

Call for Applications

Spring School of the Käte Hamburger Kolleg Münster EViR (*Einheit und Vielfalt Im Recht / Legal Unity and Pluralism*):

Material Entanglement and Normative Constellations: Atlantic and Indian Ocean Histories of Exchange and Exploitation (18th to 20th centuries).

Münster, Germany, from Monday, 17 March 2025 to 21 March 2025

Venue: Käte Hamburger Kolleg (Iduna Building), Room 7011, Servatiiplatz 9, 48143 Münster.

Organisation: João Figueiredo (EViR, University of Münster), Felix Brahm (History Department, University of Münster).

Concept:

The Atlantic and Indian Oceans, spanning vast distances, are not just bodies of water but conduits of global history. They were spaces of human migration, commodity and idea circulation, technological innovation, and political and social reform during the Modern and Late Modern eras (18th to 20th centuries). These ocean worlds witnessed large-scale historical processes based on the movement of people, such as the traffic of enslaved persons, the free migration of former peasants, or the forced migration of indentured labourers or 'freed slaves,' but also on material flows, such as the transfer of cheap commodities and cash crops, the extraction and removal of precious metals and raw materials, the diplomatic exchange of gifts, or the plunder of artworks, prestige items, and naturalia. This spring school will focus on the material dimension of cross-oceanic and global exchanges. These processes brought ever more distant regions into direct contact, creating dense material entanglements, but often not on equal terms.

Notably, exchange and exploitation occurred within legal and normative frameworks or actively against them, simultaneously depending on preexisting legal regimes, varying constellations of local and European norms, and power relations. They profoundly impacted these legal regimes and normative constellations, shaping their future development. From the

common law and canon law doctrines that justified slavery within imperial legal spaces to the emergence of an embryonic international law system through the proliferation of abolition treaties during the 19th century; from the growth of joint-stock maritime trading companies to current debates about ethical investment, fair trade, and corporate ‘greenwashing;’ from the local and European conventions that regulated the exchange of gifts and the taking of wartime spoils to current debates about restitution and repatriation. All these changes and developments in law and normative knowledge, cultural values, and ethical and moral reasoning are indissociable from the material entanglements they are concurrent with. In this Spring School, we want to study and discuss these issues together with renowned invited scholars, on the basis of primary sources and introductory readings.

Faculty:

Professor Ana Lucia Araujo from Howard University, USA, is a social and cultural historian whose comparative research focuses on the history and the memory of the Atlantic slave trade, slavery, and their social and cultural legacies. She has published extensively about reparations for slavery, public memory, heritage, and the visual and material culture associated with slavery and the slave trade. Most recently, she is the author of *Humans in Shackles: An Atlantic History of Slavery in the Americas* (University of Chicago Press, 2024) and *The Gift: How Objects of Prestige Shaped the Atlantic Slave Trade and Colonialism* (Cambridge University Press, 2024).

PD Dr. Felix Brahm from the University of Münster, Germany, is specialising in global and colonial history. He has published, amongst other topics, on the trade relationships between Europe and Africa, particularly on the arms trade, and on the central European involvement in the Transatlantic slavery business and its abolition. He recently co-edited a volume titled *Global Commerce and Economic Conscience in Europe, 1700–1900: Distance and Entanglement* (Oxford University Press, 2022) with E. Rosenhaft.

Dr João Figueiredo, from the Käte Hamburger Kolleg of Münster (EViR), Germany, is a cultural and legal historian with a background in anthropology. His work focuses on West Central Africa under Portuguese influence, highlighting the diverse interactions among African legal systems, Portuguese laws, and various European and Atlantic sources of law and normativity. He is the

author of *Sorcery and Jurisdiction: The Law and Multinormativity in Early Modern West Central Africa* (Böhlau, 2025).

Professor Maxine Berg from Warwick University, UK, is a global economic historian who researches the global history of trade, commerce, material culture, and knowledge during the early modern period, focusing mainly on the relationships between Asia and Europe. She has written extensively about British trade with Asia, focusing on luxury trades and the history of knowledge and technology. Additionally, she explores the history of material culture, particularly textiles, porcelain, and luxury manufactured goods. Her latest work is a co-authored book titled *Slavery, Capitalism, and the Industrial Revolution* (Polity, 2023), written in collaboration with Pat Hudson.

Professor Monica Juneja from the University of Heidelberg, Germany, is a distinguished global art historian specialising in transcultural studies and the history of visual representations. She has made significant contributions to the study of religious identities in South Asia and has also engaged with the fields of Gender Studies and Postcolonial Studies. Most recently, she has published *Can Art History be Made Global? Meditations from the Periphery* (De Gruyter, 2023).

Application:

This Spring School is aimed at master's and doctoral candidates enrolled in History, Art History, and Legal History programmes or working in neighbouring disciplines. We are privileged to host a diverse and distinguished panel of invited speakers, each with unique expertise and disciplinary perspectives, from the Universities of Heidelberg, Germany; Howard, USA, and Warwick, UK. To apply, please submit a one-page motivation letter and a brief CV to both joao.figueiredo@uni-muenster.de and felix.brahm@uni-muenster.de by January 17, 2025. This does not apply for University of Münster students wishing to enroll in the Spring School - they choose it as a seminar option and follow the standard procedure (open for registration from January 15) Acceptance letters will be forwarded to external applicants by 31 January 2025. There are no participation fees; the Käte Hamburger Kolleg will cover the accommodation costs, but the participants must pay their own travel expenses.