



FROM THE DIRECTOR



On June 9th, Europeans will convene at polling stations to vote in an election that is supposed to shape the future of the Union. The European Union is a symbol for democracy and liberal values across the globe. However, the steady rise of right-wing parties in several local elections over recent years is a concerning trend that could jeopardise not only the image, but the foundations upon which the European integration project has been built.

SCRIPTS is keenly attuned to shifting political and social landscapes. During the last months, our researchers put out 26 publications on core topics of contestations of liberal values and models, such as the conflict in Ukraine, the use of social media and digital channels for political manipulation and repression, the growing issues with human rights, and increasing inequality. Our findings show that liberal ways of organising societies continue to experience a multitude of often interlinked challenges and crises.

These and other fundamental topics were at the forefront of the **SCRIPTS Midterm Conference** in November 2023, taking stock of four years of the Cluster's research. The Conference provided an opportunity for all members to reflect on past achievements and

discuss how to further develop our research agenda in the upcoming years. Among the key conclusions of the Conference were the changing nature of contestations of the liberal script expressed in the growing polarisation and radicalisation. Broken promises and hypocrisy are major drivers of this deepening of contestations while crises and social media act as accelerators. A short article in this newsletter summarises the central discussions and insights gained from the conference.

Digitalisation plays a key role in the contestation of liberal democracy. Our new SCRIPTS PI, Professor Anita R. Gohdes' book, **“Repression in the Digital Age: Surveillance, Censorship, and the Dynamics of State Violence”** recently received the prestigious Goldsmith Book Prize from the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School.

Another significant publication shedding light on the deepening of contestations of the liberal script is the Special Issue of West European Politics **“Under Pressure: Polarisation and Participation in Western Europe”**, edited by SCRIPTS Professor Swen Hutter, postdoctoral researcher at the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB) Dr. Endre Borbáth, and research fellow at the Hertie School Arndt Leininger. The Special Issue explores how ideological and affective polarisation shape electoral and non-electoral participation in politics.

The year 2024 holds particular significance for SCRIPTS as we prepare for the **application for the second funding period**. We will continue to investigate how and why liberal ideas and institutions for organising societies are increasingly under stress. In particular, we want to find out why some liberal democracies are more resilient in coping with polarisation and radicalisation than others.

We invite you to join us during this decisive year in SCRIPTS trajectory and follow the exciting new developments yet to come.

Tanja A. Börzel

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SCRIPTS welcomes new Deputy Directors

During its plenary meeting on 28 November 2023, SCRIPTS has elected two new Deputy Directors. [Prof. Mark Hallerberg](#) and [Prof. Dr. Yasemin Soysal](#) now form, together with SCRIPTS Director [Prof. Dr. Tanja A. Börzel](#), the Cluster's Board of Directors. Mark Hallerberg is Professor of Public Management and Political Economy at the Hertie School and Principal Investigator at SCRIPTS' Research Unit (Re-)Allocation. Yasemin Soysal holds the Cluster's Professorship in Global Sociology and coordinated the new Research Unit Science. We very much look forward to working with them in the upcoming years!

SCRIPTS expresses its heartfelt thanks to [Prof. Dr. Michael Zürn](#), Director of the Research Unit Global Governance at the WZB - Berlin Social Science Center, who was SCRIPTS Co-Director from 2019 to 2023, and had significantly contributed to the research agenda and design of SCRIPTS during the proposal stage. We are deeply grateful to Michael Zürn for his many contributions – and are happy to keep him involved as the Director of the Knowledge Exchange Lab.

[Find out more about the Board of Directors at SCRIPTS](#) ↓



Reaching the four-year mark, SCRIPTS takes stock of developments and results during Midterm Conference

Marking the fourth year of the Excellence Cluster, SCRIPTS members and invited external scholars gathered in Berlin from [22 to 24 November 2023](#) to reflect on the research findings produced since the beginning of the Cluster's activities. The Conference featured plenaries and roundtables addressing themes and case studies from each of the Cluster's Research Units (RUs): Borders, Orders, (Re-)Allocation, and Temporality.

Two roundtables covering the latest developments in various forms of contestations in spatial and temporal dimensions opened the Conference, setting the stage for subsequent panels and plenaries of each RU.

During the plenary session on **RU Borders**, the examination of the liberal border script highlighted tensions between individual freedom and collective self-determination, particularly in immigration and sovereignty contexts. The plenary on **RU Orders** addressed the challenges to the Liberal International Order (LIO), focusing on how internal and external forces, including notable actors like China and Russia, present ongoing challenges to the order. Inequalities of wealth and life chances, as well as the broken promise of meritocracy, were analysed as a sign for the inadequacies of the liberal script during the **RU Allocation** plenary. Finally, the session on **RU Temporality** explored the extent to which different ideas about time or temporalities associated with life courses have driven contestations of the liberal script and questioned whether shifts in these life courses have undermined liberal societies.

Alongside these panels, discussions focused on the conditions shaping the rise of contestations, including reflections on the "broken promises" of the West and the evolving role of China and India as representing potential alternatives to the liberal script.

The Conference's findings highlight the changing nature of contestations against liberalism, involving increasing polarisation and radicalisation as well as the importance of integrating non-Eurocentric perspectives in order to understand the challenges to liberalism from a global standpoint. Additionally, the participants recognised the critical role of social media in shaping and spreading contestations, pointing to the influence of digital platforms in modern political and social movements.

Looking ahead, the momentum and insights gained from the Conference have galvanised our motivation to lead this research journey into the



Tanja Börzel presents evidence on the changing nature of contestations during a panel at the SCRIPTS Midterm Conference | Photo: Patricia Kalisch / SCRIPTS

Berlin's governing mayor reaffirms support for Berlin based Clusters of Excellence

The [Berlin University Alliance](#) (BUA) invited Governing Mayor of Berlin, Kai Wegner, and Dr. Ina Czyborra, Berlin's Senator for Higher Education and Research, on 26 February 2024 to an open exchange with all seven Berlin Clusters of Excellence: [Matters of Activity](#), [Math+](#), [NeuroCure](#), [Science of Intelligence](#), [SCRIPTS](#), [Temporal Communities](#), and [UniSysCat](#).

The event focused on the Clusters' achievements and plans for the second round of applications to the Excellence Strategy. The Excellence Strategy is a permanent programme to facilitate and support outstanding research. SCRIPTS Director Prof. Dr. Tanja A. Börzel commented: "The visit of the Governing Mayor Kai Wegner is an important signal of the state's support for the current round of the Excellence Competition." Besides reaffirming the support for the new applications, Kai Wegner and Ina Czyborra announced that the Berlin State Government will finance one permanent professorship for each cluster selected for the next round financing.

[Read the complete article about the visit at the BUA Website \[in German\]](#)





Berlin's Governing Mayor Kai Wegner and Berlin's Senator for Higher Education and Research

Dr. Ina Czyborra (front middle) pose with Clusters' representatives at the Humboldt Forum | Photo: Berlin University Alliance (BUA)

Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse discuss Georgia's relationship with the European Union in Tbilisi

SCRIPTS Director Prof. Dr. Tanja A. Börzel together with Senior Professor Thomas Risse participated in several conferences and discussions on Georgia's relationship with the EU during a visit to the Republic of Georgia in February.

Their first stop in Tbilisi was at the conference "Transformation in Times of Transition: European Integration and the Eastern Partnership Initiative", in which Prof. Börzel gave a key note on the new challenges for international cooperation, integration and the development of the legal system between the European Union (EU) and the six members of the Eastern Partnership (EaP). More details about the conference are available at the Georgian National University [SEU Website](#) and in a short [video](#) summarising the event.

Additionally, Prof. Börzel and Prof. Risse were invited by Ilia University to participate in the panel discussion "[Georgia's European Quest: Building Resilience in an EU Context](#)" which explored various aspects of Georgia-EU relations.

The round table discussion "Bridging the Divide: Exploring Georgia's Alignment with EU Security and Foreign Policy", organised by the Ilia State University and the Jean Monnet Chair, closed the trip. The event was attended by Asunción Sánchez Ruiz, Chargée d'affaire of the European Union Delegation to Georgia and H. E. Vesselin Valkanov, the Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to Georgia. The exchange aimed at sparking insightful conversations about strengthening Georgia's alignment with the EU's security and foreign policy framework as well as exploring pathways for a more comprehensive integration into the

European community. For more details, you can visit the [website](#) of the Georgian Institute of Politics.



Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse take part in the round table discussion “Bridging the Divide: Exploring Georgia’s Alignment with EU Security and Foreign Policy” at the Georgian Institute of Politics (GIP) | Photo: Georgian Institute of Politics

SCRIPTS Principal Investigator Shirin Amir-Moazami called into expert commission against anti-muslim racism

We congratulate [Prof. Dr. Shirin Amir-Moazami](#) on her appointment at the expert commission against anti-Muslim racism from the Berlin Senate Department for Labour, Social Affairs, Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination. Further information about the appointment as well as the commission is available in the form of a [press release at the Berlin Senate Department’s website](#) [in German].

Shirin Amir-Moazami is Professor of Islam in Europe at Freie Universität Berlin, Principal Investigator and head of the Research Unit Orders at SCRIPTS.

Julia Tovote chosen as a new member of the German-French Doctoral College

In a cooperation of Université Sorbonne Nouvelle and Goethe University Frankfurt, funded by the Franco-German University (FGU), the German French Doctoral School "Representing the ‘Other’: Museums, Universities, Ethnology" investigates the challenges museums with ethnographic collections are facing today. We congratulate SCRIPTS affiliate doctoral researcher Julia Corinna Tovote to be a part of the research project! More information about the project is available at the [website \[in German\] of the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Goethe University Frankfurt](#).

SCRIPTS Knowledge Sculpture makes its debut during Crossing Boundaries Conference

SCRIPTS' new Knowledge Sculpture, conceived and built by the Cluster's Knowledge Exchange Lab, was exhibited for the first time during the Berlin University Alliance (BUA) "Crossing Boundaries" Conference which took place on 22 November 2023. The "Knowledge Sculpture" is a modular and flexible collection of tables, oversized index card boxes, and flashcards, conceived to make SCRIPTS' research work and topics on the challenges of liberal democracies accessible. It translates the contestations of liberal democracy into a visual and tangible format, with research quotes from SCRIPTS scientists as well as pictures that contrast with the promises of the liberal script. The sculpture conveys the tensions the liberal script is exposed to in an accessible way, raising questions about the enforcement of promises like freedom, equality, and rule of law.

Over 300 guests visited the Spaces designed by the Berlin Excellence Clusters and engaged in discussions on the current state of the liberal script and future challenges.



Participants interact with Knowledge Sculpture at the Crossing Boundaries Conference | Photo: SCRIPTS

STAFF NEWS

Meet a few new Cluster members and learn about their research. A complete and up-to-date list of members can be found on the [SCRIPTS website](#) ↓

Principal Investigators (PI)

SCRIPTS is happy to welcome several new Principal Investigators to our Diverse SCRIPTS Community!

Prof. Dr. Anita Gohdes is Professor of International and Cyber Security at the Hertie School in Berlin. Previously, she was Assistant Professor of International Relations at the University of Zurich, and postdoctoral research fellow at the Belfer Center as well as at the Women and Public Policy Program in the Harvard Kennedy School. Her research focuses on themes at the intersection of technology and security as well as on measuring political violence.

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

Prof. Dr. Robert Kindler is Professor for East European History at the Institute for East European Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. He is a former member of the Graduate School "Global Intellectual History." His research and teaching focus on the transnational history of the Russian Empire, the history of the North Pacific, Stalinism in Central Asia, and Post-Soviet cultures of memory.

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

Dr. Julia Langbein joined us from ZOIS where she is the head of the Research Cluster Political Economy and Integration since 2020. Her research focuses on the integration of (semi-)peripheral economies into transnational markets and value chains as well as on the consequences for their economic and political development. At SCRIPTS, she will be a part of the Research Unit Orders.

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

Prof. Dr. Arianna Ornaghi is Assistant Professor of Economics at Hertie School. Her research aims at improving our understanding of forces that influence the behaviour of public officials such as police officers and judges. Before joining the Hertie School, Arianna was a British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Warwick.

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

Prof. Dr. Diana Panke just started at the Freie Universität in April as Professor for Political Science with a focus on International Relations. Previously, she was Professor of Political Science and Chairholder of "Multi-Level Governance" at Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg. One of her latest research projects "The Secret Life-Changes of Norms: A Comprehensive Analysis of Norm Change" was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

Prof. Dr. Christoph Trebesch is the head of the Research Center International Financial Markets and Macroeconomics at the Kiel Institute for the Global Economy (IfW) and Professor of Macroeconomics at Kiel University. He works at the intersection of international finance and macroeconomics, economic history, and political economy

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

Pre- and Postdoctoral Researchers

SCRIPTS warmly welcomes **Philip Warncke** who joined us as a Postdoctoral Researcher at the [Data and Methodology Centre](#) (DMC). As a comparative political scientist, he supports the DMC as Academic Coordinator. His research focuses on the origins, properties, and consequences of political belief systems. Additionally, he develops conceptual and computational methods that are suitable for latent constructs like political ideology, that are tricky to capture with conventional statistics.

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

International Research College (IRC)

The IRC is a hub for postdoctoral fellows and international guest researchers and the main venue for fostering cooperation between SCRIPTS and its international partners. Through the international network built within the IRC, SCRIPTS promotes career mobility for researchers at any stage of their career.

Visiting Senior Fellows

From January until June we are joined by **Dr. Yuliya Bidenko**, a political scientist who, since 2016, is the expert for the “Team Europe” Initiative of the European Union’s Delegation to Ukraine. She holds the position of Associate Professor and Guarantee of the Master’s Programme at Karazin Kharkiv National University, Department of Political Science.

Likewise, from March until the end of December, **Dr. Dmitry Uzlaner**, Director of the Center for the Study of Religion from the Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration joins SCRIPTS as a Senior Fellow and will be with us till the end of the year.

We also welcome **Prof. Juan Diez Medrano**, Professor of Sociology at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, who will be with the Cluster until the end of June 2024.

In April, SCRIPTS also welcomes **Sokhna Ndiaye**, a sociologist who holds a PhD of Charles University Prague. Her research focus includes public policy and governance.

Lastly, we were joined by **Prof. Ettore Recchi** from Sciences Po Paris, a part-time Professor at the Migration Policy Centre (MPC) of the European University Institute (Florence) and the Institut Convergences Migrations in Paris. He joined SCRIPTS from January until the end of March as a Senior Fellow.

A warm welcome to all the new faces at SCRIPTS!

[List of all current Visiting Senior Fellows at the IRC](#) ↓

Pre- and Postdoctoral Researchers

Dr. Jazmín Duarte Sckell will be with the Cluster as a postdoctoral researcher from January 2024 to December 2025. She is a social researcher on gender, politics and history. She earned her PhD titled “The Political Use of Masculinity During Stroessner's Dictatorship (1967)” at the Universität zu Köln. As a SCRIPTS IRC Postdoctoral Fellow, she is focusing on the analysis of masculinity within the extreme right wing in the Southern Cone of Latin America.

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

Dr. Karmen Tornius started as a postdoctoral fellow at IRC in January this year. She earned her PhD from the Roskilde University and Danish Institute for International Studies where she produces her publication-based dissertation “Regional Gender Governance in Africa: The African Union in Perspective.” Her current research projects at SCRIPTS “African Imprints on the Global Women’s Rights Script” focuses on the Global South histories of women’s rights, particularly the voices of African actors in global United Nations-led processes in the 1980’s and 1990’s. She will enrich SCRIPTS with her presence until the end of 2024.

[Profile and Contact](#) ↓

EVENTS, CONFERENCES, AND WORKSHOPS

To stay up-to-date with upcoming and past SCRIPTS Events, follow us on [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

EXCELLENT PUB QUIZ | THE LONG NIGHT OF SCIENCE

22 JUN, 6:30 PM | TU Berlin, Main Building

Do you want to test your knowledge about cutting edge science made in Berlin and learn more about the work of the Clusters of Excellence? Then you might want to secure a place in the pub quiz organised by the seven Clusters of Excellence in Berlin during this year’s Long Night of Science (in German, Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften, short LNDW), on 22 June. The pub quiz will be split in two rounds each lasting an hour and containing different questions related to the Clusters’ research projects. The Clusters invite all science enthusiasts and quiz lovers to take part in both quiz rounds and try their luck!



Participants competing at the Pub Quiz in 2023 | Photo: Kay Herschelmann

DISCUSSION | FEVER CURVE OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY - WHAT A GLOBAL SURVEY BY THE SCRIPTS CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE TELLS US ABOUT THE STATE OF SOCIETY | THE LOMNG NIGHT OF SCIENCE

22 JUN, 7:30 PM | Freie Universität Berlin, Fabeckstraße
23/25 (Holzlaube) Room L23 0.3099

Democracies are under pressure – but how do people feel about the core values and institutions of liberal societies? SCRIPTS surveyed over 60,000 people in 30 countries to gain insight into this and other questions related to perceptions and attitudes towards liberalism. In a discussion moderated by SCRIPTS' doctoral researcher Neval Güllü, Dr. Heiko Giebler and Karoline Estermann will explain how such a complex survey is carried out and what the data reveals about the state of affairs in liberal societies.



Berlin Wall with graffiti of J. F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. Photo: Isai Ramos | Unsplash

SCRIPTS AT ISA | ISA 2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION

3-6 APR | San Francisco, California

The International Studies Association (ISA) is one of the oldest interdisciplinary associations dedicated to understanding international, transnational, and global affairs. Its 65th Annual Convention 2024 "Placing Relationality at the Centre of International Studies" took place from 3 to 6 April in San Francisco, USA. SCRIPTS' scientists hosted and actively participated in 34 panels and roundtables throughout the four-day event.

Highlights included the panels "Academic Freedom in Europe: Contestations, Limitations and Judicial Remedies", chaired by Prof. Dr. Tanja A. Börzel and "Liberal Script of Science, its Alternatives and Contestations", chaired by Prof. Dr. Yasemin Soysal.

Participants also had the chance to meet SCRIPTS' members in a more informal setting by attending the reception hosted by the Cluster on Friday, 5 April. Furthermore, representatives of SCRIPTS met with colleagues from the German Center for Research and Innovation (DWIH) and from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) to discuss potential cooperation opportunities on topics such as academic freedom, climate politics, and artificial intelligence.

You can find a selection of the ISA 2024 programme, containing all activities in which SCRIPTS participated during the convention here: [SCRIPTS Programme ISA 2024](#). For further information about the ISA and the conference, please visit the [ISA website](#).



Participants attend the SCRIPTS Reception at the ISA 2024 | Photo: Isabel Winnwa / SCRIPTS

SCRIPTS' LATIN AMERICA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

11-12 MAR | Instituto de Relações Internacionais of the University of São Paulo

In the beginning of March, SCRIPTS' Principal Investigators and scholars from its partner institutions and beyond met at the Instituto de Relações Internacionais (IRI) of the University of São Paulo (USP) in Brazil for the second authors' workshop "Contestations of the Liberal Script in Latin America". During the two-day workshop, researchers discussed their contributions to a volume co-edited by Tanja A. Börzel (SCRIPTS), Ana Covarrubias (El Colegio de Mexico), Cristiane Lucena (USP), and Thomas Risse (SCRIPTS).

The event concluded with a public roundtable "From Authoritarian Populism to Pink Tides? Contestations of the Liberal Script in Latin America". SCRIPTS director, Prof. Dr. Tanja A. Börzel, the professor at the Institute of Political Science at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Cristóbal Rovira-Kaltwasser, and the executive director of the Fundação Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Sérgio Fausto, discussed the role of economic and cultural grievances in explaining the success of far-right parties and movements in Latin America and Europe.



Tanja A. Börzel takes part in the roundtable "From Authoritarian Populism to Pink Tides? Contestations of the Liberal Script in Latin America." | Photo: Vinicius Doti / Fundação Fernando Henrique Cardoso

SCRIPTS EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGIONAL WORKSHOP

25-26 JAN | Zentrum Liberale Moderne (LibMod)

In January, SCRIPTS, in collaboration with Reichman University's Lauder School and the Center for Liberal Modernity (LibMod), organised the "Order Contestation in the Eastern Mediterranean" workshop in Berlin. Led by Thomas Risse, Tanja Börzel, and Assaf Moghadam, the workshop is part of the SCRIPTS Regional Conference series. Scholars from the

region explored challenges to the liberal order with a focus on contested sovereignties, political regimes, and critical needs. Sessions dedicated to "Contestations in the Arab Mediterranean" and "Radical Contestations" delved into specific issues such as domestic contestation in Lebanon and Syria, Hezbollah's shadow economy, and the Islamic State's campaign against liberal governance. The workshop fostered interdisciplinary dialogue and laid the groundwork for future collaboration in understanding and addressing order contestation in the region.

BRIDGING GAPS BETWEEN POLICY SYSTEMS AND RESEARCH | WORKSHOP

11-12 APR | Stiftung Wissenschaft Politik (SWP)

SCRIPTS, [German Council on Foreign Relations](#) (in German: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik - DGAP), and [German Institute for International and Security Affairs](#) (in German: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik - SWP) organised a workshop titled "Bridging Gaps between Policy Systems and Research: Changing Roles and Practices of Think Tanks". Directed at early career specialists, the event marked a significant step in fostering synergy within the research and policy community. Led by Tannas Michel and Weronika Perlinski, the workshop delved into practical strategies for translating research findings into impactful policy recommendations. Attendees engaged in discussions on enhancing the visibility of their recommendations and understanding the unique role of think tanks in shaping public discourse. By emphasising the societal relevance of research, the workshop empowered junior researchers to bridge academic inquiry with actionable solutions. This successful collaboration underscores the importance of interdisciplinary dialogue in advancing informed policy solutions.



SCRIPTS doctoral researchers watch the opening presentation at the "Bridging Gaps" workshop. | Photo: Matthias Hahn / SCRIPTS

“OBJECTS FROM AFAR” | WORKSHOP

5-6 MAR | Humboldt Labor

The politics of restitution of artefacts from the “Global South” displayed in Western museums, the narrative connected with them, as well as the challenge for liberal democracies to confront their colonial histories through material culture were the topics of the workshop “Objects from Afar”, organised by the homonymous SCRIPTS Project’s team.

The workshop brought together specialists and researchers from the University of Oxford, the National Museum of Namibia, the University of Western Cape, the College de France, The New School for Social Research in New York, and the Georgia State University in the USA.

[More information about the project is available in our website](#)↓

“MAKING A LIVING – EDUCATIONS AND SOCIETIES AND MISSING LINKS” | WORKSHOP

22-23 FEB | University of Bayreuth

Organised by Prof. Dr. Erdmute Alber (Universität Bayreuth), Prof. Dr. Iris Clemens (Cluster of Excellence Africa Multiple), and Prof. Dr. Anette Fasang (SCRIPTS Berlin), the workshop “Making a Living” focused on testing this concept through anthropological, demographical, and sociological analysis and case studies conducted in African and Asian countries.

During the workshop, SCRIPTS’ researchers Prof. Dr. Anette Fasang and Dr. Binda Niati together with Madlen Beck from the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin gave a presentation on “Navigating the Transition to Adulthood in Senegal: How Do Young Adults Make a Living When There Are No Formal Jobs to Be Had?”. Prof. Fasang and Dr. Niati are part of the SCRIPTS’ project “High Hopes and Broken Promises: Young Adult Life Courses in Senegal.”

[You can find out more about their project in our website](#) ↓

“KNOWLEDGE FROM THE MARGINS, MARGINAL KNOWLEDGE?” | WORKSHOP

15-16 FEB | SCRIPTS Offices in Dahlem

The SCRIPTS Junior Research Group Peripheral Liberalism in partnership with Sciences Po Grenoble-Université Grenoble Alpes hosted the workshop “Knowledge from the Margins, Marginal Knowledge? Analysing the Production of Economic Knowledge Since the End of the 19th Century”. The event was the first of three meetings planned for this Franco-German research project.



From left to right, from front to back: Pierre Alayrac, Max Trecker, Tobias Rupprecht, Olga Gnydiuk, Veronika Helfert, Juliette Blayac, Alexandra Ghiț, Kevin Axe, Simon Godard, Alice Trinkle, Maximiliano Jara Barrera. | Photo: George Payne / SCRIPTS

BCCN-TALK | ONLINE EVENT “CHINA IN AFRICA: NEW MUTUAL TRUST?”

1 DEC 2023 | Online

Together with the Institute of Intercultural and International Studies (InIIS), the GlobalLab (Bremen Collaboratory on Global Solidarity), SCRIPTS organised and held the [BCCN-Talk “China in Africa: New Mutual Trust?”](#). The event focused on an original survey dataset from South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Nigeria regarding the question who citizens would most like to ally their country with – China, Western countries, others, or no one at all?

Principal Investigator Prof. Dr. Genia Kostka together with Prof. Dr. Wiebke Rabe, who is Assistant Professor of International Relations at Universität Bremen, chaired the event. Among others, Prof. Dr. Anja Osei, Principal Investigator and Cluster Professor "Contemporary Politics and Societies in Africa" at SCRIPTS, participated as a discussant.

SHORT TALK | IN FUTURE #1 WEALTH AND INEQUALITY WITH MARTYNA B. LINARTAS AT THE BERLIN SCIENCE WEEK

3 NOV 2023 | Museum für Naturkunde Berlin

“Inheritance is the most important reason for rising inequality”. With this and other impactful statements, Martyna B. Linartas punctuated her arguments concerning social disparities, possibilities for introduction of a new inheritance tax, and discussed the role of billionaires in Germany in an [interview with journalist Adrian Schulz during the Berlin Science Week](#).

Martyna Berenika Linartas is a political scientist and postdoc in the Cluster of Excellence SCRIPTS. She teaches at the Otto-Suhr-Institute of Freie Universität Berlin with a focus on international political economy and is founder of the website [ungleichheit.info](#) – a platform that transfers knowledge and information on inequality from academia to the general public – in order to comprehend, convey, and challenge inequality.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

A selection of current journal articles and book chapters (in alphabetical order by authors) published in the framework of SCRIPTS. See all publications on our website [↗](#).

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Distract and Divert: How World Leaders Use Social Media During Contentious Politics

Pablo Barberá, Anita R. Gohdes (SCRIPTS & Hertie School), Evgeniia Iakhnis, Thomas Zeitzoff

The International Journal of Press/Politics

In this study, researchers analyse world leaders' social media communication during domestic crises. They unveil a strategic shift towards foreign policy topics, suggesting a diversionary tactic to mitigate internal unrest. This trend is more pronounced in democracies, especially before elections, indicating the influence of democratic institutions. Leveraging innovative datasets and machine learning, the study sheds light on leaders' digital strategies in navigating phases of social unrest.

[Online access](#) ↓

Human Rights beyond the Liberal Script: A Morphological Approach

Tobias Berger (SCRIPTS & FU Berlin)

International Studies Quarterly

The way in which competing ideological projects underpin different interpretations of human rights is often overlooked in recent scholarship. In this article, Tobias Berger seeks to broaden the understanding of human rights by introducing a morphological approach, treating them not as standalone norms but as intricate components within larger ideological structures. By analysing how these norms interact with other concepts, it sheds light on non-liberal interpretations of human rights. Through two case studies, the article explores human rights beyond traditional liberal ideas of democracy, the rule of law, and the singular human ontology.

[Online access](#) ↓

The Temporal Dimension of Parental Employment: Temporary Contracts, Non-Standard Work Schedules, and Children's Education in Germany

Bastian A. Betthäuser, Nhat An Trinh, Anette E. Fasang
(SCRIPTS & HU Berlin)

European Sociological Review

The increasing prevalence of non-standard work and its adverse consequences are well documented. However, there is still known little about how common non-standard work is perceived by parents, and whether its negative effects are further transmitted to their children. Using data from the German Microcensus, the three authors document the prevalence and concentration of temporary employment and non-standard work schedules in households with children in Germany.

[Online access](#) ↓

Regionalism and liberal nationalism in the European Union. A case *Sui Generis*?

Tanja A. Börzel (SCRIPTS & FU Berlin)

Journal of European Public Policy

Ernst B. Haas pioneered European integration studies, emphasizing supranationalism. His neofunctionalism theory, adaptable globally, contrasts with European Union scholars' view of the bloc as being *sui generis*. In this paper, Tanja A. Börzel reconsiders European regionalism, viewing the EU as strong supranationalism fostering 'cosmopolitan internationalism', influenced by liberal nationalism but not solely dependent. It addresses challenges to EU's liberal regionalism model by non-liberal nationalisms.

[Online access](#) ↓

Life Course Trajectories and Wealth Accumulation in the United States: Comparing Late Baby Boomers and Early Millennials

Anette E. Fasang (SCRIPTS & HU Berlin), Rob J. Gruijters,
Zachary Van Winkle

American Journal of Sociology

Millennials are often assumed to be economically worse off than previous generations because of more precarious employment and unstable family lives. SCRIPTS Principal Investigator Anette Fasang, together with colleagues, analyse in this article the work and family trajectories of late baby boomers and early millennials and relate them to wealth holdings at age 35. As methods sequence analysis and unconditional quantile decomposition are being used.

[Online access](#) ↓

Politicized Science and Rural–Urban Divides: Exploring How Rurality in the Place of Residence and Red and Blue Media Use Affected Attitudes Toward Scientists Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tomoko Okada (SCRIPTS & WZB Berlin), Liwei Shen

Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy

In their article Postdoctoral Researcher Tomoko Okada together with Liwei Shen disentangle the effects of rurality and partisanship and consider their interactions with red/blue media use in rural–urban divides in attitudes toward scientists. Their study is based on the 2016 American National Election Survey and primary data collected in a 2021 survey.

[Online access](#) ↓

Tanzania under Magufuli: the personalization of a party-based regime

Anja Osei (SCRIPTS & FU Berlin), Elisabeth Bruhn

International Studies Quarterly

New research challenges the notion of static authoritarian regimes, revealing subtle yet significant shifts in power dynamics. Focusing on Tanzania, this article by SCRIPTS Professor Anja Osei and Elisabeth Bruhn highlights how Magufuli's presidency transformed the country from a party-based to a party-personalist regime. Factional tensions within the ruling party empowered him to manipulate institutions to his advantage. This case underscores the need for refined tools in understanding evolving autocratic systems, bridging theory with real-world complexities.

[Online access](#) ↓

Tatiana Zhurzhenko (SCRIPTS & ZOiS)

Geopolitics

Everyday Europeanization and Bottom-Up Geopolitics at the Ukrainian-Polish Border

Postdoctoral Researcher at SCRIPTS, Tatiana Zhurzhenko explores in her article how the Ukrainian-Polish border is lived, experienced, and perceived from below in two Ukrainian near-border towns. The importance of the local dimension of these relations – multiple horizontal ties and cooperation projects, mass cross-border movement, dense social networks, and transnational family relationships – became particularly clear in spring 2022, when the border turned into a life-saving corridor and a site of everyday solidarity. The article is based on a conceptual approach that combines ‘everyday Europeanization’ and ‘bottom-up geopolitics’ with the notion of the border as a historically multi-layered and dynamic phenomenon.

[Online access](#) ↓

BOOKS

Research Design in the Social Sciences: Declaration, Diagnosis, and Redesign

Graeme Blair, Alexander Coppock, and Macartan Humphreys
(SCRIPTS & WZB Berlin)

This book provides a methodological framework that allows researchers to assess the properties of research designs before implementing them. This framework, called MIDA – short for Model, Inquiry, Data Strategy, and Answer Strategy – can support a description of any empirical research design in the social sciences.

[Available for purchase in the publisher’s website.](#) ↗

Visions of Humanity

Jessica Gienow-Hecht (SCRIPTS & FU Berlin), Sönke Kunkel, Sebastian Jobs

Together with Sönke Kunkel and Sebastian Jobs, SCRIPTS Professor and Professor for International history at the Freie Universität Berlin, Jessica Gienow-Hecht, addresses in this book the growing interest in historical ideas and actions targeting international and global audiences in the name of common values, rights, and concerns. Through an international set of contributions, which explore the spaces, materials, actors, and mediations of and on humanity, this volume applies both an historical and cultural lens to the tensions and struggles involved in constructing, invoking, and instrumentalising the “we” of humanity.

[Available for purchase in the publisher’s website.](#) ↗

Repression in the Digital Age: Surveillance, Censorship, and the Dynamics of State Violence

Unravelling the nexus of digital expansion and authoritarian control, in this book, SCRIPTS Professor Anita R. Gohdes explores how new technologies support states in their use of violent repression. Through

large-scale analyses of fine-grained data, she unveils how regimes leverage online censorship and surveillance to stifle dissent, shedding light on the paradoxical nature of Internet shutdowns during uprisings. This timely analysis reveals a troubling reality: heightened Internet accessibility correlates with increased state violence, underscoring the profound impact of digital connectivity on modern governance and activism.

[Available for purchase in the publisher's website.](#) ↗

Russia's War Against Ukraine

Gwendolyn Sasse (SCRIPTS & ZOiS)

Anita R. Gohdes (SCRIPTS & Hertie School)

In this timely book, SCRIPTS Professor and Director at the Center for East European and International Studies (ZOiS), Gwendolyn Sasse, analyses the background to this war and examines the factors that led to Putin's fateful decision. She retraces the history of Ukraine's struggle for independence from Russia and shows how democratic developments in Ukraine had become a risk for Russia's political system. She also shows that ambiguous Western policy towards Russia encouraged elites in the Kremlin to think that they had more room for action than they did.

[Available for purchase in the publisher's website.](#) ↗

OTHER WRITTEN OUTPUT

Under Pressure: Polarisation and Participation in Western Europe. Special Issue of West European Politics

Endre Borbáth, Swen Hutter (SCRIPTS & WZB Berlin), and Arndt Leininger

Special Issue of West European Politics

Polarisation over cultural issues and the emergence of radical, often populist, challenger parties indicate a fundamental restructuring of political conflict in Western Europe. The authors argue that the emerging divide crosscuts and, in part, reshapes older cleavages. The contributions to this band innovate by adapting concepts and measures of ideological and affective polarisation to the context of Europe's multi-party and multi-dimensional party competition and by emphasising electoral and protest politics, examining how ideological and affective polarisation shape electoral and non-electoral participation.

[Online access](#) ↓

SCRIPTS BLOG

Meloni's "Premierato": Where do representativity and Italian civil society go?

[Roberta Astolfi](#)

[SCRIPTS Blog Post No. 71](#)

Roberta Astolfi, political philosopher and an expert in the history of Italian politics, presents her political-philosophical reflections on Meloni's proposal for a constitutional reform, which points to a deep ongoing crisis of representativity of the Italian government and raises questions about the future of the liberal democratic system.

[Online access](#) ↓

[How Does Your Country Rank These Days? On the Reshuffle at the Top of the Nation Brands Index 2023.](#)

[Jessica Gienow-Hecht](#)

[SCRIPTS Blog Post No. 70](#)

In November 2023, the Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index revealed that for the first time an Asian state has climbed to the top of global popularity. In this new blog post, SCRIPTS Principal Investigator and Professor of International History at Freie Universität Berlin Jessica Gienow-Hecht reflects upon what implications such ratings may have for the liberal script and its contestations.

[Online access](#) ↓

[SCRIPTS ARGUMENTS](#)

[What is the Relation of Markets, Property, and Freedom in the Liberal Script?](#)

[Katharina Bluhm](#)

Since the Soviet experiment has failed in its attempt to replace markets and private ownership of the means of production with a centrally planned, state-owned economy, modern authoritarian regimes usually incorporate markets and property rights. In this paper, SCRIPTS Principal Investigator Katharina Bluhm explores what distinguishes them from liberal capitalisms in all its varieties is whether state regulations and interventions rest on the undividable "rule of law" as a normative guideline binding on both the rulers and the ruled.

[Online access](#) ↓

[What is the Relationship of Digitalisation, Social Media, and the Liberal Script?](#)

[Curd Knüpfer](#)

Digitalisation's impact on society is too broad and complex to be summarised in a few paragraphs. Therefore, Curd Knüpfer focuses in this SCRIPTS Argument on aspects relevant to democratic will formation and how liberal institutions process informational input. Rather than explain "digitalisation", he homes in on two key concepts that help to navigate these dynamics. These, in turn, concentrate on the mechanisms that

could either enable or hinder challenges to existing institutional orders upholding the liberal script.

[Online access](#) ↓

SCRIPTS WORKING PAPERS

20 Years of LIO Contestation(s). A Computational Text Analysis of Russia's Foreign Policy Discourse (2003–2023)

Adriana Cuppuleri

Working Paper No. 38

How has Russia's contestation of the Liberal International Order (LIO) shifted over time? To answer this question, SCRIPTS IRC Postdoctoral Fellow, Adriana Cuppuleri, builds an understanding of how the architecture of the concept of 'world order', according to Russian policymakers, has changed over time. Furthermore, she identifies four ideal-type categories of LIO contestations pursued by Russia: Eurasianism, Westphalianism, Security Concerns, and Multipolarity. Preliminary results reveal that Russian political discourse has been accompanied by increasing intensity in the expression of ideological positions (Eurasianism and Westphalianism) over interest-driven strategies (Security Concerns and Multipolarity).

[Online access](#) ↓

Institutions of the Inter-American Human Rights System and Their Role in Shaping the Liberal International Order

Cristiane Lucena Carneiro, Mariane Monteiro Costa

Working Paper No. 37

Cristiane Lucena Carneiro as an Associate Professor at the International Relations Institute at Universidade de São Paulo together with PhD candidate Mariane Monteiro Costa chronicle in the new working paper the role of Latin American countries and institutions of the Inter-American human rights system in instances where principles of the Liberal International Order (LIO) were advanced. They rely on the mechanism of co-constitution to showcase instances where Latin American countries resisted American hegemony in the region.

[Online access](#) ↓

Before and After the Liberal International Order. Overlapping and Diverging Trajectories of the International Society and the Liberal Order

Arie M. Kacowicz

Working Paper No. 36

Arie Kacowicz from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem focuses on the need to disaggregate the rise and current decline of the Liberal International Order (LIO) from the emergence, evolution, and changing

dynamics of international society (IS). In this working paper he offers a conceptual distinction between the IS and the LIO. He was a research fellow at SCRIPTS in 2022.

[Online access](#) ↓

How Economics and Sociology Contest the Meaning of “Social Inequality”. The Russian Case

Alexander Kalgin

Working Paper No. 35

In Russia, economists dominate in expert discourse (as judged by their predominance in TV and radio). Sociologists contest this domination in certain subfields, including social inequality. SCRIPTS Alumni Senior Visiting Researcher, Alexander Kalgin, explores within this paper the expert discourse surrounding “social inequality” in Russia, analysed with a focus on the role of two academic disciplines: sociology and economics.

[Online access](#) ↓

Colliding Scripts in Asia? Comparing China’s Belt and Road Initiative and the EU Global Gateway Strategy

Tanja A. Börzel, Valentin Krüsmann, Julia Langbein, Lunting Wu

Working Paper No. 34

China’s growing engagement in Eastern Europe through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is often expected to challenge the EU approach to promoting regional development. The authors argue that BRI is not intended to export the China Model, and that it challenges the EU approach on the programmatic rather than implementation level.

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The “Public Attitudes towards the Liberal Script” (PALS) Survey. Conceptual Framework, Implementation, and Data

Heiko Giebler, Lukas Antoine, Rasmus Ollroge, Jürgen Gerhards, Michael Zürn, Johannes Giesecke, Macartan Humphreys

Working Paper No. 33

The norms and institutions of liberal democracy, market economy, and open society have become increasingly contested worldwide. Is the rise of illiberal and authoritarian contestations reflected in a decline of citizens’ acceptance of liberal ideas and values? The comparative public opinion survey “Public Attitudes towards the Liberal Script” (PALS) provides data that lets scholars address these questions.

The goal of PALS is first and foremost to measure attitudes towards what we call the liberal script.

[Online access](#) ↓

States, Scripts, and Democratisation

Jiwei Ci

Working Paper No. 32

Visiting Professor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford, Prof. Dr. Jiwei Ci, seeks to understand how the liberal script and the Chinese authoritarian script differ. In this working paper he focuses on comprehending the nature of their confrontation. Additionally, he proposes a concept of script in terms of the capacity for generating beliefs and helping create an imagined order and distinguish between two subtypes according to whether a script stems from a decentred or an authoritarian mode of production.

[Online access](#) ↓

ABOUT SCRIPTS

The Cluster of Excellence “Contestations of the Liberal Script (SCRIPTS)” is a research consortium that analyses why the liberal model of order has fallen into crisis despite its political, economic, and social achievements. Interdisciplinary research teams investigate why alternative concepts of social order are on rise, how these contestations differ from earlier contestation, and what the consequences are for the global challenges of our time. In operation since 2019, SCRIPTS is hosted by the Freie Universität Berlin and unites eight major Berlin-based research institutions.

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