

## Seeking Justice.

### Ideas and Practices from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East

Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO), Berlin, 30 November – 2 December 2022

Visions of justice have history and contexts, and so do experiences and perceptions of injustice. They are all informed and shaped by local traditions, conditions and needs, but also by translocally circulating concepts and practices.

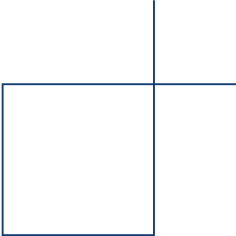
This interdisciplinary, international conference investigates what happens when **different ideas and practices of justice encounter each other**, in past and present scenarios. Such encounters can be shaped by **friction** but also by **accommodation**. They may involve processes of conflict, exchange, as well as localization (such as translations and appropriations of human rights discourse).

Recent years have witnessed a rise in populism, authoritarian movements and rule, as well as actors and movements across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East challenging them. Calls and actions in the name of justice have multiplied, often making mutually opposed claims. Under such conditions, it is necessary to carry out research that is both analytical, providing an understanding of the claims and ideas, as well as committed to identifying injustices and documenting struggles to overcome them.

We especially invite contributions that address three general questions that arise from pursuing a translocal perspective: the *who*, the *how*, and the *when* of justice and injustice.

First, *who* acts in the name of justice and *why*? Who claims the right to speak about the past? Contributions are invited to raise the issue of voice and representation related to wider patterns of social and legal exclusion and inclusion. They may also include questions about giving legal rights to non-human entities, pointing to issues of cosmology and faith. Furthermore, *who* is held responsible for injustices? Which actors and institutions are involved in negotiating and delivering justice (or injustice)? In each of these cases, we also ask where the different actors, including institutions, are situated, and how these sites and locations matter (such as the spatial distance provided by exile).

Second, *how* do these actors proceed, contest, or accommodate each other? These questions aim at the nature and outcomes of the encounter. Studying translocal



entanglements through the lens of justice alerts us to translations of different sorts, to ways of forming alliances, learning from each other, establishing networks or failing to do so. How do people become aware of justice and injustice? In which linguistic and conceptual terms do they express calls for justice? Which forms of knowledge does this language reflect? What kind of action may they take? Last but not the least, what institutional resources and processes (law, courts, mediations), which can also have translocal resonance, do people use to seek justice (or fight injustice)?

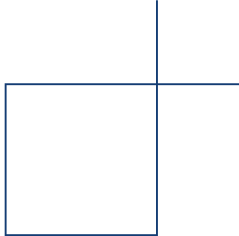
Third, when do encounters turn political, and possibly also violent? We invite contributions that track ruptures and moments of transformation: shifts in political regimes, legal systems, or global moments that restrict or enable calls and campaigns for justice. When is the 'right' moment to invoke justice, and how are such 'right' moments shaped by broader developments (such as interwar internationalisms or the Global 1960s)?

The **first part of the conference** will consist of **methodological and epistemological** sessions that engage with existing traditions, ideas, and concepts while considering them in relation to empirical practices. Contributions are invited on

- matters of epistemic justice
- the translocal circulation of discourses
- the localization of different terms
- alternative but related ideas (such as equity, truth, rights, equality) in a variety of languages
- conceptual diversity and change across time and space

In the **second part**, the focus will shift to specific **thematic 'sites' of just and unjust encounters**. These are related to the four main research units at ZMO. Presenters are welcome to address more than one of the sites (as there is substantial overlap between them):

- economic justice/injustice
- just and unjust political orders
- environmental justice and climate action
- the role of religion in struggles over justice and injustice
- age, generation, and generational planning
- just and unjust pasts: cultures of remembering and forgetting
- legal forums and the delivery of justice



Paper abstracts of no more than 300 words, grounded in the disciplines of history, social and cultural anthropology, Islamic Studies, political science, sociology, socio-legal studies, and related fields are invited for all parts of the conference. **Abstracts should be sent to [Marta.Podvolotskaya@zmo.de](mailto:Marta.Podvolotskaya@zmo.de) by 31 March 2022.**

Pre-circulated papers will be sent to discussants before the conference. **Successful applicants should send a draft version of their papers by 15 October 2022.** They should be ready to have their revised papers published in a special issue of a journal or open-access edited volume.