

Call for Panels and Papers ASAUK 2020

The Politics of Transitional Justice

We welcome paper and panel submissions for the 'Politics of Transitional Justice' stream at the African Studies Association UK conference. The conference will be held on September 2020, at Cardiff University.

More information about the stream, including abstracts for the two panels that are already confirmed, can be found at the bottom of this email or at the conference website:

<http://www.asauk.net/asauk-2020/thematic-streams-asauk2020/the-politics-of-transitional-justice/>

To submit a new panel, a paper to an existing panel, or an individual paper to this stream, please follow: <http://www.asauk.net/asauk-2020/call-for-papers-and-panels/>

The submission deadline is 22 March 2020.

STREAM

Transitional justice (TJ) has become a dominant global framework through which legal and political responses are provided to past mass violence and repression. This is particularly the case in Africa where many governments have requested or allowed TJ interventions, to the extent that 'Africa provides a living laboratory' for TJ.¹ Recent scholarship has begun to address the political nature of TJ, but often operates with underdeveloped or limited concepts of politics. Moreover, there has been a lack of exchange between the different disciplines engaged in TJ scholarship about the politics of TJ. This stream therefore aims to examine the politics of TJ through its different political aspects, roles and concepts, and how it manifests at both the macro- and micro-level. It is interested in the instrumental use of TJ by governments, local political or military/armed actors, NGOs and external interveners; in how politics orients how actors understand and engage with TJ; and how TJ itself can act as a performative political space. It creates a conversation about how different political actors relate to TJ and its possible aims and discourses. It also seeks to move scholarship forward by reflecting on the notions of politics used in TJ research.

The organisers invite abstracts to the two following panels, and welcome any other panel proposals.

Panel 1: Conceptualising politics/'the political' in transitional justice

Convenor: Dr. Line Engbo Gissel (Roskilde University)

There is no shortage of claims of politics in the field of transitional justice. Scholars have, particularly in the past five years, unveiled the embeddedness of local, national and international power asymmetries and the interests of the powerful. Law's givenness and suspension above politics, they argue, is a fiction; transitional justice is inherently political. Others have explored the constitutive interaction between law and politics in particular sites, arguing that not only is the legal dimension of justice determined by its political context, it also shapes the scope and nature of politics. While the many analyses of politics have deepened our understanding of transitional justice, however, they operate with largely implicit notions of politics, resulting in an under-theorised concept of the political.

¹ De Ycaza and Schabas, [symposium], Forsythe et al., 2011, 564.

This panel explores and discusses the notions of politics and the political involved in living, studying, and/or practicing transitional justice. It welcomes papers that operate at a conceptual level; trace or explore particular notion of politics in empirical material; or tease out important aspects or types of politics in TJ scholarship or practices, whether past or present. TJ in particular African countries or organisations may provide an explicit focus, but the panel is also open to insights about global TJ or theoretical reflections on specific political thinkers insofar as these can enhance the study of TJ.

Panel 2: The UN Security Council and Transitional Justice

Convenor: Dr. Valérie Arnould (Egmont institute and University of Leuven)

Transitional justice has become increasingly prominent on the United Nations (UN) policy agenda, and various UN bodies and agencies are actively involved in transitional justice activities. This panel is interested in focusing on the role of the UN Security Council (UNSC) in transitional justice, and how it has integrated the latter into its broader peacekeeping and peacebuilding agendas. How politics have influenced UNSC actions and positioning on transitional justice, both great power politics and the domestic politics of targeted states, are of particular interest. Some issues which papers could explore include the politics of the relationship between the UNSC and the International Criminal Court; UNSC member states positioning on the peace-justice dilemma (or their attempts to side-step it); and cooperation between UN peacekeeping missions and international or hybrid courts. Further topics to explore include the role of the UNSC as a norm transmitter on transitional justice; transitional justice activities undertaken by UN peacebuilding missions; and linkages between the UNSC's Women, Peace and Security agenda and transitional justice.

If you have any queries or suggestions please contact Line Engbo Gissel (Lgissel@ruc.dk) and Valerie Arnould (v.arnould@egmontinstitute.be). For panel and paper submissions please follow the instructions on the website: <http://www.asauk.net/asauk-2020/call-for-papers-and-panels/>