



Eva Willems with her Dissertation: „ **Open Secrets & Hidden Heroes. Violence, Citizenship and Transitional Justice in (Post-)Conflict Peru**” at the Ghent University

Abstract:

In 2000, after two decades of internal armed conflict initiated by the Maoist rebels of Shining Path, Peru became one out of many countries worldwide that implemented transitional justice. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up that made recommendations concerning reparations, exhumations of mass graves and institutional reform. Eva Willems’ dissertation sheds light on how the international paradigm of transitional justice – with its underlying premises on memory, victimhood and temporality – modeled Peru’s process of dealing with the legacies of the internal armed conflict. More precisely, it investigates how victims and ex-combatants in rural communities engage with, contest or appropriate transitional justice policies in function of their specific aims and priorities. By emphasizing the multi-scale and multi-directional entanglement of local, national and international actors and ideas in the Peruvian transitional justice process, this dissertation is an invitation to rethink the ‘local’ as an arena of struggles for survival, recognition and citizenship in the wake of large-scale human rights violations, rather than a mere domain of implementation and reception of transitional justice policies.



Dr. Eva Willems is a postdoctoral researcher at the Center for Conflict Studies of the Philipps University in Marburg. She conducts research on transitional and historical justice after violent conflict, and is especially interested in politics of memory, time, victimhood, exhumation and reparation in the aftermath of mass violence. Her current work focuses on claims for reparation and recognition of victims and ex-combatants in Peru, Guatemala, Timor Leste and Northern Ireland. Eva Willems obtained her PhD in History at the University of Ghent in 2020.