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Phd Project:

Knowledge of Reconciliation. Religious Practices as Local Forms of Transitional Justice in Mozambique (1992–2016)

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Abstract:

The dissertation will explore in the categories of Transitional Justice studies (TJ) the contribution of religious practices to peace processes in post-conflict societies in Africa. Using Mozambique as a case study, I propose to examine the contribution of plural religious practices for reconciliation in three religions respectively and comparatively: African Traditional Religions, Christianity, and Islam. The time frame of analysis will be the end of the civil war until the rise of political tensions in the country (1992–2016). With reference to the “local turn” within the field of TJ, and taking the perspective of local actors, the dissertation will seek to analyse plural religious practices and their contribution for reconciliation processes in societies that until now have not been sufficiently considered. More specifically, I propose to analyse the diversity of local practices and the complex local power relations with particular attention to religious reconciliation rituals. The aim of the analysis is the reconstruction of knowledge of reconciliation as knowledge about the reconstruction of a society. The leading research questions concern the diachronic and synchronic importance of religious actors in relation to reconciliation, the practices of reconciliation used and their relation to each other.

Biography :

Magdalena Freischlad, M.A. studied History and Politics in Berlin and Paris. During her studies she has specialized in decolonization processes in Africa, and has particularly focused on the Algerian war of independence (year of graduation: 2015). From 2008-2009 she completed a research internship at the Institut d'études politique de Paris (“SciencesPo Paris”) and, from 2010-2013, she was a student assistant at the Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut at FU Berlin. Magdalena Freischlad has worked as a Political Advisor at the German Bundestag (2014), as Director and Head of Communication at a NGO (2015) and as Head of Project and Coordinator International Religious Dialogue at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (2016-2017), focusing especially on issues related to religion, freedom of religion and belief as well as development aid. In 2018 she started her dissertation titled “Knowledge of reconciliation. Religious practices as local forms of transitional justice in Mozambique (1992-2016)”.

Within the scope of her area of interest, she spent a research semester in Portugal (Universidade de Lisboa) in 2018. Since 2019 she has been conducting field research in Mozambique (Maputo, Nampula), fully funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Since 2020 her dissertation is fully funded by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung.

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