
BONN CENTER FOR RECONCILIATION STUDIES (BCRS)

NEWSLETTER



NEWS – EVENTS – CALLS – PUBLICATIONS – TEACHING

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New Member

Dr. Katharina Fackler of the North American Studies Programm (Department of English, American and Celtic Studies) is joining BCRS.

Dr. Fackler is the Co-Coordinator of the DFG Research Group *The Cultural Politics of Reconciliation*.



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Website

The BCRS website is now available in Spanish!



Centro de Estudios de Reconciliación de Bonn

En el Centro de Estudios de Reconciliación de Bonn, investigadoras e investigadores de distintas disciplinas como humanidades, ciencias sociales, derecho e historia trabajan de manera conjunta para desarrollar teorías y metodologías orientadas a comprender y analizar diversos procesos de reconciliación.

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SOBRE NOSOTROS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Panel discussion: German Colonialism and its first Genocide

Wednesday 11 March: 6–7.30 pm

As Europe rethinks its foreign policy amidst shifting global political relations, one question remains central: Can cooperation succeed without confronting colonial history?

This panel takes Germany's first genocide of the 20th century in Namibia as a starting point to explore how colonial legacies continue to shape today's global crises, from geopolitics and inequality to diplomacy and democracy. What does the "past in the present" mean for justice claims and Europe's future role in the world?

ACADEMY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS NRW

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ZENTRUM FÜR VERSÖHNUNGS-EDUCATION

BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES

German Colonialism and its first Genocide

Henning Melber
German-Namibian political scientist and African studies scholar

Julia Manek
Medico International

Katharina B. Hacker
International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC)

Heloise Weber
The University of Queensland

The discussion will connect postcolonial perspectives with today's political challenges, including the rise of authoritarian populism as well as transnational efforts aimed at building relations of solidarity and 'just repair'

Join the conversation and be part of a critical debate on history, responsibility, and the future of international cooperation.

The event is being held in cooperation with the Academy for International Affairs NRW and the Bonn Center for Slavery Studies.

Find out more and register [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Hybrid Lecture

Monday 30 March: 4–6pm

Peace Work amid the Polycrisis: Interdisciplinarity and the Challenge of Future Peace – Gearoid Millar (University of Aberdeen)

Peace work has long been framed in normative terms—conflict resolution or peacebuilding. Yet the field has continually evolved. As understandings of threats to peace have shifted, so too have the paradigms and practices used to address them. The post-9/11 period, for example, generated markedly different approaches from those that followed the end of the Cold War.



Today, however, the accelerating and interconnected challenges of the polycrisis demand renewed reflection. Drawing on interviews with 156 peace practitioners conducted over eight years, this lecture argues that more deeply interdisciplinary forms of peace work are required to address climate change, global and domestic inequality, mass mobilisation, AI-driven polarisation, pandemic risks, and the fragility of global order.

The findings demonstrate that contemporary peace challenges have become increasingly complex and resistant to single-disciplinary approaches. A shift toward more radical interdisciplinarity is necessary to build future peace.

Organised by University College Roosevelt in collaboration with TG02 Conflict Transformations and Peacebuilding, International Sociological Association.

Find out more and register [here](#).

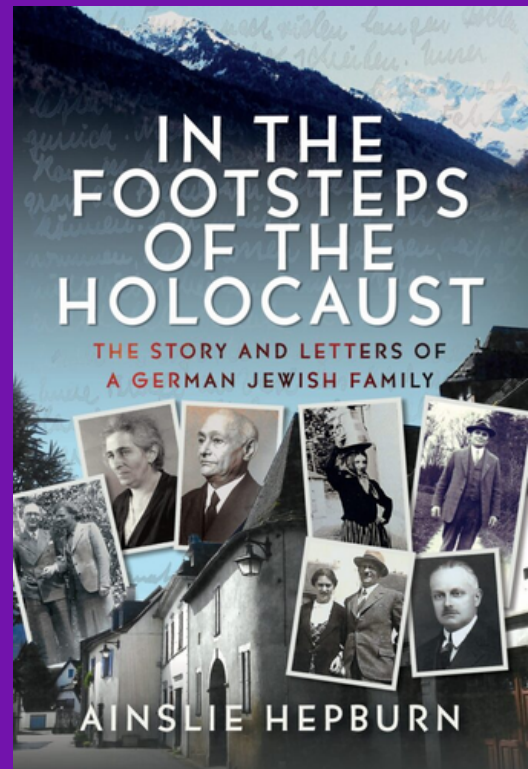
UPCOMING EVENTS

Talk

Monday 13 April 6pm – Seminarraum 8, Rabinstraße 8, 53111 Bonn

In the Footsteps of the Holocaust: The Story and Letters of a German Jewish Family – Ainslie Hepburn

Author Ainslie Hepburn is giving a talk on 'ordinary' people – ordinary people who were caught up in the cataclysm of events in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s. A discovery of letters that had been carefully kept for decades since that time led to the uncovering of a family story that took the author on a journey in the footsteps of her husband's grandparents through Germany, Belgium, and France.



Hermann Hartog (1887 – 1942) was a Jewish teacher in the north-west of Germany at a time of increasing anti-Semitism. He and his wife, Henny (1897 – 1942) recognised that Germany was becoming an unsafe place for Jews and sent their daughters to England for safety. As a leader of his community, Hermann stayed for as long as he could.

An active memory of the Hartog family lives on. In France and Germany, 'ordinary' people remember their names, commemorate their legacy, and work to build communities where tolerance, acceptance, and friendship can thrive.

This event is hosted by the Deutsch-Britische-Gesellschaft. Find out more [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Event with Theater Bonn: Reconciliation – a Utopia?

On **16 April**, the next event of our series with the Theater Bonn is taking place. Prof. Mouhanad Khorchide (Münster University) is joining Prof. Hans-Georg Soeffner for a discussion on Antisemitism and Racism, as well as the inter-religious relation of Judaism and Islam.



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THEATER BONN

Event held in German. Get tickets and find out more [here](#).



CALLS

Call for Papers: Special Issue of Peace Review Between Co-existence and Reconciliation: Islands of Peace in Ongoing Violent Conflicts

Rosario Figari Layús, Conrad Schetter and Esther Gardei are preparing a special issue of Peace Review. Researchers are welcome to submit contributions for a special issue that investigates local experiences of peaceful coexistence and collaborative relations emerging within contexts of ongoing violence – so-called “islands of peace.”



The issue aims to address questions such as: What factors enable the creation and endurance of these initiatives and spaces? Who are the principal actors involved, and how do they navigate the complexities of protracted conflict? What challenges do they face in sustaining and safeguarding these fragile environments of peaceful interaction? Submissions from scholars in the social sciences and humanities are welcome.

The deadline for submissions is **31 April 2026**.

See the full Call for Papers and the submission guidelines [here](#).

CALLS

Children's Testimonies. Unveiling Historical and Art-Historical Archives

BCDSS Conference 22-24 October 2026

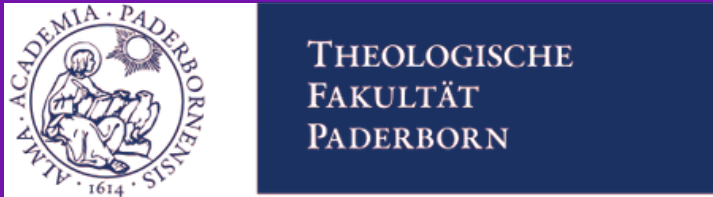
The conference addresses the question of how children, as historical actors, recount and bear witness to their experiences. These often include physical and psychological violence, as well as experiences resulting from separation, war, and displacement.

The field of testimonial research has been gaining importance in historical research for several years, although children and young adults are often overlooked in these contexts. This is particularly true for the pre-modern period, as the available sources are considered insufficient. We, on the other hand, argue that they should be considered untapped. For this reason, the declared aim of this conference is to develop cultural-historical archives that could close the postulated source deficit. This also applies in particular to archives on visual culture, which have grown steadily in recent years and are still awaiting systematic development.

Deadline for proposals is 28 March 2026. See the full call for papers and how to apply [here](#).

CALLS

Call for Abstracts: Theologies of Reconciliation International Meeting on Comparative Theology



On 17th/18th June 2026 the University of Paderborn's Faculty of Theology is hosting the annual International Meeting on Comparative Theology aimed at early career researchers (pre- and post-docs).

Since 2016, the meeting provides an interdisciplinary space for the exchange of ideas between researchers in theologies and other disciplines. It is convened by the Center for Comparative Theology and Cultural Studies (ZeKK) at the University of Paderborn and the International Center for Comparative Theology and Social Issues (CTSI) at the University of Bonn in a joint venture with the Faculty of Theology in Paderborn (ThF).

Deadline for abstract submission is: **19 March.**

See the full call for abstracts [here](#).



PAST EVENTS

Research Group Meeting

In February, BCRS member Prof. Michael Schulz and Dr. Monika Wehrheim (Spanish Studies) co-organized a workshop on the topic of “Reconciliación” at the Centro Cultural PUCP Valentín Paniagua in Písaq near Cusco (Peru).



Prof. Schulz gave two lectures entitled “La breve historia de la palabra ‘reconciliación’ en el contexto político” and “La Confederación Iberoamericana: el proyecto de reconciliación de Bartolomé de Las Casas.”

PAST EVENTS

Conference

On 8–9 January, Prof. Martin Chung and his colleagues at Hong Kong Baptist University organised the 2026 **Peace Conference** “Peace & Conflict: Ethical, Religious, and Geopolitical Perspectives”.

Prof. Chung chaired a session on the topic of “Peace, Regions, and Politics”.

Find out more [here](#).

Hong Kong Baptist University, Research Committee, International Activities Programme 2025/26.

Peace & Conflict: Ethical, Religious, and Geopolitical Perspectives

Peace Conference 2026

8-9 Jan 2026 [Thu to Fri]

SWT 501, HKBU
Council Chamber,
Shaw Tower, Shaw Campus,
Hong Kong Baptist University

Register Now:
 Contact:
cscs@hkbu.edu.hk

Keynote Speakers:



Prof. Edgardo Colón-Emeric
Dean of Duke Divinity School; Ruth and A. Morris Williams Jr. Professor of Theology and Christian Ministry, Duke University, US



Prof. Liu Cheng
UNESCO Chair on Peace Studies; Professor, Department of World History, Nanjing University, China

22 international scholars from United States, United Kingdom, South Korea, China, and HKSAR will present papers at the conference.

PAST EVENTS

First Colloquium on Peace, Conflict and Reconciliation Studies

On 29 January 2026, the Bonn Centre for Reconciliation Studies (BCRS), in cooperation with the Bonn International Centre for Conflict Studies (BICC), hosted the First Colloquium on Peace, Conflict and Reconciliation Studies in Bonn. The event was jointly organised by Rosario Figari-Layús (BCRS) and Conrad Schetter (BICC).

The colloquium provided a platform for interdisciplinary exchange on current empirical and conceptual research in peace, conflict and reconciliation studies.



Four thematic panels focused on marginalization and violence; civil society, local peacebuilding and governance; inclusion, truth and agency in transitional justice and memory and the politics of reconciliation. The presentations covered a wide range of regional contexts and methodological approaches.

The event particularly aimed to foster dialogue among early career researchers and to strengthen academic exchange across related fields of peace and conflict research.

We would like to thank all speakers, participants and our cooperation partner BICC for their engagement and contributions to a successful first edition of the colloquium.

PAST EVENTS

Panel

On January 20, 2026, the third panel discussion, “Between Remembrance and a New Beginning – Reconciliation and Transitional Justice in Post-Conflict Contexts” took place at the University of Bonn. The event marked the conclusion of our panel discussion series, which addressed current challenges in reconciliation processes in various regions of the world.



The discussion focused on the question of how societies can deal with the past after violent conflicts and how a sustainable new beginning can be achieved. Different concepts and instruments of transitional justice and their political, legal, and social prerequisites were critically examined.

Together with Jun. Prof. Dr. Rosario Figari Layús, Prof. Dr. Susanne Buckley-Zistel (Zentrum für Konfliktforschung, Philipps-Universität Marburg), Dr. Annelen Micus (European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights – ECCHR) and Barbara Unger (Berghof Stiftung, Berlin) discussed areas of tension between memory politics, the reappraisal of human rights crimes, and the need for institutional and social reforms.

PAST EVENTS

Event with Theater Bonn: Reconciliation – a Utopia?

On **13 January**, the first event of our series with the Theater Bonn took place. José Brunner and Andreas Nachama discussed **New Antisemitism – Reconciliation and the right to irreconcilability.**



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PUBLICATIONS

Interview

In January, Michael Rohrschneider gave an interview to Deutschlandfunk on the topic of "Frieden und Versöhnung: Aus der Geschichte lernen".

Listen to the interview [here](#) (German).

New Publications by Conrad Schetter

Schetter, Conrad, Lucy Massoi and Venance Shillingi (2025). "Infrastructure for Peace. Conflict Settlement between Pastoralists and Farmers in Kilosa/Tanzania." *Journal of Eastern African Studies*. 19(4), pp. 579-600. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2025.2611657>



Schetter, Conrad, and Janosch Prinz (2025). "Peace or War? On the Logic of the Triple Nexus from the Humanitarian Aid Perspective." In: Heike Krieger, Giedre Jokubauskaite, Asli Ozcelik and Andreas Buser (Eds.) *From Protracted Conflict to Sustainable Peace? The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and International Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

New Publication by Christine Krüger

Fischer, Victoria, and Christine G. Krüger, editors. *Geschlechterzuschreibungen der (Un-)Versöhnlichkeit*, V&R unipress – Bonn University Press, 2026.

Theorien der Gewalt **Prof. Conrad Schetter**

Gewalt ist einer der zentralen Begriffe der Sozialwissenschaften. Für ein Verständnis, wie Gesellschaft organisiert ist, ist der Bezug zur Gewalt zentral. Dennoch handelt es sich um einen sehr vagen und auch kontroversen Begriff, der allgemeinsprachlich, in vielen Disziplinen aber auch zwischen einigen Denkschulen ganz unterschiedlich verwendet wird. Daher erstaunt es nicht, dass sich eine Fülle an richtungsweisenden Theoretikerinnen und Theoretikern mit dem Gewaltbegriff auseinandergesetzt haben, von Walter Benjamin, Hannah Arendt und Norbert Elias bis hin zu Pierre Bourdieu, Judith Butler, Gayatri Spivak und Slavoj Žižek.

Versöhnung in der griechisch-römischen Antike **Prof. Jan Meister**

„Versöhnung“ ist mehr als der bloße Verzicht auf direkte Konfrontation, sondern impliziert, dass in einem längeren Prozess eine dauerhafte Überwindung eines vorherigen Konflikts angestrebt wird und die ehemaligen Konfliktparteien zu einem neuen Vertrauens- oder Freundschaftsverhältnis finden sollen. Das Idealtypische Bild ist dabei stark von modernen Versöhnungsprozessen geprägt, die (nationale) Identitäten und christlich-theologische Konzepte von Schuld und Vergebung voraussetzen. In der griechisch-römischen Antike ist das in der Form nicht gegeben, doch Versöhnungsprozesse lassen sich auch hier identifizieren. Dabei stehen insbesondere die zahlreichen inneren Konflikte im Fokus, wobei die Frage, was ein „innerer“ Konflikt ist und welche Einheit mittels Versöhnung erzielt werden soll, sich im Verlauf der verschiebt: Das Entstehen eines „hellenischen“ Gemeinschaftsbewusstseins verschiebt die Grenzen ebenso wie die römische Imperiumsbildung, die die gesamte Mittelmeerwelt zu einer als Einheit gedachten oikumene vereinigt. Die Übung hat zum Ziel, verschiedene antike Versöhnungsprozesse exemplarische zu analysieren und dabei wiederkehrende Probleme (wie der Umgang mit Vergangenheit und Schuld bzw. Rache) in den Blick zu nehmen und zu schauen, wie die sich verändernden politischen Ordnungen, aber auch die sich ändernden Konzeptionen der zu versöhnenden Entitäten zu unterschiedlichen Strategien führen.

TEACHING

Vergangenheitsaufarbeitung im öffentlichen Raum: Gerechtigkeit, Erinnerung und Versöhnung im internationalen Vergleich (mit Exkursion nach Berlin)

Jun.–Prof. Rosario Figari Layús

Im Rahmen einer zweitägigen Exkursion nach Berlin (12.–13. Mai) analysiert das Seminar, wie unterschiedliche Gesellschaften mit historischen Gewalterfahrungen – darunter Diktaturen, koloniale Gewalt und Bürgerkriege – umgehen und welche Bedeutung Erinnerungskulturen für gesellschaftliche Versöhnungsprozesse haben. Ein besonderer Schwerpunkt liegt auf der Frage, was erinnert wird, wie erinnert wird und wie Vergangenheitsaufarbeitung öffentlich sichtbar gemacht wird – etwa durch Denkmäler, Gedenkpraktiken, künstlerische Interventionen, Ausstellungen, digitale Erinnerungsräume oder performative Formen des Erinnerns. Im Zentrum stehen zudem theoretische Grundlagen der Erinnerungsforschung, Konzepte der Transitional Justice sowie politische Instrumente der Vergangenheitsaufarbeitung wie Wahrheitskommissionen, Entschädigungsprogramme, Gedenkstätten und juristische Verfahren. Insbesondere bietet das Seminar einen vertieften Blick darauf, wie Vergangenheit im öffentlichen Raum ausgehandelt und dargestellt wird – etwa im Stadtraum, in Museen, in Medien oder durch zivilgesellschaftliche Initiativen – und welche politischen sowie gesellschaftlichen Konflikte und Aushandlungsprozesse damit verbunden sind.

Menschenrechte, Frieden und Versöhnungspolitik in und nach Konflikten

Jun.–Prof. Rosario Figari Layús

Das Seminar bietet eine vertiefte Auseinandersetzung mit internationalen Menschenrechten, Friedensförderung (Peacebuilding) und Versöhnungsprozessen. Im Zentrum stehen deren konzeptionelle und historische Grundlagen, wobei insbesondere theoretische Ansätze, normative Debatten sowie praxisorientierte Zugänge zu Versöhnung in fragmentierten Gesellschaften und Gesellschaften nach Konflikten berücksichtigt werden. Darüber hinaus analysiert der Kurs zentrale internationale Rechtsinstrumente, institutionelle Arrangements sowie die sozialen und politischen Dynamiken und Akteure, die diese Bereiche prägen.

MISCELLANEOUS

We are on [Instagram](#) & [LinkedIn](#)!

Follow us for more frequent updates!



Our Website has had an update – take a look [here](#).



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IMPRESSUM:
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