

Preface and Acknowledgements

This Open Access edited volume brings together a first series of revised discussion papers by scholars from a range of disciplinary, (trans)regional and epistemic perspectives that came out of our networking initiative *co²libri: conceptual collaboration – living borderless research interaction*, funded by the Berlin University Alliance (2020–2025). As an interdisciplinary and transregionally oriented initiative, co²libri envisages a multicentric perspective that integrates neglected positions of Southern theory and praxis into the heart of academic conversations. co²libri's collaborative endeavour builds on long-standing active connections with partners in Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. Instead of setting an agenda from the North, it proposes to find ways forward through collaborative engagement, building on relationships of mutual trust. Using formats that facilitate substantial and open-ended discussion, we are rethinking theory and method, academic practices and research ethics, while keeping material inequalities in view.

Contributors to this edited volume are working towards the implementation of various innovative activities and collaboration formats which all subscribe to the principle of dialogue on equal footing with scholars and activists based in divergent positionalities along the global North–South divide and beyond. Authors are brought together in their aim to produce more adequate and more sensitive critical knowledge and to apply a fresh view to approach, methods and ethical standards. The group focuses on alternative frames of reference and theorizations of lived experiences. Thus, the various chapters add to our multi-layered, multi-disciplinary and transregional understandings, discussions and critical takes on the existing state of the art and its underlying practices. Subsequently, we aim to contribute to transformative understandings and practices of what it means to take an adequate position, and a constructive role, for scholars based in the global North and/or South or its interstices, within the current field of demands and expectations towards decolonising scholarship.

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The Editors