justice in Tunisia.

Knowledge Diplomacy and South-South-North Cooperation: Revitalizing Bandung for the 21st Century in the Merian Centres Network

How (not) to do Science communication through Social Media in India and Germany

Abu-Er-Rub, Laila

This talk explores the multifaceted challenges involved in coordinating a German-funded Centre of Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences in India, with a particular focus on external communication and social media engagement. As international academic collaborations become increasingly enmeshed in the broader currents of politics and global geopolitics, managing public-facing narratives has grown more complex and sensitive. Drawing from experience, I will examine how shifting political climates—both in India and Germany—had an impact on institutional messaging. The Centre's mission of fostering critical scholarship and transnational dialogue often confronts tensions between academic freedom and diplomatic caution. Social media, while a vital tool for outreach and visibility, can quickly become a site of contention, requiring careful curation and cultural sensitivity.

Decolonizing Knowledge: the experience of the Merian Centres

Amorim Fernandes Izabel, Tomaz (*Abstract for Panel I, Reclaiming Bandung? Decolonizing Knowledge to Strengthen Intellectual Independence and South-South Cooperation*)

This presentation reframes the experience of managing a center for advanced studies in the Global South, sponsored by Germany, through the analytical lens of "conviviality-inequality," the core research program of the Maria Sibylla Merian Centre Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America (Mecila). The Centre's location in São Paulo inverts the traditional flow of academic exchange, fostering a critical and innovative environment for North-South and, crucially, South-South dialogue. This dynamic is enriched by the participation of researchers from a global consortium of institutions and in joint activities with other Merian Centres, enabling exchanges that move beyond established hierarchies. Epistemologically, this approach is grounded in interdisciplinarity and multilingualism, essential presuppositions for the practice of decolonizing knowledge. By respecting diverse intellectual traditions and forms of expression, Mecila cultivates an environment of mutual trust. This, in turn, facilitates the formation of political and academic alliances for future collaborative research, fostering direct institutional partnerships that transcend state-mediated relationships and contribute to a more interconnected and equitable global research landscape.

Migrations and the Crisis of the Liberal Order: What is at stake for the Merian Centres?

Ben Khalifa, Riadh

The current crisis of the liberal world order is marked by a retreat from the principle of free trade, a gradual return to protectionism, the revision of customs tariffs, renewed calls for the relocation of production chains, and the tightening of border controls - particularly regarding South-North mobility. Public opinion is becoming increasingly radicalized, expressing hostility toward foreigners perceived as threats. Human rights values, once upheld by a dense network of non-governmental organizations and civil society actors, are being undermined and openly challenged by political leaders. Migration research is conducted by academic institutions, governmental bodies, NGOs, and civil society organizations. Two main approaches emerge: the first asserts that migration is a fundamental right, which benefits not only the individuals concerned but also host societies - economically, socially, and culturally. The second frames

migration as a “problem” to be solved, thereby reinforcing migrant stigmatization and supporting restrictive security-oriented policies. Since migration is a fundamentally transnational phenomenon, research on this topic must also adopt a transnational approach - one that follows migratory trajectories across regions, shares research experiences, cross-analyzes data collected in the field, and fosters meaningful exchange between researchers, practitioners, and affected communities. Within this framework, the Merian Centres can act as key players in a decolonial knowledge diplomacy, capable of responding to current geopolitical shifts by producing critical, multilingual, and field-grounded knowledge.

Knowledge, Participation, and Environmental Justice: Reflections on Latin American Mobilization

Christel, Lucas Gabriel

This proposal examines the relationships between knowledge, participation, and environmental justice that emerge in socio-environmental conflicts. Based on a conceptual review and the study of significant experiences, three main forms of knowledge are identified: traditional-local, technical, and legal-institutional. Each of these is constructed, transmitted, and employed in struggles against the expansion of extractive activities in Latin America such as large-scale mining, fracking, or lithium exploitation. As a tentative argument, it is suggested that environmental participation cannot be understood solely in terms of access to information but rather involves collective, multidimensional, and context-specific processes of knowledge production. The proposal further explores how the dynamics of appropriation and contestation of knowledge strengthen environmental awareness and enhance the capacity for social actors' influence

Merian Centres and the Role of Area Studies in the Era of Global Turbulence

Costa, Sérgio

Based on our experience after 8 years running the Merian Centre Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America (Mecila), I will discuss three aspects in this presentation: i) Multiple contemporary crises are interdependent and can only be mitigated in a concerted and simultaneous manner in different world regions; ii) Fostering cooperation between the global north and the global south as well as between disciplines and area studies is not just science diplomacy, it is science policy; iii) Merian Centres are fortunate spaces for both researching global interdependencies and renewing humanities and social sciences in Germany and in the regions in which the Centres are located.

African Languages and Science: Rethinking Knowledge Production and Dissemination in 21st-Century Africa

Diabah, Grace

This contribution interrogates the viability of African languages as legitimate vehicles for scientific knowledge production and dissemination in the 21st century. Despite the richness and intellectual depth embedded in African languages, their use in scientific discourse remains marginal, constrained by colonial legacies, institutional language hierarchies, and the global dominance of English and French, among others. With examples from various African contexts, the paper examines both conceptual and structural challenges such as the lack of standardized scientific terminologies, limited publishing infrastructure, and policy neglect. It also highlights opportunities for epistemic justice through linguistic revitalization, community-driven research, and multilingual scientific practices supported by advances in AI-driven language technologies. Drawing on insights from the Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA), attention is also paid to the role of non-dominant dissemination formats as legitimate and impactful modes of scientific communication. The paper ultimately advocates for reimagining African languages not as vernacular residues, but as robust and credible mediums for scientific

thought, innovation, and inclusive knowledge dissemination.

Knowledge Production: Beyond Bandung

Diawara, Mamadou (*Abstract for Panel 1, Reclaiming Bandung? Decolonizing Knowledge to Strengthen Intellectual Independence and South-South Cooperation*)

Bandung is not something we should forget. A meeting of around six hundred leaders and delegates from twenty-nine newly independent countries was held 70 years ago. These countries were from a fragmented world in Asia and Africa. Take, for instance, the case of Carlos Romulo, the Philippines' representative, who, despite considering Nehru to be a "highly cultivated intellect", also saw him as a "pedant". A senior delegate of the Indian representation in charge of the conference stated that... 'There is little that is significantly new in the Bandung Declaration, since most of the ideas can be found in the United Nations Charter' (Chakrabarty, 2010). When reclaiming Bandung, it is important to bear this in mind, as it concerns evaluating his legacy critically.

Knowledge Production: Lessons Learned

Diawara, Mamadou (*Abstract for Panel 5, Science With(out) Boundaries: Policy, Hubs & South-South Collaboration in Global Research*)

The poor state of universities is well known. It is pointless to mention this. However, they play a crucial role in the development of highly innovative formats that offer a fresh perspective on the increasingly bleak dystopian paradigm. The time has come to consider the various experiences that have taken place across the continent and beyond. Point Miasa, Point Sud, The Program Point Sud and Papa are among those. What lessons can we learn from Africa and the Global South to inform our future path?

The Rocky Road towards Epistemic

Fuchs, Martin; Linkenbach, Anne

The call for a South-South dialogue and cooperation on an academic level between the globally active Merian Centers seems a legacy of the Bandung Conference of 1955 and its anticolonial agenda. However, the hoped-for dialogue shows a crucial difference. Merian Centers, while located in the Global South, are first of all a form of North-South cooperation, meant to open European / Western academic traditions to other than Western epistemologies. This inbuilt hybrid connection already points to characteristic features (or should we say: problems) of the decolonial debate. In our contribution we will highlight some of the difficulties on the road to epistemic justice. In order to stimulate a longer-term discussion and cooperation we will address a) the radical demand for 'delinking' from Western knowledge, the chimera of authentic non-Western traditions, and the always existing hybridity of knowledges; b) the unclear role of western scholars in the decolonial debate, and the need for unlearning and learning; c) the question of scholarly credibility: whose knowledge counts; which knowledge is accepted to raise universal validity claims? Related to this is the question of subaltern vs. hegemonic knowledge; d) the appropriation, even weaponization of the decolonial critique by ethnic nationalism.

The ICAS:MP Merian centre in Delhi: Chances and Challenges of (Global) research

Gengnagel, Jörg

This contribution will address ICAS:MP's specific position as the first Merian Center and research hub established 2015 in New Delhi. Some of the opportunities and challenges addressed here are:

1. Delhi-Centric Structure

- While New Delhi offers proximity to numerous academic institutions and policy bodies, the centralization of activities in the capital can inadvertently marginalize scholars and institutions from other regions in India and the Global South.
 - The physical and intellectual centrality of Delhi risks reinforcing existing hierarchies within the Indian academic landscape.
2. Institutional Collaborations
 - Institutional collaborations, while important, have at times proven to be problematic. ICAS:MP has found more success in building on existing networks with well-established Indian scholars across disciplines.
 - This scholar-driven model, though productive, creates challenges in terms of sustainability, visibility, and institutional ownership.
 3. Fellowship Program
 - Despite its thematic mission, the majority of fellowship applications center on South Asia, raising the question of whether ICAS:MP is being perceived as an Area Studies center.
 - This underscores a broader challenge of maintaining a global and comparative focus while responding to local scholarly ecosystems.
 4. Opportunities for South–South Collaboration
 - There is a growing interest in developing stronger South–South academic networks.
 - The center could play a pioneering role in reimagining international cooperation beyond the Global North-Global South binary, by fostering links between India, Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

South-South cooperation and knowledge production: Cuban and Angolan Academics Research the "National Question" in Postcolonial Angola (1984-1990). The "Interdisciplinary Project for the Study of National Integration in Angola" (PIQN).

Hatzky, Christine

PIQN was a binational, interdisciplinary academic project between Cuba and independent Angola, involving disciplines such as history, sociology, linguistics and economics. The aim was to create and exchange academic knowledge about the foundations of the Angolan nation and to develop new methodologies to explore the possibilities of national unity in the face of the multi-ethnic and multilingual nation of Angola, and to find out if and how this could be achieved and the population culturally and linguistically homogenised. The second underlying question of this enterprise was whether a socialist society could be developed under these circumstances. This academic project was part of the civil cooperation between Cuba and Angola that ran parallel to the military cooperation between 1976 and 1991.

Bandung in Berlin: Directions, Locations and Relations
Khalil, Georges

Almost 100 years ago, in 1927, the League against Imperialism was founded in Brussels. It has been initiated and was run by Willi Münzenberg, a young German socialist from Berlin. During the twenties of the last century and until 1933 Berlin has been a hub for activists, intellectuals and scholars from different parts of the colonial or imperial world. The League against Imperialism was referenced by some of the protagonists of the 1955 Bandung conference as a predecessor. It emerged in the context of anti-colonial uprisings in Syria, Morocco and other places and as a response to the perpetuation of colonial practices by the League of Nations. The Bandung conference took place in the post-colonial period of national independencies. My intervention will take up questions of relation from the perspective of my own location and ask whether the cultural and political directions and divisions of the past century such as East/West or South/North are still useful today.

Reactivating Sufi Archetypes: An Alternative Epistemology to Explore the New Man in Maghrebi and English Modernist Fictions

Kortas, Cyrine

This paper explores the potential of Sufism as a potential epistemological approach for literary texts analysis, within the broader context of strengthening African and Maghrebi knowledge systems. Through a comparative reading of a selection of English and Maghrebi texts, I investigate the reactivation of Sufi archetypes, such as the Perfect man, the child, the rebirth, and the journey, in texts such as Abdallah Laroui's *El Ghorba*, Mohamed El Khaldi's *Awtad*, and D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*. Though written in different settings, these narratives share an articulation of disillusionment and estrangement, experienced essentially by the male characters who struggle in modern times with a sense of the self. In this project, I am proposing Sufism, a Maghrebi mystical philosophy as a potential endeavor to grasp the existential question that marked modernist texts and the conceptualization of the New Man across cultural and literary boundaries. Ultimately, by situating Sufism with African and Maghrebi intellectual and ancestral tradition, this project proposes spiritual revitalization as a reading for literary texts that not only fosters intercultural and interdisciplinary knowledge production, but also enriches alternative knowledge systems and epistemologies, highlighting the transformative power of embodied mysticism in confronting modern alienation and reconstructing selfhood.

Retour sur l'expérience de l'Académie pilote postdoctorale africaine : leçons et enjeux de la production du savoir en Afrique

Matri, Khaoula

En tant que fellow de l'Académie pilote postdoctorale africaine (PAPA), je souhaite revenir sur deux dimensions centrales de ce programme, conçu comme un exercice de réflexivité critique sur les conditions de production du savoir en Afrique et à propos de l'Afrique. Dans un premier temps, j'analyserai les débats épistémologiques qui ont nourri les rencontres régulières entre chercheur-es et mentors, contribuant à interroger les cadres théoriques et méthodologiques dominants. Dans un second temps, j'examinerai les défis soulevés par la pratique académique elle-même, en particulier dans le champ de l'enseignement et des activités scientifiques, qui mettent en lumière les tensions mais aussi les potentialités liées à la circulation et à la valorisation des savoirs produits sur le continent.

Enjeux linguistiques de la postcolonialité - Le cas des sciences sociales en Tunisie

Melliti, Imed

La naissance de la sociologie en Tunisie au lendemain de l'Indépendance a été fondamentalement marquée par deux exigences : d'une part, faire table rase de l'héritage et des objets de connaissance que la science du colonisateur avait privilégiés (tribu, confrérisme, pratiques magico-religieuses, superstitions, etc.) ; de l'autre, faire de la sociologie un levier de modernisation d'une société qui vient de recouvrer sa souveraineté et son *agency*. Le désir de se départir de l'héritage colonial met au cœur du travail d'émancipation engagé la question linguistique, notamment l'usage du français, langue de l'ex-colonisateur. Aujourd'hui, après plusieurs décennies d'arabisation de la sociologie, les interrogations sur l'opportunité et l'intérêt de continuer de faire de la sociologie en français dans un pays comme la Tunisie n'ont pas reçu de réponses définitives. Notre communication tentera de faire la lumière sur ces questions et d'en dévoiler les enjeux.

Kwame Nkrumah's Search for Africa's Modernity

Mba, Chika

Here, I will discuss Nkrumah's seemingly contradictory efforts, both in his speeches, writings, and actions, to create an African modernity. He variously anchored his efforts in Western epistemology and constructs but progressively favoured a South-South/African epistemic

pathway to an Africa-centred modernity. I contrast his standpoint with that of other efforts to chart an African modernity, notably those of the moderate Kwasi Wiredu and the more radical Olufemi Taiwo. I argue that Nkrumah's decolonial modernity has some inconsistencies and shortcomings, but a critical contextualisation offers the continent and its people a much more strategically rewarding futurity.

Academic cooperation – thinking freely in a postliberal world

Mehler, Andreas

The decline of the Liberal World Order has immediate repercussions on all sorts of cooperation between Africa and Europe (or Ghana and Germany), including in the field of academic cooperation. Discussing openly the hitherto implicit assumptions on (shared or contested) values and goals has become an urgent necessity. MIASA has based its work on a very generic (supposedly non-Western) understanding of its key term „sustainable governance“ – but is this only one more implicit assumption? This presentation will discuss whether and how collaborative universal projects such as Merian centres can provide intellectual platforms for controversy and synthesis.

Maghreb face aux mutations globales: enjeux géopolitiques, diplomatie du savoir et reconfiguration des coopérations

Ouaissa, Rachid

La réflexion sur la place du Maghreb dans un monde traversé par des mutations globales et une polycrise sans précédent devient aujourd'hui plus urgente que jamais. Dans un contexte où l'ancien ordre international se défait et où le nouvel ordre peine à émerger, la région maghrébine apparaît à la fois comme un espace de fragilité et comme un laboratoire d'avenir. Situé au carrefour de l'Europe, du Moyen-Orient et de l'Afrique, le Maghreb concentre des enjeux géopolitiques majeurs – ressources énergétiques et minières, migrations, sécurité régionale – tout en souffrant de la paralysie persistante de son intégration régionale. Dans cet ordre mondial en recomposition, le Maghreb peut ainsi devenir un nœud stratégique. Face à ces bouleversements, les États maghrébins adoptent des stratégies différenciées de multipositionnalité : l'Algérie s'appuie sur une diplomatie énergétique diversifiée, le Maroc mise sur son rôle de passerelle vers l'Afrique subsaharienne, tandis que la Tunisie, fragilisée par ses crises internes, cherche à préserver une autonomie diplomatique malgré des marges de manœuvre limitées. Dans ce contexte, la nécessité d'une diplomatie du savoir s'impose avec force. Le rôle des centres Merian, et en particulier du MECAM (Merian Center for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb), apparaît essentiel : offrir une plateforme de coproduction scientifique et de coopération triangulaire South-South-North. Dans un ordre mondial en recomposition, le Maghreb peut ainsi devenir un médiateur épistémique entre l'Europe, l'Afrique et le monde arabe, contribuant à repenser et à façonner de nouvelles formes de coopération internationale.

Importance of the BRICS+ bloc in the Global South: potentialities and challenges for international cooperation and for a multipolar world order

Preciado Coronado, Jaime Antonio

Although the BRICS bloc promotes a multipolar vision, it continues to operate in a world order contested by supremacist, neo-protectionist, belligerent nationalism of domination without hegemony (Trump 2.0), which is against a liberal order based on rules articulated by global institutions such as the United Nations system, or multilateral ones (the IMF, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization), which is defended by the European Union, some countries of the 'Collective West' supported by liberal democracies, and the apex bodies of the world powers, such as the G-7, the G-20 and the OECD. The recent expansion of BRICS membership from 2024 with the incorporation of countries such as Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates, in addition to a long list of countries from Latin America, Africa and Asia that are

waiting to join, seeks the reconfiguration of alliances that broaden its scope in the Global South, in order to reinforce a possible multipolar world order. In addition, the BRICS+ bloc is promoting convergence with traditionally non-aligned countries, which is why it is allied with the Non-Aligned Movement and its update in the G-77, which brings together some 130 countries, including China and Mexico. Among its successes is a partial de-dollarization; although the pressure to use its own currencies in trade is gaining strength, it faces logistical and financial obstacles, despite the creation of the China-based New Development Bank (NDB) as an alternative to the IMF. Their regional influence has also grown: together, the BRICS account for more than 40% of the world's population and approximately 32% of global GDP (measured in PPP). China and India are locomotives of growth, Russia is at the center of the Eurasian Pivot, while countries such as Brazil and South Africa represent strategic points in Latin America and Africa. Given the regionalization process of the BRICS+ bloc, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI, Silk Road) promoted by China competes with the European Union's Global Gateway and the G-7's Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII). The relative success of the BRICS+ lies in the 'soft' diplomacy it practices, as the CELAC-China Summit in May 2025 showed. China's leadership, however, raises reservations among its members. India fears losing strength in manufacturing exports, while Russia is concerned about the lack of a global initiative. And, the particular concerns of the new member states should be analyzed. BRICS+ promotes cooperation among developing countries, especially in trade, energy, infrastructure, education and health, supported by the New Development Bank (NDB), which offers financing without neoliberal conditionalities, thus providing an alternative to the IMF for several nations in the Global South. This is different from traditional free trade agreements and somewhat in contrast to the bilateralism of the Trump 2.0 administration.

Reflections on Research Collaborations: Experiences from the Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA)

Schneider-Musah, Agnes

In this contribution we will reflect on some of the experiences from research collaborations carried out at the Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA). The institute builds on established networks within and beyond Africa and is part the network of Merian centres that has become an important framework of intellectual cooperation. Although international collaborations are often prone to challenges (unequal access to funds, limited funding, restrictions in academic freedom, etc.) they prove to be vital for approaching important contemporary issues and societal debates. This will be highlighted by a number of concrete examples from MIASA.

Positioning the MECAM in a tricky geopolitical environment

Werenfels, Isabelle

Even during the heydays of the liberal world order, knowledge exchange and production on the Maghreb was at risk of becoming sucked into ideological and political disputes related to a painful colonial past, to asymmetry in relations with Europe or to violent domestic conflict, as was the case in Algeria in the 1990s. Yet, in recent years growing geopolitical competition and new regional and international alliances of Maghreb states have begun to severely threaten knowledge exchange within the Maghreb. And the war on Gaza, related European positions, and the erosion of international law have impacted trust and exchanges between the Maghreb and Europe. In this difficult landscape the MECAM has been playing a unique role in preserving and promoting knowledge exchange.

Decolonizing Knowledge: Power, Epistemic Asymmetries, and Colonial Legacies

Decolonizing Knowledge in Times of Asymmetric Ignorance. On Counter-Mapping and Self-Indictments

Boatcă, Manuela

How do knowledge producers – in the social sciences and beyond – try to grapple with the geopolitical positionalities built in the reigning self-understanding of their institutional structures and disciplines? In the following, I discuss counter-mapping as a decolonial strategy to the essentialization of nation-states and world regions in social scientific and political discourse and argue for a relational perspective capable of revealing the constitutive entanglements through which a global capitalism grounded in colonial expansion interlinked all areas of the world. The focus lies on the entanglements that counter-mapping as a method uncovers between Europe and Africa, which Occidentalist social science has repeatedly constructed as fixed and unrelated locations on imperial maps.

The “decolonization machine.” Reflections on the act of decolonization

Mestiri, Soumaya

The aim of the keynote is to examine the propensity to decolonize, both as a phenomenon and as a practice. Is it possible – or even desirable – to decolonize everything? Might radicalism sometimes lie in the very refusal to decolonize, or at the very least, in approaching the issue in terms of degree rather than nature? The reflection will be structured around these central questions.

Abstracts of the Roundtables

Presentation and discussion of the Rowman & Littlefield Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies

Peace and Conflict Studies was broadly founded in the Northern Hemisphere, influencing how scholars understand patterns of peace or violence in the Global North via a core-periphery relationship with the Global South. This has implicitly strengthened asymmetric colonial power structures in knowledge production about peace, security, development and order. Thus, there is a need to make the discipline more inclusive and plural by setting a different agenda by taking cognisance of the grounded and global scale realities— political, economic, and social – of the Global South. This handbook discussion contributes to this research agenda examining postcolonial hierarchies and different trajectories of conflict/violence, justice/peace both in the Global South and North. It establishes comparative parameters of debates on peace and war in a thorough academic discussion not only ABOUT but WITH the Global South, combining innovative and synergetic thinking between scholars from the North and the South to pluralise Peace and Conflict Studies.

Rewriting Peace & Conflict: The Virtual Encyclopaedia as an avenue to pluralise knowledge in Peace and Conflict Studies

Peace and conflict studies (PACS) is a burgeoning and diverse field. Yet, it still needs to tackle the legacies of colonialism and its hierarchies, the historical trajectories of conflicts and their embeddedness in global entanglements. Postcolonial and decolonial approaches have pointed out that research and practice in the field are rooted in west-driven epistemological and ontological grounds resulting from colonial structures of power that hinder and often misconstrue our understanding of peace, conflict, and violence contributing to the reproduction of the structures sustaining violence and epistemic injustices. Thinking of strategies to move towards addressing coloniality of knowledge, scholars have highlighted the need to interrogate and problematize foundational concepts in the different disciplines of Social Sciences as well as the importance of unsettling the patterns of (in)visibility by bringing the voices and different forms of knowledge of groups traditionally marginalized to the centre. Against this background, the objectives of this roundtable are twofold: On the one hand, it introduces the Virtual Encyclopaedia (VE) on Peace and Conflict Studies one of the flagship initiatives of the collaborative network ‘Postcolonial Hierarchies in Peace & Conflict’. We will explain the rationale shaping the project of the VE, the principles and practices guiding the process, and the challenges we have encountered and the persistent tensions and contradictions. Along these lines, we will reflect on our positionality and the complexities of a project that aims to contribute to the pursuit of de-colonizing PACS, while being embedded in the Global North. On the other hand, in dialogue with a group of the VE’s contributors the roundtable aims to develop a reflection about the possibilities, challenges, and limitations in the pursuit of confronting epistemic hierarchies and undoing epistemic and ontological violence in the field.

Looking ahead - Current Debates and Developments

Postcolonial Hierarchies seldom persist without challenges. Both civil society and state actors have continuously challenged them, positing their own ideas of peace against existing socio-political realities. At the same time, legacies of colonialism persist, as roots of many contemporary conflicts. Debates on transformative justice and restitution continue to debate how conflicts can be transformed in the contemporary period. In this roundtable, we discuss recent developments in postcolonial research on peace, and examine potential trajectories the field.

Participants

Re-thinking Peace and Conflict Studies in a Postcolonial World

Bartelmann, Miriam

Miriam Bartelmann is a Ph.D. researcher at the Arnold-Bergstraesser Institute (ABI) in Freiburg, focusing on environmental and territorial conflicts that stem from or reproduce postcolonial trajectories. For her PhD she conducted fieldwork in Argentina, in and around the Delta of the river Paraná. Her research interests include decolonial perspectives, world-ecology, and epistemic hierarchies. She received an M.A. in Social Sciences from the University of Freiburg (UFR) and FLACSO Buenos Aires, and she studied at JNU (New Delhi) as well as in the M.A. Sociology program at UFR. Previously, she completed her B.A. in Sociology and Islamic Studies at Freiburg. She collaborates in the coordination, conceptualization, and development of the Virtual Encyclopedia.

Benhadda, Yazid

Yazid Benhadda holds a PhD in Politics and International Relations from the University of Exeter (UK). He is currently a fellow at the MECAM – University of Tunis. His research intersects critical security studies, colonial migration history, and North African studies. His work aims to understand present migration governance practices through shedding light on their colonial roots. His current project investigates the colonial history of the Moroccan passport. During his time in Exeter, he has also worked as a postgraduate teaching associate at the same university. He held a visiting research fellowship at the University of Marburg as part of the CRC138 “Dynamics of Security”. His work appeared in *International Political Sociology* and *Migration Studies*.

Buckley-Zistel, Susanne

Susanne Buckley-Zistel is a Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies and Executive Director of the Center for Conflict Studies at the Philipps University Marburg. Prior to this she held positions at the Freie Universität Berlin, the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt and King's College London. Her PhD she received from the London School of Economics in 2002, from 2015-6 she was a Senior Fellow at the Käfer Hamburger Kolleg for Global Cooperation Research and she has been acting as the Deputy Chairperson of the German Foundation for Peace Research since 2016. Her main interests lie in (transitional) justice, memory, gender, space and post-colonialism. She has published widely on these issues, including the co-edited volumes *Memorials in Times of Transition*, *Transitional Justice Theories*, *Gender in Transitional Justice*, *Women – Violence – Refugees, Perpetrators and Perpetration of Mass Violence*, as well as *Spatializing Peace and Conflict*. She has also co-edited the Forum section of the *Zeitschrift für Konfliktforschung* (ZefKo) on post-colonialism and conflict studies.

Cherbi, Massensen

Massensen Cherbi is a current longterm-fellow at MECAM (2023-2026) – University of Tunis. He holds a doctorate in law. In December 2019 he defended a thesis at the Université Paris II Panthéon-Assas on the “limits of Algerian constitutionalism” within the constitutional law of March 6, 2016. He moved to Algiers in January 2019 for his research, which allowed him to experience the first year of the “Hirak” protest movement **in situ** and incorporate initial developments into his thesis. He currently works on both the organization of public authorities, through themes such as citizenship, presidentialism or the constitutional role of the army, and fundamental rights and freedoms, through themes such as state religion, gender equality, or linguistic pluralism. He also works on Algerian constitutional history, from the demands of the Algerian nationalist movement to the more recent Hirak, and more generally on comparative

law, particularly with constitutions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Durdiyeva, Selbi

Selbi Durdiyeva is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Center for Conflict Studies, at Philipps University Marburg. She obtained her PhD at Transitional Justice Institute, Ulster University, Northern Ireland. She is a former Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability Fellow, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University (2021-2022). She was previously a research assistant at Nottingham Law School's UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded project. She also worked as an Adjunct Lecturer and Legal Clinic Coordinator at the School of Law at KIMEP University, Kazakhstan and as a researcher at the Child Rights International Network. Selbi's research interests are at the intersection of decolonial theory, transitional justice, feminist methods, and the former Soviet Union. Her recent article on the challenges and limitations of reparations for Soviet repressions in Russia is published in the International Journal of Transitional Justice.

Falschebner, Sophie

Sophie Falschebner is a PhD researcher at the Center for Conflict Studies at the Philipps University Marburg. Her PhD project focuses on the impact of colonialism on conflict dynamics in Cyprus, examining varied perspectives and experiences of colonisation and their influence on collective understandings, memories and lived experiences of the Cyprus problem, conflict party relations and approaches to conflict transformation. Before joining the project, she studied the M.A. in Peace and Conflict Studies at the Philipps-University of Marburg and the B.A. Applied African Studies at the University of Bayreuth. Sophie's research interests include activism and social movements, processes of social transformation, memory, identity and conflict, security studies, and post-colonial theory. She is especially interested in the micro-dynamics of conflict and conflict transformation.

García Pinzón, Viviana

Viviana García Pinzón is a Senior Researcher at the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute (ABI) in Freiburg and an Associate at the Institute of Latin American Studies at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA). Viviana completed a PhD in Political Science with a focus on peace and conflict studies at the Philipps University of Marburg (summa cum laude) and as part of the GIGA Doctoral Programme. In the Postcolonial Hierarchies network, her work examines how social mobilisation both reflects and challenges political, social, and spatial expressions of the colonality of power and the implications of these dynamics for urban governance and everyday politics. In addition, she coordinates the conceptualisation and development of the virtual encyclopedia.

Garroum Pla, Gabriel

Gabriel Garroum Pla is a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Research Group in International Public Law and International Relations at Pompeu Fabra University (Barcelona). Moreover, he is an external faculty member in the Barcelona Institute of International Studies (IBEI). He holds PhD in War Studies from King's College London. His interdisciplinary research combines qualitative and aesthetic methodologies and has recently focused on the relationships between practices of violence and power, space, and political subjectivities, particularly in Syria. In addition, he is especially interested in exploring the potential of using critical social and political theory to address the international politics of the Middle East.

Gannouni Khemiri, Imene

Imene Gannouni Khemiri is a current fellow at MECAM – University of Tunis. She works as an Assistant Professor in the English Department at the Faculty of Letters, Arts and

Humanities, University of Manouba, Tunisia. She holds a Master's degree and a Phd in cultural studies from the University of Manouba. Her doctoral research focused on the representation of Tunis in British travel writing (1815-1910). Her research interests include travel writing, migration studies, media studies and visual culture. She is the author of "Pretty as a Picture: Tunisian Landscape in the Travel Narratives of Temple (1835), Playfair (1877), and Ashbee and Graham (1887)"(2021). As a participant in the 'Migrant in Transit' program for emerging migration scholars in Tunisia, she has recently developed a strong interest in migration studies.

Goll, Anna Lena

Anna Lena Goll is a PhD researcher at the Department for International Relations at the University of Erfurt. Anna holds an LLM in Law and Politics of International Security from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and an MPhil in Justice and Transformation from the University of Cape Town. She obtained her BA in International Relations and Communication Science at the University of Erfurt. Her research interest lies at the intersection of International Law, Critical Security Studies, and Postcolonial Theory. More specifically, she is interested in the world-making and world-ordering activities of international law in the realm of international security, the construction and contestation of (legal) expertise and authority, as well as the narratives and practices that (re)produce and perform the international legal field and the (colonial) hierarchies within it.

Hatzky, Christine

Prof. Dr. Christine Hatzky is Professor for Latin American and Caribbean History at Leibniz Universität Hannover, and also has expertise in Atlantic history and the history of Lusophone Africa. Her research focuses on decolonisation processes, South-South cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa, transnational solidarity networks, the history of knowledge and science, and processes of violence and peace. Since 2015, she has been spokesperson for the Centre for Atlantic and Global Studies (CEAGS), since 2017 head of the joint project CALAS, and was project manager in the EU network ConnectCaribbean until June 2024. In 2023/24, she was a fellow at the Käte Hamburger Kolleg Global Cooperation Research at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Her Publications include: *Cubans in Angola* (U. Wisconsin Press 2015; LASA Book Prize 2016); *Peace in Latin America: Shifting Paradigms in the Studies of Culture, Society and Politics* (with David Díaz et al., Routledge New York 2025); *Lateinamerika 1800-1930 and Latin America seit 1930* (with Barbara Potthast, Oldenbourg Munich 2021). *Gender and Intersectionality in the History and Culture of Central América and the Caribbean (19th/20th centuries)/Género e interseccionalidad en la historia y la cultura de Centroamérica y el Caribe, siglos XIX y XX*, (with Anja Bandau and Lidia Becker), CIHAC Universidad de Costa Rica, San José 2024.

Heidrich, Benjamin

Benjamin Heidrich works in MECAM's science and project management team and is particularly responsible for coordinating tasks (e.g. in the areas of fellow selection, controlling, reporting and event organization). As a former employee of the Leuphana University Lüneburg, the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg and the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO) in Berlin, he has extensive experience in science administration as well as in research and teaching. As a doctoral candidate in the field of (Political) Geography, he is also investigating the role of imagined (state and non-state) orders of the future in the context of state fragmentation in Syria.

Hönke, Jana

Jana Hönke's current research examines how political geographies become transformed through South-South relations by studying the contested social and security arrangements

around multinational companies and large-scale infrastructure projects in Africa. This research explores how postcolonial and transnationalized politics in Africa come to constitute security knowledges and their related practices. It examines how governance practices are co-produced and contested, how they travel, and to what effect. Much of her work is multi-sited, taking place in diverse locales such as in Europe, China, and Brazil, as well as several African countries (South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Guinea). Before becoming a Professor of Sociology of Africa at the University of Bayreuth, Jana was an Associate Professor and Rosalind Franklin Fellow in International Relations at the University of Groningen. Prior to that, she worked as a lecturer in International Relations at the Politics and International Relations Department, University of Edinburgh.

Mageza-Barthel, Rirhandu

Rirhandu Mageza-Barthel is a Senior Researcher at the University of Marburg's Center for Conflict Studies. Trained in Political Studies and with an interdisciplinary background, Rirhandu's research interests situate themselves on the cusp of peace, development and international studies. She recently served as Full Professor of Peace and Development Studies at the University of South Africa, was a Visiting Research Fellow of the Research Centre 'Transformations of Political Violence' and was previously appointed as a Visiting Professor for International Gender Politics at the University of Kassel. She is a co-editor of the Routledge Series 'Gender in a Global/Local World' and sits on the editorial boards of 'Third World Quarterly' (TWQ) as well as 'International Feminist Journal of Politics' (IFJP).

Mehler, Andreas

Andreas Mehler is director of the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute and Professor of Political Science at Freiburg University, Germany. Mehler is the co-chair of the executive council of the Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA; at the University of Ghana) and director of the Africa Centre for Transregional Research (ACT) at Freiburg University. He is co-editor of the Africa Yearbook (since 2005), from 2009-2018 he has been editor of Africa Spectrum (with Henning Melber). Since 2018 he follows closely aspects of governance in restitution processes (of cultural artefacts and ancestral remains). Earlier he studied peace processes particularly power-sharing agreements and their implementation mostly in francophone Africa.

Mekouar, Merouan

Merouan Mekouar is Full Professor of Development Studies in the Department of Social Science at York University, Toronto. His research focuses on authoritarianism, governance, and contentious politics in the Middle East and North Africa as well as research methodologies. He is the author of *Protest and Mass Mobilization* (Routledge, 2016), and co-editor of *New Authoritarian Practices in the Middle East and North Africa* (Edinburgh University Press, 2022) and *Doing Research as a Native* (Oxford University Press, 2025). His work has appeared in *International Studies Review*, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, and *Surveillance & Society*, among others. He has held research appointments at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) and serves on the Scientific Advisory Board of the Merian Centre for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM).

Oettler, Anika

Anika Oettler is a Professor of Sociology at Philipps Universität Marburg and an Associate Researcher at the Hamburg-based German Institute for Global and Area Studies. She is a former member of MECAM's Executive Council. Her research is driven by the quest for a more thorough understanding of the forces behind social inequality, peace and transitional justice. She has conducted fieldwork in Central America and Colombia, and she has a special interest in

methodological innovation in the field of qualitative research. Among her recent publications are articles on the meanings of reconciliation in Colombia and the gendered dimensions of the 2016 Colombian peace accords.

Parashar, Swati

Prof. Dr. Swati Parashar is Professor in Peace and Development at the School of Global Studies, Gothenburg University, Sweden. Her teaching and research have led to academic appointments and fellowships in India, Singapore, UK, US, Ireland, Australia and Sweden. She has also taught at the University of Rwanda in Kigali and at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica. She is a member of the Swedish Development Research Network and has also served as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of SIDA. Her research interests include feminism, postcolonialism, research methodologies, gender based violence, famines and development in South Asia and East Africa. She is the author and co editor of several books, journal special issues and articles, book chapters, policy papers and popular media pieces. She is a co-editor in chief of the International Feminist Journal of Politics and serves on the advisory boards of other journals as well as the Helsinki University Press. She is also one of the co editors of the book series, Creative Interventions in Global Politics with Bloomsbury, and Gender and Sexuality in Global Politics with Bristol University Press. She served as Program Co-Chair of the International Studies Association for their 2023 annual convention at Montreal. She is the recipient of the eminent scholar award of the Feminist Theory and Gender Studies (FTGS) Section at the 2025 International Studies Association Convention at Chicago.

Rodríguez, Fabricio

Dr. Fabricio Rodríguez is a Senior Researcher at the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute (ABI) in Freiburg. He holds a PhD in Political Science with a focus on International Relations from the University of Freiburg. Prior to joining the Postcolonial Hierarchies network, Fabricio worked as a postdoctoral researcher in the BMBF-funded project ‘Bioeconomy & Global Inequalities’ at the Institute of Sociology at the Friedrich Schiller University Jena. His research and practical experience in international cooperation have drawn attention to how conflicts around land use, oil extraction, mining and biomass trade shape global inequalities and spatial reconfigurations across Latin America, Europe and China. His research in the Postcolonial Hierarchies network explores the ways urban protests are entwined with the contestation of coloniality/modernity dynamics and how this relationship shapes violent processes of hierarchization in Latin America. Fabricio also coordinates the Knowledge in Dialogue(s) component of the network.

Salehi, Mariam

Mariam Salehi leads the research group on “Transnational Conflicts” at the INTERACT Center for Interdisciplinary Peace and Conflict Research at Freie Universität Berlin. She is a former Visiting Scholar at MECAM. Her research focuses on struggles for change and justice, worldmaking, as well as the knowledge politics of violence. Her first book “Transitional Justice in Process: Plans and Politics in Tunisia” was published by Manchester University Press in 2022 (paperback in 2024). Recently, she published on “peace as a process” (with Thorsten Bonacker, *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen*) and “Global Hierarchies and Unequal Pressures in the Report-Making of Truth Commissions” (with Anne Menzel, *International Studies Review*).

Sandor, Adam

Adam Sandor is a Senior Researcher at the Chair for Sociology in Africa at the University of Bayreuth and part of the Postcolonial Hierarchies Network. His research for the project examines the transnational governance of violence in the Global South with a focus on African security dynamics. The project asks to what extent do Africa-led security initiatives aiming to

tackle armed Islamist groups challenge postcolonial security relationships and security practices. Before joining the project, Adam was the Research Lead for the United Kingdom's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) projects in Mali, the Gao Stabilisation Fund (GSF) and Supporting Stabilisation in Central Mali. He also held post-doctoral researcher positions at the Käte Hamburger Kolleg Global Centre for Cooperation Research (Universität Duisburg), and at the Centre Franco-Paix in Conflict Resolution and Peace Missions at the University of Québec in Montreal (UQAM).

Schnieders, Hanna

Hanna Schnieders is a PhD researcher at the Chair for Political Theory at the University of Erfurt. She holds a B.A. in Political Science and Cultural Research from the University of Bremen and an M.A. in Interdisciplinary Latin American Studies, specialising in Gender Studies, from Freie Universität Berlin. Hanna's research interests lie in decolonial and postcolonial feminist perspectives. In her dissertation, she explores conceptions of global justice that address the complex interplay of postcolonial hierarchies and global inequalities. Adopting a grounded normative theory approach, she examines how ideas of justice are formed and expressed in practice. For her fieldwork, she spent time in Costa Rica engaging with socio-ecological conflicts and examining how those involved in environmental and climate justice movements understand and practise justice.

Sydiq, Tareq

Tareq Sydiq is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Center for Conflict Studies and Coordinator of the Postcolonial Hierarchies in Peace & Conflict Network. He is the Principal Investigator of the AFPRO project on protest movements during and after insurgencies. His research is centered around questions of state-society relationships particularly within authoritarian contexts, reframing and reinterpreting state power through the lens of protest and societal resistance. He has previously worked on interest articulation and negotiation in Iran, with fieldwork during the protest movements in 2017/18. Currently, he is working on transformations of opportunity structures, e.g. in the post-Taliban takeover in Afghanistan and in the post-colonial period in Pakistan. He has previously worked as a JSPS fellow at the Center for Relational Studies on Global Crises at Chiba University in Japan.

Tripathi, Siddharth

Siddharth Tripathi is a Senior Research Fellow at University of Erfurt where he leads Postcolonial Hierarchies project. Prior to that he was a Senior Research Fellow at the Käte Hamburger Kolleg, University of Duisburg Essen and has also worked as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Willy Brandt School of Public Policy. He served as an Assistant Professor at Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi. He has held various visiting positions at Free University Berlin, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) in Brussels and Berlin, University of Leipzig and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Afghanistan. He received his PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. As part of his research at the doctoral and postdoctoral levels, he has conducted extensive fieldwork in Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Berlin and Brussels. His primary interest lies in postcolonial and decolonial perspectives in IR and peace and conflict studies especially on epistemic and structural hierarchies that exist in the discipline.

Wolfmeier, Darja

Darja Wolfmeier is a PhD researcher in the Postcolonial Hierarchies Network at the University of Bayreuth examining how postcolonial hierarchies are produced by humanitarian organizations working in situations of peace and conflict. Postcolonial continuities and racism within the humanitarian aid sector have been criticized for some time now. In her research, Darja focus on the historical development and construction of inequalities and

social exclusions based on race in major humanitarian organizations such as *Médecins Sans Frontières*. Through a historical sociological study, the aim is to gain a deeper understanding of forms of racialised exclusions and postcolonial hierarchies in externally-induced peacebuilding and emergency relief measures. Prior to starting her PhD, she studied a M.A. in Global History at the University of Bayreuth and SOAS London. She holds a double BA in history and French from Bielefeld University and University of Paris Cité.

Xavier do Monte, Izadora

Izadora Xavier do Monte is IR lecturer at Universidade Estadual da Paraíba. She holds a PhD in sociology from the University of Paris 8, a master's degree in international and comparative politics from University of Brasília, and a master's degree in gender, politics, and sexualities from the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences in Paris. She was a junior fellow at SCRIPTS, Contestations of the Liberal Script, at the Free University of Berlin, and also at Mecila, a joint program of the University of Cologne and CEBRAP, researching women's resistance to militarization in Brazil.

Znaïen, Nessim

Nessim Znaïen is member of MECAM's Executive Council. He works as Professor of Colonial/Postcolonial Maghreb at Phillips-Universität Marburg, attached to the History Department and the Centre for the Near and Middle East (CNMS). He studied history in Lyon and Paris, and Arabic, Italian and Turkish at the University of Aix-Marseille. After a doctoral fellowship at the Institut français de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC) in Tunis (Tunisia), he defended his doctorate at the Sorbonne University in Paris in 2017. He then became a lecturer at the University of Aix-Marseille before joining the University of Marburg in 2022. His research interests focus on everyday life, material culture, food and religion in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Nessim Znaïen is the project's associate member.

Knowledge Diplomacy and South-South-North Cooperation: Revitalizing Bandung for the 21st Century in the Merian Centres Network

Abdejallil, Moncef

Agrégé en langue et littérature arabes à l'université de Tunis (1984) et docteur en Lettres de l'université de La Manouba (1997). Professeur à l'université tunisienne et à l'Institut Agha Khan de Londres. Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, Université de Sousse.

Abu-Er-Rub, Laila

Laila Abu-Er-Rub holds a PhD in visual and media anthropology from Heidelberg University. Since 2017, she works as academic coordinator of the Delhi-based Maria Sibylla Merian Centre ICAS:MP, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR). The project investigates the "Metamorphoses of the Political in the Long Twentieth Century." Before her posting in India's capital, she coordinated the Research Area "Public Spheres" at Heidelberg University's Cluster of Excellence "Asia and Europe in a Global Context" (2012–2017) and the EU-funded HERA SINGLE project "Creating the 'New' Asian Woman: Entanglements of Urban Space, Cultural Encounters, and Gendered Identities in Shanghai and Delhi" (2013–2016). Her research interests include visual and material culture, fashion studies, advertising, colourism, and gender. Laila co-edited *Engaging Transculturality Concepts, Key Terms, Case Studies* (Routledge, 2019) and *Being Single in the City: Cultural Geographies of Gendered Urban Space in Asia* (Heidelberg University Publishing, 2024).

Ajl, Max

Max Ajl is a current long-term-fellow at MECAM (2023-2026) – University of Tunis. He works as a

Senior Fellow in the Department of Conflict and Development Studies at Ghent University and as researcher with the Tunisian Observatory for Food Sovereignty and the Environment. He is an editor at *Agrarian South* and *Journal of Labor and Society*, and has written for *Agrarian South*, the *Journal of Peasant Studies*, *Globalizations*, *Review of African Political Economy*, *Middle East Report*, and many other scholarly and popular journals, including the *Guardian's* *Comment is Free*, *Boston Review*, and *Monthly Review*. He researches climate politics, Tunisian national liberation, agrarian politics in the Arab region, and ecological planning, and Arab-North African intellectual history. He is the author of a recent book, *A People's Green New Deal*.

Amorim Fernandes Izabel, Tomaz

Tomaz Amorim is a literature scholar based in São Paulo, Brazil. He received his PhD in Literary Theory from the University of São Paulo and has been a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Campinas (Unicamp), Brazil, and at the "Temporal Communities" Cluster of Excellence at Freie Universität Berlin, Germany. Since 2022, he has served as the Academic Manager of the BMBF-funded project Mecila - the Maria Sibylla Merian Centre Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America, where he also conducts research on extractivism and Brazilian literature. He is currently an active member of the "Infrastructures: Aesthetics and Care" research group at Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany, and an Associated Investigator at the Brazilian Center of Analysis and Planning (CEBRAP). He has published poetry books, translations, and in 2024, the literary criticism book "Arquipélago: Literatura Brasileira Contemporânea."

Baklouti, Nesrine

Nesrine Baklouti is currently the coordinator of the National Erasmus+ Office for Tunisia, leading initiatives that promote academic exchange, mobility, and cooperation between Tunisia and European partners. She holds a graduate degree in Electrical Engineering and a Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the National Engineering School of Sfax, University of Sfax (2004 and 2013, respectively).

Beltaief, Emna

Emna Beltaief is a contemporary French Professor at the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences at the University of Tunis. She teaches 20th and 21st century French literature, and more specifically works on self-narratives and the relationship between literature and art. She was head of the Faculty's French department and then head of the Master's commission in the French department. She is currently Vice-President of the University of Tunis, spokeswoman at the rectorate of the University of Tunis and MECAM's Principal Investigator in the field of „Aesthetics & Cultural Practice“.

Ben Khalifa, Riadh

Riadh Ben Khalifa is an alumni-fellow (2024/2025) at MECAM. He works as an Associate Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Tunis and a member of the Research Laboratory of Economy and History of the Mediterranean (Faculty of Human and Social Sciences). He is editor-in-chief of the *Tunisian Review of Social Sciences*. His research interests focus on migration, asylum, and mobility in transitional contexts. Over the past decade, he published several books and articles in refereed journals as well as contributed to numerous chapters in collective works. He also made contributions to reports on migration and refugee issues for international organizations. Riadh Ben Khalifa serves as a scientific member of the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (FTDES), the Arab Institute for Human Rights, and the National Migration Observatory (Minister of Social Affairs). Additionally, he is a member of several migration networks.

Christel, Lucas Gabriel

Lucas G. Christel holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and an M.A. in Public Policy and Development Management from the Universidad Nacional de San Martín (UNSAM). He is currently an assistant researcher at CONICET, director of the bachelor's degree program in political science at UNSAM, and adjunct professor at the school of politics and government at UNSAM. Since June 2025, he has been a member of the CALAS Board of Directors. His current research analyzes socio-technical controversies surrounding the risks of extractive industries and explores ways to improve institutional and democratic practices to resolve these controversies. His interests include collective action dynamics, environmental politics, climate change, and biodiversity issues. He has conducted research at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) at Princeton University, the Watson Institute at Brown University, and the University of British Columbia (UBC). He was also invited to collaborate with the Biodiversity Revisited project, an initiative of the Luc Hoffmann Institute in Gland, Switzerland, in partnership with several global universities and environmental non-governmental organizations. He has been invited to teach postgraduate courses at CLACSO, the National University of Rosario (UNR), New York University Buenos Aires, and the University of Hradec Králové (Czech Republic).

Costa, Sérgio

Trained in economics and sociology in Brazil and Germany, Sérgio Costa has been since 2008 a professor of sociology with focus on Latin America at Freie Universität Berlin. Since 2017 he has been Project leader and spokesperson of the Maria Sibylla Merian Centre Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America (Mecila). His main research areas are social inequalities, living together in difference, postcolonial theories. His recent book publications include: *Desiguais e Divididos* (Unequal and Divided, 2025, *Todavia*); *A Port in Global Capitalism* (with Guilherme L. Gonçalves, 2020, Routledge); *Entre el Atlántico y el Pacífico Negro* (Between the Black Atlantic and the Black Pacific, with Manuel Góngora and Rocío Vera, 2019, Iberoamericana).

Diabah, Grace

Grace Diabah is the Director (Ghana) of the Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA) and an Associate Professor of Language and Gender at the University of Ghana, where she previously served as Head of the Department of Linguistics. She holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics from Lancaster University, UK. Her research and teaching focus on language and gender, as well as language use in domains such as politics, media, education, and business. Her scholarly work addresses issues of gendered discourse in African contexts, humour studies, and the politics of language. As Co-Director of MIASA, an institute with decolonization as one of its core cross-cutting themes, Grace is increasingly situating her research within the broader discourse of decolonizing knowledge. Grace is a Postdoctoral Fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies-African Humanities Program (ACLS-AHP), a Fulbright Visiting Scholar (University of South Florida) and a Fellow of the Building a New Generation of Academics in Africa (BANGA-Africa) initiative funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. She serves on the board of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI) and the Steering Committee of the University-Based Institutes for Advanced Study (UBIAS).

Diawara, Mamadou

Mamadou Diawara is social anthropologist and Goethe Research Professor at the Goethe Universität, Frankfurt/Main. He is “Director Germany” of the Maria Sibylla Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA) at the University of Ghana (Legon) and Corresponding Fellow of The British Academy. He was until 2023 Director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary African Studies; Deputy Director of the Frobenius-Institut. He taught at Yale University. He was principal investigator at the Frankfurt University for the Cluster of

Excellence research project The Formation of Normative Orders; for the Africa's Asian Options. M. Diawara is founding director of Point Sud, The Centre for research on local knowledge in Bamako, Mali; member of the International African Institute, London. He had several fellowships as at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study, the Institute for Advanced study in Nantes; and the Université Laval, Canada as John G. Diefenbaker fellow. Research focus: oral tradition and history, media, migration between Asia and Africa and development in sub-Saharan Africa. Among his publications: With Mamadou Diouf et Jean-Bernard Ouédraogo (sous la direction) *Afrika N'Ko. La bibliothèque coloniale en débat*, Paris, Présence Africaine, 2022. With Ute Röschenthaler *Copyright Africa. Staging the Immaterial: Intellectual Property, Piracy and Performance in sub-Saharan Africa*. Wantage: Sean Kingston Publishing, 2016.

Dihstelhoff, Julius

Julius Dihstelhoff has been serving as the Co-Director "Germany" of the international collaborative project Merian Centre for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM) since April 2025. From May 2020 to March 2025, he was MECAM's Academic Coordinator (Postdoc). As a political scientist, his research focuses on German foreign policy in the MENA region, political transformation processes in Tunisia, and questions of regional (re)ordering and political Islam.

Driss, Slim

Slim Driss is the Director of ESSEC Tunis and a Professor of Higher Education in Economic Sciences. He is currently the President of the University of Tunis.

Fischer, Luise

Luise Fischer is MECAM's Academic Coordinator. She has been a research associate at Leipzig University since August 2021. Until March 2023, she oversaw the meta-project of the BMBF funding guideline "Cultural Education in Rural Areas" as a postdoc and researched collaboration between science and society. Since April 2023, Ms. Fischer has also been teaching and researching (intercultural) education, the role of educational and research organizations in social transformation, and (post)qualitative methodological developments. Reflective action and thinking, as well as new forms of collaboration between science and practice, are particularly close to her heart. Ms. Fischer draws on a broad social science background in human geography (PhD, MSc), counseling (MSc), and economics (diploma), as well as research in North Africa (Fraunhofer IMW).

Fuchs, Martin

Martin Fuchs, trained in Sociology and Anthropology, Professor for Indian Religious History, Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, University of Erfurt, Germany. Member, and temporarily Director, of the M.S. Merian – R. Tagore International Centre of Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences 'Metamorphoses of the Political' (ICAS:MP) in Delhi, India. Taught at universities in Zürich, Heidelberg, Paderborn, Free University Berlin, Central European University, Budapest, Canterbury University, Christchurch (New Zealand), and Erfurt. His research interests lie in Cultural and Social Theory and South Asia studies. His books and articles have focussed on social movements, social recognition, Dalit studies, urban poor and property studies (Mumbai), religious individualization, religion and urbanity, bhakti, debates on modernity, reflexive anthropology and ethnographic representation, intercultural translation and comparison, and on M. Weber, L. Dumont and B.R. Ambedkar. Among his recent book publications are *Religious Interactions in Modern India*, co-edited with Vasudha Dalmia, New Delhi: Oxford University Press 2019, and two co-edited volumes on *Religious Individualisation: Historical Dimensions and Comparative*

Perspectives, Berlin: de Gruyter 2019. Published together with Antje Linkenbach and Beatrice Renzi: “‘Theorizing Across Traditions’: Social Science as a Polyphonic Encounter,” in: Hollstein/Rosa/Rüpke (eds.), ‘Weltbeziehung’. The Study of our Relationship to the World, Frankfurt (Main): Campus 2023, 129-156.

Ganseforth, Sonja

Sonja Ganseforth has been working at the Institute of Geography in Leipzig since 2023. Previously, she worked at the Institute for Environmental Social Sciences and Geography at the University of Freiburg and, from 2017 to 2022, at the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) in Tokyo. She completed her doctorate on Japanese development policy in the Middle East at Leipzig University, having previously studied Arab Studies, Japanese Studies, and German as a Foreign Language in Leipzig, Kyoto, and Damascus. Her research interests include the globalization of food systems, development* discourses, the political ecology of food, environmental justice, commons and property rights to natural resources and public spaces. In recent years, she has been researching Japanese coastal fisheries and Japanese social movements against the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Gengnagel, Jörg

Jörg Gengnagel is at present the German director of ICAS:MP. He is Professor and head of the Department of Indology at the Institute for Cultural Studies of East and South Asia at Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg. He is a founding member of the India Competence Centre at Würzburg University. Prior to joining Würzburg University in 2017 he was a member and project leader of the collaborative research center (Sonderforschungsbereich) “Ritual Dynamics” at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University and co-directed a project on waterscapes at the inter-disciplinary research group “Waterscapes in Transcultural Perspectives” at the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context”. Among his fields of interest are medieval Indian Shaivism, the religious topography of the north Indian city Varanasi, and the relation of spatial texts, cartography, and ritual performances in South Asia. He has published on the religious cartography of Varanasi (“Visualized Texts” 2011) as well as studies on court ritual in Rajasthan. Until 2023 he was head of the DAAD funded Indo-German project on “Cultures of Learning in Varanasi”.

Guizani, Amel

Amel Guizani is Assistant Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Tunis. She was appointed Co-Director of the MECAM Centre in July 2024 under the terms of the joint research project initiated by Marburg University and the University of Tunis. She represents the University of Tunis in MECAM’s Executive Council and ensures coordination between this research structure and the University of Tunis.

Hatzky, Christine

Christine Hatzky is Professor for Latin American and Caribbean History at Leibniz Universität Hannover, and also has expertise in Atlantic history and the history of Lusophone Africa. Her research focuses on decolonisation processes, South-South cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa, transnational solidarity networks, the history of knowledge and science, and processes of violence and peace. Since 2015, she has been spokesperson for the Centre for Atlantic and Global Studies (CEAGS), since 2017 head of the joint project CALAS, and was project manager in the EU network ConnectCaribbean until June 2024. In 2023/24, she was a fellow at the Käte Hamburger Kolleg Global Cooperation Research at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Her Publications include: Cubans in Angola (U. Wisconsin Press 2015; LASA Book Prize 2016); Peace in Latin America: Shifting Paradigms in the Studies of Culture, Society and Politics (with David Díaz et al., Routledge New York 2025); Lateinamerika 1800-

1930 and Latin America seit 1930 (with Barbara Potthast, Oldenbourg Munich 2021). Gender and Intersectionality in the History and Culture of Central América and the Caribbean (19th/20th centuries)/Género e interseccionalidad en la historia y la cultura de Centroamérica y el Caribe, siglos XIX y XX, (with Anja Bandau and Lidia Becker), CIHAC Universidad de Costa Rica, San José 2024.

Kemner, Jochen

Jochen Kemner is the Scientific Manager of the Center for Advanced Latin American Studies in Guadalajara, Mexico. After completing a Magister degree in History, Economics, and Spanish and Latin American studies (Bielefeld University), and a state examination for teaching History and Spanish (University of Paderborn) he earned his doctorate in History again at Bielefeld University. He subsequently worked in several post-doc projects and was a regular lecturer at the Hochschule Ostwestfalen-Lippe. He has been invited as a guest lecturer at the University of Guadalajara, Mexico, the National University San Martín, Argentina, and the University of Havana, Cuba. He is also producer of the podcast "Acentos Latinoamericanos".

Khalil, Georges

Georges Khalil is member of MECAM's Executive Council. He works as Managing Director at the Forum Transregionale Studien since 2009. He was the Coordinator of the Working Group "Modernity and Islam (AKMI)" at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin from 1998 to 2006, and has been coordinating its successor program Europe in the Middle East—The Middle East in Europe (EUME) since 2006. He studied History, Islamic and European Studies in Hamburg and Cairo, co-edited "Di/Visions. Kultur und Politik des Nahen Ostens" (2009), "Islamic Art and the Museum. Approaches to Art and Archeology of the Muslim World in the Twenty-First Century" (2012) and "Commitment and Beyond: Reflections on/of the Political in Arabic Literature since the 1940s" (2015). He is a member of the Executive Council of the Merian Centre for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM).

Korn, Evelyn

Evelyn Korn has been deputy president and vice president for university culture and quality at Marburg University since February 2022. She is, amongst others, also responsible for internationalization, sustainability, quality and organizational development, conflict management and process development, science communication and university marketing.

Kortas, Cyrine

Cyrine Kortas is a current long-term-fellow at MECAM (2023-2026) – University of Tunis. She works as an assistant professor of English literature at the university of Gabes, Tunisia. She is also a member of the Research Unit LAD at the faculty of Arts and Humanities, Sfax. Her research interests include Lawrentian studies, comparative literature, feminist and gender studies. Recently, she has developed an interest for media studies as coordinator of the MA programme English for media studies and journalism. Her current research focuses on the influence of modernist English authors such as D. H. Lawrence on the rise of the modern novel in the Maghreb region; it explores the concept of the New Man in a selection of novels published in Tunisia and Morocco, while introducing Sufism as a theory of analysis. This project is influenced by one of her publications: The Image of the New Man in Post-War Short Stories "The Man who Loved Islands" by D. H. Lawrence and "The White Rose" by Hanna Mina in 2020.

Kochlef, Malek

Malek Kochlef is the General Director of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Tunisia.

Linkenbach, Antje

Antje Linkenbach, anthropologist and sociologist, is long-term Fellow at the Max Weber Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, University of Erfurt, Germany. She has held teaching and research positions at institutions in Heidelberg, Berlin, and Tübingen (all Germany), Zürich (Switzerland), and Christchurch (New Zealand). She is a research member of the M.S. Merian – Rabindranath Tagore International Center for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Societies: ‘Metamorphoses of the Political’ (ICAS:MP), Delhi. Her fields of expertise are anthropological and sociological theory, anthropology of development and environment, indigenous epistemologies, social movements, human rights and indigenous rights. She has recently co-edited *Realizing Justice? Normative Orders and the Realities of Justice in India* (Delhi: Manohar 2024); *State, Law and Adivasis: Shifting Terrains of Exclusion* (Delhi: Sage 2022); *Religious Individualisations: Historical Dimensions and Comparative Perspectives* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), and is the author of *Forest Futures: Global Representations and Ground Realities in the Himalayas* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2007). She has published ‘Ambiguity, Contingency, and Dominance: Decolonizing Theories of Modernity’ (*International Journal of Social Imaginaries* 2, 2023), and co-published “‘Theorizing Across Traditions’: Social Science as a Polyphonic Encounter’ (in *Weltbeziehung: The Study of our Relationship to the World*, ed. By B. Hollstein et al., Campus 2023).

Matri, Khaoula

Khaoula Matri holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Tunis and the University of Paris V-Descartes. Her thesis focuses on “the Veil: Representations and Practices of Tunisian Women’s Body”, associate researcher at the Institute of Research on the Contemporary Maghreb in Tunis. Since 2014, she has been a teacher-researcher at the University of Sousse and hosts several scientific activities. Author of works concerning gender-based violence, the status and conditions of women in Tunisia, the body and sexuality, the veil and social norms.

Mba, Chika

Chika C. Mba is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, where his teaching and research span the broad domains of African philosophy, decolonial thought, human rights, and global justice. His work centres the understanding of Africa and Africans in key debates in philosophy and the humanities more broadly, raising challenging questions to hegemonic discourses about human nature, global justice, (global) culture and human rights. He holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He is the recipient of many research grants, international research fellowships and sponsorship awards, including the African Humanities Programme by the American Council of Learned Societies; Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA’s) Small Grants Programme for Thesis Writing; the Unit for the Humanities at Rhodes University’s (UHURU) Postdoctoral Fellowship, the 2022 Scholars at Risk Mellon-funded fellowship on academic freedom. He is the Principal Investigator (PI) for the Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA)’s thematic focus on “Human Rights”. His recent publications include “African Philosophy: Rethinking the Ethics of Development and Human Well-being in the 21st Century,” 2025. *African Studies Review*. DOI:10.1017/asr.2025.43; “The Challenges of Decolonising Philosophy in Africa: Ibadan and Legon as Case Study.” 2025. *The MISR Review*. No.7: 259 – 284; Ramutsindela, M; Mba CC; et al. “African Political Ecologies.” *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-111523-102218>. Forthcoming (September 10, 2025).

Mehler, Andreas

Andreas Mehler is director of the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute and Professor of Political Science at Freiburg University, Germany. Mehler is the co-chair of the executive council of the

Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA; at the University of Ghana) and director of the Africa Centre for Transregional Research (ACT) at Freiburg University. He is co-editor of the Africa Yearbook (since 2005), from 2009-2018 he has been editor of Africa Spectrum (with Henning Melber). Since 2018 he follows closely aspects of governance in restitution processes (of cultural artefacts and ancestral remains). Earlier he studied peace processes particularly power-sharing agreements and their implementation mostly in francophone Africa.

Melliti, Imed

Imed Melliti is member of MECAM's International Advisory Board. He works as Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at the Higher Institute of Human Sciences of Tunis, University of Tunis El-Manar, and Honorary President of the Association internationale des sociologues de langue française (AISLF). His research lies at the intersection of sociology and anthropology, with a particular focus on the sociology of youth, transformations of religion, feelings of injustice, and moral economies in the context of the "Arab Spring" revolutions. He obtained his PhD in Sociology from the Sorbonne (Paris V) in 1993, following a Master's degree in Sociology from the University of Tunis in 1987. He was recruited as Assistant Professor of Sociology in 1997 and joined the Department of Sociology at ISSHT in 1999. In 2008, he earned his Habilitation in Sociology at the University of Tunis.

Ouaissa, Rachid

Rachid Ouaissa is MECAM's project lead and its former Director "Germany". He is Professor and Chair of Politics of the Near and Middle East at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Philipps University Marburg, a position he has held since 2008. He studied Political Science at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg after completing language studies there, and earned his PhD in Political Science from the University of Leipzig in 2004 with the highest distinction (Summa Cum Laude). Before his appointment in Marburg, he worked as a researcher at the University of Leipzig and was a visiting scholar at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada. His research focuses on transformation processes in the MENA region, the rise of fundamentalist movements, EU-Mediterranean policy, the role of middle classes, and the political economy of rentier states, with a particular emphasis on Maghreb societies and states. He is project leader of *extractivisms.de* and head of the Merian Center for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM), based at the University of Tunis, where he also served as Director from 2019 to April 2025.

Pannewick, Friederike

Friederike Pannewick is member of MECAM's Executive Council. She works as professor for Arabic Literature and Culture at the Philipps-Universität Marburg, Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies (CNMS), and Chairwoman of the Forum Transregionale Studien, Berlin. At MECAM, she is P.I. and member of the Executive Council. She is co-editor of the series *Literatures in Context – Arabic – Persian – Turkish* (Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden), and has published extensively on modern Arabic literature and theatre. Selected publications: (2021) *Entanglements of the Maghreb. Cultural and Political Aspects of a Region in Motion*. (Eds.) Julius Dihstelhoff, Charlotte Pardey, Rachid Ouaissa und Friederike Pannewick. Transcript Verlag; (2020) *Re-Configurations. Contextualising Transformation Processes in the Middle East and North Africa*. (Eds.) Rachid Ouaissa, Friederike Pannewick und Alena Strohmaier. Wiesbaden, Springer VS; (2015) *Commitment and Beyond. Reflections on/of the Political in Arabic Literature since the 1940s*. (Eds.) Friederike Pannewick und Georges Khalil. Wiesbaden, Reichert Verlag.

Preciado Coronado, Jaime Antonio

Jaime Antonio Preciado Coronado is a professor-researcher at the Department of Iberian and Latin American Studies (DEILA) of the University of Guadalajara. He has been the coordinator of the Doctoral Program in Political Science at the same University. Jaime Preciado earned his Ph. D. in Latin American Studies from the University of Paris III. He was President of the Latin American Association of Sociology and currently is Director of the headquarters of the Center for Advanced Latin American Studies (CALAS) in Guadalajara, Mexico and a member of CALAS's international Directory Board. His research interests include the geopolitics of globalization and regional integration, geography of power -local, national, supranational- and democracy.

Schneider-Musah, Agnes

Agnes Schneider-Musah has served as the Academic Coordinator of the Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA) at the University of Ghana since January 2019. A trained linguist, she received her doctoral degree from the University of Freiburg, Germany, in 2015 with a thesis on English in Ghana. Before moving to Accra she was a lecturer in the English Department at the University of Freiburg and coordinator of the DFG-funded research training group Frequency Effects in Language.

Scholze, Marko

Marko Scholze studied anthropology, African languages, and religious studies at the University of Bayreuth and the Centre for African Studies in Bordeaux (now known as Les Afriques dans le Monde, LAM). From 2000 to 2006, he was a research assistant on the project 'Ethnic Tourism: Europeans Visiting Berbers and Tuaregs', under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Gerd Spittler, at the Collaborative Research Centre SFB-FK 560 'Local Agency in the Context of Global Influences' at the University of Bayreuth. He completed his PhD (magna cum laude) as part of this project, focusing on the topic of: Modern Nomads and Mobile Merchants: Tuareg and Tourism in Niger'. His research focuses on the anthropology of tourism, cultural heritage, multi-sited ethnography, and North–South cooperation in science. He focuses on West Africa, particularly Niger and Mali. Since 2008, Marko Scholze has coordinated various collaborative programmes with Africa at Goethe University in Frankfurt, including the Programme Point Sud, which is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG); the postdoctoral fellowship programme 'Knowledge for Tomorrow', which was funded by the Volkswagen Foundation; and the MIASA outreach programme in Accra.

Werenfels, Isabelle

Isabelle Werenfels is a Senior Fellow in the Africa and Middle East Division of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP). She is also chairing the International Advisory Board of the Merian Centre for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM) in Tunis and is on the editorial board of the MECAM's book series with Amsterdam University Press. Isabelle Werenfels has been teaching at various German universities and has extensively published on political transformation, authoritarian resilience and regional relations in the Maghreb, on Maghrebi relations with Sub-Saharan Africa as well as on German, European and NATO relations with Maghreb states.

Wolbers, Elisabeth

Elisabeth Wolbers has been the ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Tunisia since July 2024. Having studied law and political science, she joined the German Foreign Service in 1991. After postings in Toronto, in the Foreign Office and in Moscow, she joined the German Embassy in Algiers in 2005 as Deputy Head of Mission. From 2008 till 2011 she was Head of Division in the Foreign Office. From 2011 she led the Political Department at the

German Embassy in Moscow and from 2014 she was Consul General in Wrocław. From 2017 till 2020, she was again Head of Division in the Foreign Office, and from 2020 till 2024 she was the German Ambassador to Algeria.

Decolonizing Knowledge: Power, Epistemic Asymmetries, and Colonial Legacies

Boatcă, Manuela

Manuela Boatcă is Professor of Sociology and Head of School of the Global Studies Programme at the University of Freiburg, Germany. She has published widely on world-systems analysis, decolonial perspectives on global inequalities, gender and citizenship in modernity/coloniality, and the geopolitics of knowledge in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. She is the author of *From Neevolutionism to World-Systems Analysis* (Leske+Budrich, 2003), *Global Inequalities Beyond Occidentalism* (Routledge 2016) and co-author, with Anca Parvulescu, of *Creolizing the Modern. Transylvania Across Empires* (Cornell UP 2022). Together with Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Sérgio Costa, she co-edited *Decolonizing European Sociology. Transdisciplinary Approaches*. Her current project deals with the consequences of the enslavement of the Roma for current conceptions of Europeanness and whiteness.

Farrah, Raouf

Raouf Farrah is an Algerian researcher and scholar focusing on migration, human security, and geopolitics in North Africa and the Sahel, as well as transnational solidarities across Africa through a decolonial lens. He is a senior analyst at the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC), where he works on security dynamics and political economies in the region. His research is grounded in extensive fieldwork across Algeria, Libya, Mali, Niger, and Mauritania. Farrah is the co-founder of the media platform Twala and coordinated the collective book *Algérie : l'avenir en jeu* (Koukou Editions, 2023). His forthcoming edited volume, *Resisting Erasure: Africa–Palestine Solidarity and Decolonisation*, will be published by Pluto Press in February 2026. He writes regularly for African and international journals and contributes to initiatives promoting justice and solidarity across the continent.

Mestiri, Soumaya

Soumaya Mestiri is Senior Professor in Political and Social Philosophy at the University of Tunis (FSHST). She was Visiting Professor at the University of Michigan (2017), Sorbonne University (2019) and Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis (2024). She was also lecturer on Arab Feminism in Sciences Po (Campus de Menton, France) from 2019 to 2022. She works on contemporary theories of justice, the history of liberalism and republicanism and on gendered issues applied to postcolonial and decolonial grids. Her recent authored books include *Pour un féminisme décentré. Recadrer, résister, Paris, Le Cavalier bleu*, 2024, *Décoloniser le féminisme. Une approche transculturelle* (Paris, Vrin, 2016) and *Elucider l'intersectionnalité. Les raisons du féminisme noir* (Paris, Vrin, 2020). She has also translated Al Farabi and Al Kindi to French for Fayard editions (*Aphorismes choisis*, 2003 and *Du moyen de chasser les tristesses et autres textes éthiques*, 2004).

Süß, Clara-Auguste

Clara-Auguste Süß is MECAM's Outreach and Transfer based at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg, Germany. She is in charge of organizing and coordinating MECAM's outreach events, effectively the *Rencontres Ibn Khaldun* and the MECAM Policy Talk, as well as MECAM's representation at (inter)national scientific conferences. Her research focuses on local and transnational conflict dynamics, Islamist

radicalization, social movements, and political violence in North Africa, with a particular emphasis on Tunisia. She holds a PhD in Political Science from Goethe University Frankfurt with a dissertation entitled “Radicalization of the Marginalized? Dynamics of Islamist Radicalization in Tunisia post-2011”.