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- Max-Weber-Kolleg (MWK), University of Erfurt
- Centre for Modern Indian Studies (CeMIS), University of Göttingen
- Institute of East and South Asian Cultural Studies, Julius-Maximilians-University of Würzburg

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ICAS:MP

International Centre of
Advanced Studies:
'Metamorphoses of the Political'



Comparative
Perspectives on
the Long Twentieth
Century.

About ICAS:MP

ICAS:MP is a Centre of Advanced Studies funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) as one of their Maria Sibylla Merian Centres. We offer short-term fellowships in New Delhi to distinguished scholars in the social sciences and humanities working on the theme of 'Metamorphoses of the Political in the Long Twentieth Century'.

Academic focus of ICAS:MP

Scholars associated with ICAS:MP examine and compare, from a wide array of disciplinary and methodological approaches, how 'the political' has been conceptualized, articulated and performed in specific arenas of contestation during what we call the 'long twentieth century.' This temporal demarcation is a heuristic tool that allows us to consider longer historical trajectories, ranging from the 'age of empire' to the transformative phase following the end of the Cold War in which 'the political' emerged as a realm transcending the boundaries of institutional politics.

ICAS:MP researchers ask: What comes to count as 'the political' in distinct locales? What are the historical dynamics of depoliticization and repoliticization? How has the boundary between the political and the non-political shifted over time? What are the material and normative stakes of claiming, redefining or rejecting, the political? How do these dynamics unfold beyond, and unsettle, the West/non-West divide?

ICAS:MP Special Lecture: *Bodybuilding and Muscular Manliness – Towards a Global History* by Sebastian Conrad, in collaboration with the German Embassy, New Delhi, 20 February 2024. On the podium: Ambassador Philipp Ackermann.



Cross-Modal Conference: *The World After the Pandemic*, 22-24 February 2024, organised by Prathama Banerjee and Ravi Sundaram (CSDS, Delhi), and Martin Fuchs (MWK Erfurt).

Research Themes

Through its innovative transnational structure, we aim to foster sustainable research cooperation among leading humanities and social science scholars from Germany, India and other countries who investigate similar research problems. Adopting a comparative approach, ICAS:MP highlights the overlapping yet distinctive trajectories of political processes that have unfolded around the world.

These questions about the shifting nature of the 'political' have been addressed through sustained empirical focus since the inception of the centre in 2015.

In the pre-phase and main phase of the project (2015 – 2024), our research revolved around seven Thematic Modules (TMs) that engaged with the 'Metamorphoses of the Political' from their distinctive points of departure and multiple theoretical perspectives.

These were:

- History as a Political Category
- Labour as a Political Category
- Critiques and Renewals of Democracy
- Normative Conflicts and Transformations
- The Challenge of Gender
- Political Economy of Growth and Distribution
- Media and the Constitution of the Political

In the current phase (July 2024 – June 2027), the earlier modular format has been replaced by Thematic Consolidation Groups (TCGs), designed

to meet the requirements of the research themes that have emerged in the main phase of the project.

These are:

- Constructing Alternative Pasts: (New) Sources and Methods
- The Challenge of Gender
- Normative Conflicts and Transformations
- Theory from the South

Publications

We bring out two book series with international academic publishers. Both series are set up to publish books authored or edited by our researchers, fellows and collaborators. The volumes also originate from workshops and conferences organised by us.

These are:

- a) Cambridge University Press – ICAS:MP Series
Metamorphoses of the Political: Multidisciplinary Approaches

This series publishes new books that both expand and de-centre current perspectives on politics and the political in the contemporary world.

- b) Routledge – ICAS:MP Series
Politics and Society in India and the Global South

Following our mandate to make research accessible, this series is published in Open Access. The books in this series were earlier published by SAGE Publications.

ICAS:MP Keynote: *Between Revolution and Repair: Rethinking Walter Rodney's How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* by Professor David Scott; Autumn School: Decolonization/Decolonial: *Thinking across Disciplines and Geo-Histories*, 11 - 21 September 2024.

