embeddedness in colonial, imperial, and, generally, capitalist legacies, as well as its contemporary role in the neoliberal political and economic project - paradoxically as both a productive part of the 'shadow economy' and as a justification for imposing public sector reform - tends to be left out of the picture. The agents behind this reductive corruption narrative are heterogeneous and often well-intentioned.

Hence, many civil society organizations, chiefly among them Transparency Inter-national, have genuinely sought to empower the victims of corruption by shaming states and their administrations into cleaning up their act. Yet, to do so effectively, they have often had to pander to a media and public eager for digestible quantitative macro-level accounts, to the detriment of the more complex qualitative micro-level stories of corruption. Likewise, the media have played an ambivalent role as, on one hand, whistle-blowers and advocates of transparency, and, on the other hand, as the projection device that has enabled the upscaling of the corruption narrative, often in line with particular partisan interests. Hence, while the causes for the rise of (anti-)corruption are multi-faceted, it is clear that its current stylization into a cipher for all that is ill in government, in the world, and, indeed, in modernity itself, has made the much needed examination of the concrete practices and contexts that constitute corruption more, rather than less, difficult.

ORGANISERS

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PD Dr. Bettina Hollstein (Max-Weber-Kolleg of the University of Erfurt)

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Max Weber Centre
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Metamorphoses of the Political
M.S. Merian – R. Tagore International Centre of Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF ERFURT

TM4 – Workshop 2017

„From 'Lava Jato' to 'Notebandi': Discourses on Corruption – Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Perspectives"

12.–13.10.2017 | Erfurt

PROGRAM

12.10.17

till 12:45	arrival
13:00	**Welcome Address** Martin Fuchs
13:15	**Introduction: „From 'Lava Jato' to 'Notebandi': Discourses on Corruption – Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Perspectives"** Kalpana Kannabiran, Florian Hoffmann, Bettina Hollstein
14:00	**Presentation and discussion: "Sand and the Politics of Plunder in Tamil Nadu"** J. Jeyaranjan (India)
15:00	**Presentation and discussion: Law and political crisis in Brazil: from „mensalão" to „lava-jato"** Fernando Fontainha (Brazil)
16:00	**Coffee break**
16:30	**Presentation and discussion: "A new kind of systemic corruption? New findings on corruption in Post-Communist Societies."** Frank Ettrich (Germany)
18:00	**Keynote (public): "Urban Spatial Politics: Sociality, Transparency and Ideas of 'Community"** Sanjay Srivastava (India)
20:00	**Conference Dinner**

13.10.17

9:30	**Presentation and discussion: "Corruption indices – basis for comparison or bias?"** Bettina Hollstein (Germany)
10:30	**Presentation and discussion: "Conceptualising Corruption, Conflict and Cities in Africa (and Beyond?)"** Lucy Koechlin (Switzerland)
11:30	**Coffee break**
12:00	**Presentation and discussion: "Before the Law: (Anti-)Corruption and the Politics of Anti-Politics in Contemporary Brazil"** Florian Hoffmann (Brazil)
13:00	**Final discussion: "Can we realise intercultural and interdisciplinary comparative analysis of corruption? Challenges and Perspectives"**
14:00	**Lunch**
15:00	**Visiting tour of the old town (facultative)**

Corruption has become an increasingly dominant theme in contemporary political discourse across the globe. Whether in mature or emerging democracies, or in hybrid or autocratic regimes, corruption, as the conceptual representation of a diffuse set of practices, has turned into a privileged cipher for the generalized critique of the political status quo. It is used across different political spectra and seems to resonate as much with political elites as with general 'public opinion'. It is firmly embedded in the global 'good governance' agenda and plays a preeminent role in the multilateral aid process, especially in relation to aid conditionalities and ever deeper going accountability obligations. While the practices described by corruption tend to involve complex public-private relationships grown over prolonged periods of time, the concept has gained its fullest critical currency as a critique of the state, public administration and the (democratic) political process. It is here that corruption has become a game-changing discourse that has enabled the wholesale deligitimation of established political actors, party formations, and even entire models of social and economic development. Likewise, it has underwritten the unconventional entry of new actors, from anti-corruption parties via the judiciary to 'the people', into the political process and has rapidly changed the political landscapes of a host of countries – the current Notebandi discussion on the broader context of the de-monetization policy in India and the Brazilian Lava Jato investigation that has brought down one government and may yet bring down another are but two prominent examples. However, this shift in the perception of corruption and its concomitant normative empowerment has been premised on a highly selective semantic which (largely) excludes some of its aspects -such as corruption in certain fields, like criminal justice-, or of certain actors -such as corporations, who may be criminalized for instigating (public sector) corruption, but who are rarely publicly vilified to the same degree as public administration is. In the same vein, the broader (structural) context of corruption such as its historical