

# How to decolonize political history

18, 19 and 20 June 2025

University of Antwerp, Centre for Political History

## Wednesday | 18 June 2025

Klooster Grauwzusters | Promotiezaal | Lange Sint-Annastraat 7 | Antwerp

8:30 Registration with coffee

9:15 Welcome: **Marnix Beyen** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

9:30 **Opening keynote lecture: Pedro Monaville** | McGill University, Canada  
*The shape of Patrice Lumumba's heart* (part of the Lumumba Legacies Series)

10:30 **PANEL 1: Speaking back to empire: Parliament, representation, and contests for political authority during and after empire**

**Chair: Pasi Ihalainen** | University of Jyväskylä, Finland

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- **Lauren Lauret** | Leiden University, the Netherlands  
*'Not all Indies' hands can become members of Parliament': Returning colonial expatriates and 19th century Dutch government culture*
- **Karen Lauwers** | University of Helsinki, Finland  
*'This is not a petition properly speaking': How letters from colonial Algeria challenged French notions of 'appropriate' political practices (1890s–1930s)*
- **David Thackeray** | University of Exeter, UK  
*'They do not understand the European method of dealing with matters': Maori claims for representation and the settler state in late 19th century New Zealand*
- **Richard Toye** | University of Exeter, UK  
*'Anytown joins lobby for fairer deal for world's poor': Mass lobbies against world poverty in Thatcher's Britain*
- **Anubha Anushree** | University of Delhi, India  
Democratizing decolonization: Perspectives on approaching decolonization through the Indian Anti-Corruption Movement

12:00 Lunch

13:00 **Keynote lecture: Adriana Salay** | Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil  
*Understanding the past, shaping the present: hunger and inequality in Brazil*

14:00 **PANEL 2: Female perspectives: Decolonization, power, and gender**

**Chair: Margot Luyckfasseel** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

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- **Adaugo Pamela Nwakanma** | University of California Irvine, USA  
*Decolonizing political histories: Nigerian women's political and economic activism in global perspective*
- **Anaïs Angelo** | Institute for Cultural Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria  
*Writing African women's parliamentary history to decolonize the history of the African state*
- **Olga Nikonenko** | University College London & British Museum, UK  
*Negotiation power: Female political authority in colonial and postcolonial contexts from Cleopatra to Sirleaf*
- **Stefanie Steiner** | Affiliation TBC  
*Erased and marginalized: Women's political roles in history textbooks and the colonial legacy of political historiography*
- **Yulia Gradskova** | Södertörn University, Sweden  
*Can the exploration of the gendered transnationalism at the periphery help decolonizing the Cold War history?*

15:30 Coffee break

16:00 **PANEL 3: Practices of (de)-coloniality in Europe**

**Chair: Maarten Van Ginderachter** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

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- **Martina Moretti** | University of Tuscia, Italy  
*Imperial legacy in question: Cape Verdeans in Portugal addressing the effects of decolonization*
- **Gauri Saxena** | IHEID-Geneva Graduate Institute, Switzerland  
*Finding respect in the neocolonial enterprise: British South Asian doctors in the historical and contemporary landscapes of the NHS*
- **Michele Debernardi** | IHEID-Geneva Graduate Institute, Switzerland  
*Money and the rule of law: A postcolonial perspective on the enlargement of the European Union*
- **Michele Benazzo** | IHEID-Geneva Graduate Institute, Switzerland  
*Rediscovering anti-colonial struggles in Europe: The Institute of Race Relations and Asian Anti-Racism in Britain*
- **Emilio Vivó Capdevila** | University of Antwerp, Belgium  
*Decolonizing Francoism: Coloniality of power and coloniality of knowledge in Spanish foreign policy during Francisco Franco's dictatorship*

17:30 Reception I until 19:00

## Thursday | 19 June 2025

Klooster Grauwzusters | Chapel | Lange Sint-Annastraat 7 | Antwerp

9:00 Welcome with coffee

9:30 **Keynote lecture: Musa Sroor** | Birzeit University, Palestine  
*When colonialism becomes non-colonialism: The case of Zionist colonialism in West Jerusalem*

### 10:30 **PANEL 4: Decolonization, politics, and the history of ideas**

**Chair: Marnix Beyen** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

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- **Josias Tembo** | University of Applied Sciences Arnhem-Nijmegen, Netherlands  
*Decolonizing Foucault's conceptualization of power, the political, and Western political subjectivity*
- **Jonas Nabbe** | Erasmus University College, Rotterdam, Netherlands  
*(Re-)drawing borders, mapping a region: Examining transregional agency and the politics in defining the 'Middle East'*
- **David Manolo Sailer** | Kiel University, Germany  
*The semantics of the decolonial state: Time, sovereignty, and the erasure of alternative historiographies*
- **Nathalie Kermaal** | University of Alberta, Canada  
*From historical political truth to speaking truth to power: The example of Canada*
- **Rommel A. Curaming** | Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Brunei  
*Marcos' Tadhana project and the ambiguities of the decolonial critique*

12:00 Lunch

13:30 **Keynote lecture: Roland Ndille** | University of Buea, Cameroon  
*Political history and the politics of history education in Africa: Between state exigencies and decolonial necessities*

### 14:30 **PANEL 5: Decolonizing political history: With what sources?**

**Chair: Gillian Mathys** | Ghent University, Belgium

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- **Juliette Bour** | University of Antwerp, Belgium  
*The words of genocidaires as a source of political history: Ethical and historiographical challenges*
- **Parand Danesh** | EHESS, France  
*Writing political history based on private archives: The case of martyrology photo albums during the Iran-Iraq war*
- **Philibert Nkurunziza** | University of Pau, France  
*Writing the political history of the Rwanda-Burundi border zone: Sources and methodology*
- **Karine Ramondy** | Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, France & **Nadeige Laure Ngo Nlend** | University of Douala, Cameroon

*Écrire l'histoire politique en commission: Rôle de la France dans la répression pendant la guerre d'indépendance camerounaise*

- **Denis Samnike** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

*The penitentiary institution in the DRC and in Cameroon, from colonial to postcolonial: Political history as a perspective for the ethnographic investigation*

16:00 Coffee break

16:30 **PANEL 6: Questioning the politics of empire: diplomacy, law, and trade**

**Chair: Burak Sayim** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

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- **Yigit Akin** | Ohio State University, USA

*The twilight years of the Ottoman Empire (1918-1922) as its most international moment*

- **Burak Bulkan** | University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA

*Beyond Europe: Ottoman legalism and the universalization of international law*

- **Andrés Landoni** | CIECS-Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina

*Rethinking British merchant discourses on China: A decolonial approach to trade and identity in Guangzhou in the 1830s*

- **Nissaf Sghaïer** | UCLouvain, Belgium

*Premodern studies? Studying the Burgundian late Medieval political ideology through a postcolonial lens*

- **Eline Ceulemans** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

*Crucial connectors in translating (Belgian) empire? Transimperial interpreters of King Leopold II in late Qing China*

19:00 Conference dinner | Location TBC

## Friday | 20 June 2025

Klooster Grauwzusters | Chapel | Lange Sint-Annastraat 7 | Antwerp

9:00 Welcome with coffee

9:30 **Keynote lecture: Jihane Sfeir** | Université Libre de Bruxelles  
*Resisting erasure: the making of archives and history in Palestine*

### 10:30 **PANEL 7: Institutional colonial trajectories**

**Chair: Julia Heinemann** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

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- **Nick Majchrowicz** | University of Antwerp, Belgium  
*In the lion's den: Small European and non-European acts of decolonisation within the Colonial College of Belgium (1920-1965)*
- **Ronald Kroeze** | Vrije Universiteit & Radboud Universiteit, Netherlands | **Susan Legene** | Vrije Universiteit, Netherlands | **Farabi Fakihi** | Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia | **Bambang Purwanto** | Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia  
*The politics of norm-setting and anticorruption in the Netherlands-Indonesian relationship (1870s-2010s): A reflection on the Colonial Normativity-project*
- **Ngome Elvis Nkome** | University of Buea, Cameroon  
*Rethinking sources of African ethnographic collections in European museums: Unravelling postcolonial debates for restitution*
- **Anne-Isabelle Richard** | Leiden University, Netherlands  
*Democratizing the Council of Europe: Decolonization by participation?*
- **Christian Nnabuike Onoja** | Makerere University, Uganda | University of Nigeria Nsukka  
*Decolonizing justice system in Africa: An examination of the role of the judiciary in the 2023 Nigerian general election*

12:00 Lunch

### 13:00 **PANEL 8: The divergent faces of colonialism: Central and East-Central Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries**

**Chair: Heleen Touquet** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

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- **Iwona Sakowicz-Tebinka** | University of Gdańsk, Poland  
*The Lithuanian question in 'Kraj' as an example of 'colonized colonizers' narrative*
- **Barbara Klasa** | University of Gdańsk, Poland  
*Polish 19<sup>th</sup> century historiography towards the Ruthenian/Ukrainian question*
- **Arkadiusz Janicki** | University of Gdańsk, Poland  
*How the formers colonizers defended themselves against colonization and denationalization: The case of the Baltic Germans in the Kurland Governorate (Russian Empire) before the First World War*
- **Bianca Sadowska** | University of Gdańsk, Poland  
*From the perspective of the colonizer: Alexandr Hilferding's view on the Polish question*
- **Nikolay Karkov** | State University of New York at Cortland, USA  
*Decolonize that: Dimitŭr Dimov's Fiction and the Race Politics of Bulgarian State Socialism*

14:30 Coffee break

15:00 **PANEL 9: Decolonization as a process**

**Chair: Henk de Smaele** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

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- **Javed Iqbal Wani** | Ambedkar University Delhi, India  
*Dilemmas of a postcolonial state: Compulsions of governance and the face-lifting of colonial policing institutions in newly independent India*
- **Benson Kanyingi** | University of Embu, Kenya  
*Mbeere voices in the Mau Mau struggle: A step towards decolonizing Kenya's political history*
- **Cyprian Nanji** | University of Buea, Cameroon  
*Decolonizing political historiography: persistence of precolonial egalitarian structures in Ndian division, Cameroon*
- **Christopher Saunders** | University of Cape Town, South Africa  
*Decolonizing political history: South African lessons from experience*
- **Gualamhuseyn Mammadov** | Ege University, Turkey | **Tural Abullazada** | Independent  
*Locating May 28 and April 28 in the modern historiography of Azerbaijan: What is needed to be decolonized?*

16:30 Coffee break

**Closing Roundtable**

16:45 **Chair: Marnix Beyen** | University of Antwerp, Belgium

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Panelists TBC