

Press Release

2026 Ernst-Otto Czempiel Award PRIF Honors Research on the Links Between Memory Politics and Peace

Frankfurt / Main, 22 June, 2026. The Peace Research Institute Frankfurt has awarded this year's Ernst-Otto Czempiel Award to the monograph "Peace and the Politics of Memory," published in 2024. Authored by an international team of five scholars—Johanna Mannergren, Annika Björkdahl, Susanne Buckley-Zistel, Stefanie Kappler, and Timothy Williams—the book draws on five case studies to examine how memory politics affect peace in societies shaped by a violent past. The 2026 Ernst-Otto Czempiel Award will be awarded on March 3, 2027, in Frankfurt am Main.

With this year's Ernst-Otto Czempiel Award, PRIF honors the best monograph in the field of peace research from 2023 to 2025. Named for Ernst-Otto Czempiel (1927–2017), internationally renowned peace researcher, co-founder and long-time director of the institute, the €5,000 prize has been awarded since 2008.

In its statement, the jury emphasizes that "Peace and the Politics of Memory" makes a groundbreaking contribution to international peace research. According to the jury, the monograph develops a compelling theoretical framework that integrates insights from peace and conflict studies with those of memory studies. As a result, the study enables an understanding of how the politics of memory shape the construction and quality of peace in so-called post conflict societies.

The jury, comprising Charlotte Dany, Eva Senghaas-Knobloch, and Jonas Wolff, praises the originality and scope of the theoretical framework, which focuses on the interplay of places, agency, narratives, and events in the construction of memory. This approach enables a systematic examination of key societal themes in the politics of memory (so-called "*mnemonic formations*").

The jury particularly commends how the authors apply this framework across five case studies conducted with great methodological rigor. Demonstrating the value of the theory, the studies offer fascinating insights into the dynamics and consequences of memory politics.

The jury also highlights the significance of the monograph beyond academic debates. As jury member Eva Senghaas-Knobloch explains, the publication offers insights that are also groundbreaking for the practice of peace policy: *"The study's relevance to peace policy is evident in its detailed case-specific analysis of various forms of public memory at the end of civil wars. The fact that the end of wars often contains the seeds of new acts of war has a socio-cultural core. Whether the end of armed conflict can be transformed into a process for sustainable peace depends on whether it is possible, within a previously fractured political community, to incorporate all groups affected by the war—with their specific needs—into public memory in such a way that they feel their dignity is recognized."* The politics of remembrance and peacebuilding must therefore be understood as intertwined processes within specific times and spaces.

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About “Peace and the Politics of Memory”

Mannergren, J., Björkdahl, A., Buckley-Zistel, S., Kappler, S., & Williams, T. (2024). *Peace and the Politics of Memory*. Manchester University Press. ISBN: 9781526178312

Open Access: <https://www.manchesterhive.com/display/9781526178329/9781526178329.xml>

About the Award Winners

Prof. Dr. Johanna Mannergren is a professor of political science and international relations at Södertörn University in Stockholm. Her research focuses on peace processes, with an emphasis on local reconciliation processes and transitional justice, memory politics and cultural heritage, and women's experiences and knowledge regarding war and security.

Prof. Dr. Annika Björkdahl is a professor of political science and peace and conflict studies at Lund University. Her research focuses on peacebuilding, transitional justice, norms in international relations, gender, and spatial analyses of peace and conflict.

Prof. Dr. Susanne Buckley-Zistel is a professor of peace and conflict studies and directs the Center for Conflict Research at Philipps University Marburg. In addition to transitional justice, coming to terms with the past, and memory studies, her work addresses peacebuilding, human rights, and refugees.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Kappler is a professor of conflict resolution and peacebuilding at Durham University. Her research focuses on forms of resistance to peacebuilding measures. She also examines the impact of memories of violence and the role of art in peace processes.

Prof. Dr. Timothy Williams is a professor of uncertainty research and social order formation at the University of the Bundeswehr in Munich. His research and teaching focus on the international politics of sustainable transformations of violence and discrimination, the politics of memory, digital violence, and genocide and its perpetrators.

About the Jury

Prof. Dr. Charlotte Dany is a professor of development and organizational communication at Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences. From 2019 to 2023, she served as Managing Director of the Peace Academy Rhineland-Palatinate at the RPTU University Kaiserslautern-Landau.

Prof. Dr. Eva Senghaas-Knobloch is a senior researcher at the artec Research Center for Sustainability, University of Bremen. She was a professor of sociological work studies with a focus on Decent Work and conflict resolution in organizations, national and international.

Prof. Dr. Jonas Wolff is a professor of political science at Goethe University Frankfurt, specializing in transformation research in Latin America. He is also the director of the Research Department Intrastate Conflicts and a board member at PRIF.

About the Ernst-Otto Czempiel Award

With the [Ernst-Otto Czempiel Award](#), PRIF honors the best monograph in the field of peace research from the preceding two to three years. Named for Ernst-Otto Czempiel (1927–2017), internationally renowned peace researcher, co-founder and long-time director of the institute, the €5,000 prize has been awarded since 2008. Past winners include Roger Mac Ginty, Kerstin von Lingen, and Simon Koschut.

About PRIF

The [Peace Research Institute Frankfurt \(PRIF\)](#) is one of Europe's leading peace research institutes. It was founded in 1970 as a public-law foundation and is funded by the State of Hesse and the Federal Government. The institute's goal is to analyze the causes of international and national conflicts and to develop ways to resolve them. To this end, PRIF combines interdisciplinary basic research with the transfer of knowledge to politics, the media, and society. The institute is active in numerous national and international research networks. Since 2009, PRIF has been a member of the Leibniz Association.

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