

1ST COLLOQUIUM ON LATIN AMERICA

Summer Term 2023

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



UNIVERSITÄT
BAYREUTH





LOCATION

Iwalewahaus (Foyer)
Wölfelstraße 2
95444 Bayreuth

www.iwalewahaus.uni-bayreuth.de

TIME

Wednesdays
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.


ENTRY FREE

ORGANISATION

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CONTACT

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PRESENTATIONS

- April 19th - Carlos Kölbl** | University of Bayreuth **1**
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An exploration in Bolivian-German relations
- May 10th - Gustavo Morello** | Boston College **2**
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Lived Religion in Latin America Today
- May 17th - Manuel Benza Llatas** | University of Bayreuth **3**
Cosmopolitical battles for good health in the Andes:
epidemics, colonialism, and indigenous resistance
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“The City that Perfumed the World”
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- May 31st - I. de Melo-Reiners & R. Hagn** | FAU / BAYLAT **5**
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to evangelicalism in the context of violence
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- June 28th - Karoline Noack** | University of Bonn **8**
Anthropology and politics.
The current situation in Peru
viewed through anthropological concepts
- July 19th - Colleen A. O'Brien** | University Saarland **9**
Movie “Strangers to Peace” + Q&A
19:00 Closing Ceremony

APRIL 19TH**CARLOS KÖLBL**

| University of Bayreuth

**Decolonising education.
An exploration in Bolivian-German relations**

In this talk I aim to contribute to a more multifaceted picture of what decolonising education can mean. I do this in the form of a case study of selected and intertwined Bolivian–German discourses and practices directed at the decolonisation of education in the wide sense of the term. First, I introduce Indigenist and ‘Indianist’ proposals, which are shaped, not least, by Nietzschean ideas. In a second step, I turn to some examples of German ‘Bildungsromane’ that are deeply entangled with Bolivian phenomena. Hence, the first part of my talk is about decolonising the formerly colonised via education, whereas the second revolves around decolonising the former colonisers, but without the possibility for or the wish to identify completely clear-cut boundaries. It will thus become clearer how decolonising education can be understood as a relational phenomenon.



MAY 10TH**GUSTAVO MORELLO**

| Boston College

**Messy, Heterogeneous, and Distinct:
Lived Religion in Latin America Today**

The presentation explores the interaction of religion and modernity. The thesis proposed here is simple: There is an interaction between modernity and religion in Latin America, but the result has not been religion diminishment, but its transformation. The difficulty in assessing religiosity as it exists in Latin America is due in part to the continuing use of categories that were not designed for religious cultures outside the North Atlantic world. Those categories point us toward a different kind of dynamics, which in fact obscure Latin American religious dynamics. If we look at religion from Latin America and from the people who practice it, we will find a different definition and different conceptual tools for understanding the religious experience of Latin American people, and perhaps it helps us to look at religion in a different way. I developed these ideas in my recent book *Lived Religion in Latin America. An Enchanted Modernity* (OUP, 2021).



MAY 17TH

MANUEL BENZA LLATAS

| University of Bayreuth

Cosmopolitical battles for good health in the Andes: epidemics, colonialism, and indigenous resistance in the 16th century

This research attempts to describe the role of epidemics in the Spanish Conquista of the Americas during the 16th century, especially in the South American Andes once ruled by the Tawantinsuyu or Empire of the Incas. The objective of this study is to conduct an analysis of the ways in which Andean people interpreted the presence of diseases as a consequence of Christianity and the campaigns to extirpate idolatries, and consequently, how they organized resistance and elaborated discourses based on their own cosmovision and epistemics. In these discourses, the guacas, non-human beings of the territory, emerged as the main political actors that led the resistance against colonizers and the Christian God. Their agency and intentionality were interpreted by the leaders of the Taki Onqoy Movement and transmitted to the Andean people. Then, our research focuses on two non-human agents: microorganisms like the virus of smallpox (studied mostly by the history of medicine and science) and the guacas (studied mostly by religious studies or ethnohistory). The analysis seeks to elaborate a hybrid framework that tries to go beyond the modern division of culture and nature, proposing a perspective that considers the emergence of indigenous cosmopolitics, recognizing the heterogeneity and multiplicity of the historical and the political.

MAY 24TH

FRANCISCO LOPEZ VÁLLEJO

| University of Bayreuth

“The City that Perfumed the World” - Initial Insights Towards a Global History of Vanilla in Twentieth-Century Papantla, Mexico

Until the first half of the nineteenth century, the small town of Papantla—situated at the north of the coastal state of Veracruz, Mexico— was considered the global center for vanilla production as virtually all vanilla came from the indigenous region of the Totonacapan. While this productive preponderance moved to former colonies in Africa and Southeast Asia during the next century, Papantla remained one of the most important centers of production and fostered a wide range of historic processes that varied from ecological, agrarian, social, political changes at the dawn of the nineteenth century. With less attention has been twentieth-century histories related to vanilla, most notably, on how this region lost its productive role and how the local level responded to it.

Based on initial archival work in Mexico and historiographical literature review, this presentation will try to share and put on the table of discussion a set of strains for a global history of vanilla in Papantla in the twentieth century. Although previous and important work has been developed on important aspects of the globality of vanilla, few studies have dived in how the global dimension operated on the regional level and how the locals (European immigrants’ descendants, indigenous peoples, Mexicans, etc.) understood, shaped and were impacted by this global commodity. Furthermore, Papantla could not only represent a central case for the history of this product, but also a compelling example for the understanding and theoretical reflection on how disintegration processes work and how locals.

MAY 31ST

IRMA DE MELO-REINERS & RICARDO HÄGN

| FAU / BAYLAT

Science Diplomacy between Bavaria and Latin America: The case of BAYLAT and its work in science and academic cooperation

The discussion focuses on the crucial role of science diplomacy between Bavaria and Latin America and the different actors involved in this partnership. Science diplomacy aims to enhance cooperation and understanding between nations, not only in scientific fields but also in political, economic, and cultural dimensions. The Bavarian University Center for Latin America (BAYLAT) plays a central role in this effort by fostering academic and science cooperation between Bavarian and Latin American institutions.

We will provide an overview of the different actors involved in science diplomacy, including universities, diplomats, government agencies, and private foundations. It will highlight the importance of these actors working together to promote cooperation, build trust, and create opportunities for scientific exchange. Additionally, the presentation will explain how BAYLAT supports these actors in their efforts and how the organization is contributing to the advancement of science diplomacy in the region. This part will allow understanding how through science diplomacy, BAYLAT has been able to attract strategic and network partners, as well as support the establishment of research alliances and create networks such as the "Research and Cooperation Network for Latin America in Bavaria" (LATinBAY).

In complementation, we will present the work of BAYLAT, including its goals, activities and achievements. BAYLAT has been promoting academic and scientific exchange between Bavaria and Latin America for over a decade, exploring the impact of its programs and initiatives in this field. Moreover, we will examine the results of BAYLAT's work, including the establishment of collaborations between universities and research institutions, the promotion of research and innovation, and the strengthening of cultural ties between the two regions.

The presentation will conclude by emphasizing the importance of science diplomacy in fostering cooperation and understanding between nations, and the critical role that organizations like BAYLAT play in this effort. Analyzing the future of science diplomacy between Bavaria and Latin America and the role that BAYLAT will play in this field.

In summary, we will provide a general overview of science diplomacy between Bavaria and Latin America, including the role of different actors, the work of BAYLAT, and the impact of this cooperation in the region. By exploring the challenges and opportunities in this field, providing a valuable contribution to the advancement of science diplomacy in the region.

JUNE 14TH**VÁLERIE GRUBER & GILBERT SHANG NDI**

| University of Bayreuth

Mafone – dance theatre for knowledge co-creation

Theatre, music, dance and poetry performances provide means and methods to co-create knowledges in a way that brings emotional and bodily experiences into dialogue with academic reflections. Working through the trauma of enslavement, colonisation and their aftermath requires such highly sensitive methodologies to avoid further objectification and alienation of the people involved. In this colloquium, we launch a 40-min live recording of the dance theatre “Mafone – Oríkì da viagem” (“Mafone – Oríkì of the voyage”) directed by Brazilian transdisciplinary artist Diego Araújo, Colombian choreographer Jaime Gómez and Mozambican musician Matchume Zango. It is a major outcome of our approach to Orlando Fals Borda’s Participatory Action Research, which inspired us to organise an exchange programme between Afro-descendant artists and community actors from Salvador da Bahia (Brazil) and Cartagena de Indias (Colombia). We take this public video screening as an opportunity to reflect on our shifting roles as researchers, mediators and mentors of this process throughout the past three years, and open up a discussion on the potentials and limitations of combining arts and research. In particular, we consider the opacity through which both trauma and dreams can be reinvented in a non-harmful, but polysemantic way. Hence, we will take the public on a creative journey of transdisciplinary experimentation and collective healing, striving to provoke thoughts and discussions on alternative ways of doing research in and with Latin America.

JUNE 21ST

ARIANE KOVAC

| University of Leipzig

**Redeemed, reborn, forgiven.
Conversions to evangelicalism in the context of
violence and civil wars in Latin America**

Evangelicals have been on the rise in Latin America for several decades. The fact that so many people are leaving Catholicism and converting to evangelical churches is usually attributed either to intensive missionary efforts by the churches or to the financial and social benefits that can accompany conversion. However, in addition to mission and poverty, conflicts and civil wars in the region are catalysts for the spread of evangelicalism. In Guatemala, conversions to evangelical churches during the civil war offered indigenous people at least a slim hope of protection from attacks by the military. In Peru, it was the other way around: in the Ayacucho region, which was particularly affected by the civil war, entire villages converted, even though evangelicals were in the line of fire of both the guerrillas and the military. In El Salvador, conversion to an evangelical church seems to be the safest way to leave a street gang.

Based on these three examples, in my presentation, I will discuss reasons why evangelical churches seem to be attractive to many people who experience violence and civil war. I am particularly interested in how evangelical theological concepts of conversion as “rebirth” and forgiveness as God's command for all believers shape conflicts, reconciliation, and remembrance. I show that conversions and the forgiveness that accompanies them represent local efforts to find alternative forms of justice in the face of the conflicts' high civil involvement. I base my presentation primarily on field research and interviews with evangelical conflict victims that I conducted in Peru in 2018.

JUNE 28TH**KAROLINE NOACK**

| University of Bonn

Anthropology and politics. The current situation in Peru viewed through anthropological concepts

The current political and socio-economic crisis in Peru is an occasion to take a look at the country's history to understand the escalation of conflicts since December last year. After initially demanding the release of President Pedro Castillo, the protests are now also calling for new elections and a new constitution; the demonstrators are raising the question of power. The conflict between indigenous, rural and peasant groups, especially from the impoverished south of Peru (the so-called deep Peru), and Lima's "white" elite has deep historical roots. These have erupted repeatedly throughout history, most recently in the 20-year "internal war" (1980-2000) in which the indigenous, rural and peasant population was worn down between Sendero Luminoso and the army. In the perspective of the *longue durée* of Peruvian history, it becomes visible that the social blocs that are currently confronting each other are also visible in past times, in each case historically and socio-politically concrete, as is also reflected in anthropological research, for example. Anthropological research in Peru, which has been going on for a little more than 100 years, has developed influential and far-reaching tools to be able to grasp social and political realities. The question to be explored in this lecture is to what extent this research has contributed to the perception of a population frozen in time, to a non-anticipation of social conflicts and thus also to a stabilization of existing power relations.

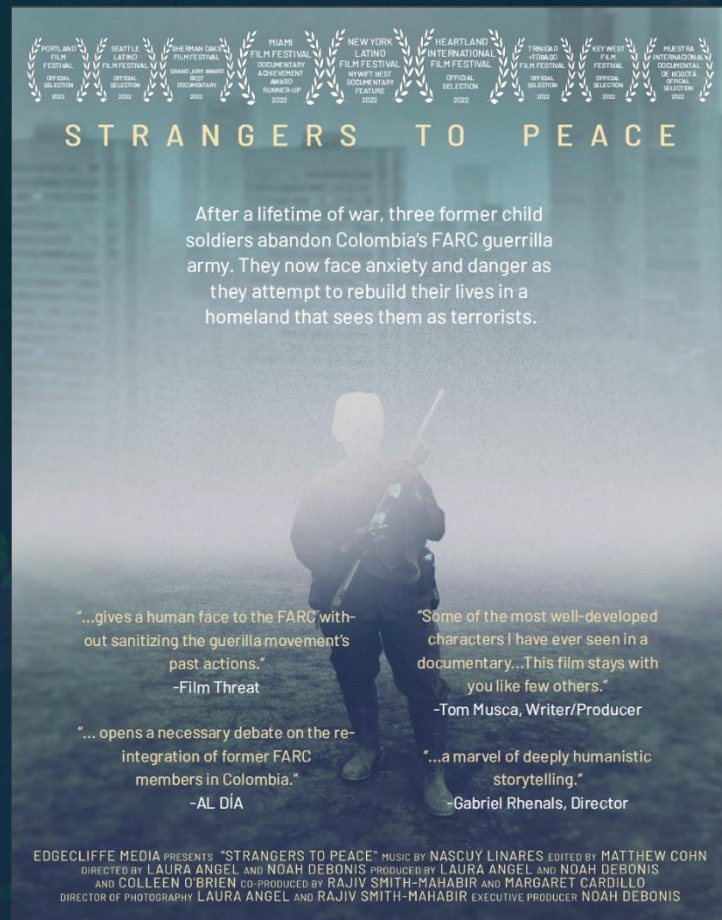
JULY 19TH**COLLEEN A. O'BRIEN**

| University Saarland

Movie "Strangers to Peace"

Three former child soldiers face retribution, anxiety, and danger as they attempt to rebuild their lives after leaving the FARC guerrilla army and the bloody Colombian conflict. *Strangers to Peace* intimately captures the personal stories of Dayana, the market vendor navigating her new identity as a trans woman; Ricardo, the young father secretly clinging to his communist ideology; and Alexandra, the indigenous child soldier, who was forced to leave her family behind in the Amazon. Their stories are told through the lens of filmmaker Laura Àngel, who herself was a victim of FARC violence.

<https://strangerstopeace.com>





JULY 19TH
19:00 P.M.

**CLOSING
CEREMONY**

**We cordially invite you to
stay for a glass of wine,
some chats and a relaxed
get-together to bring the
colloquium and the summer
term to a close.**