**Call for Papers for**

**Memory and Transitional Justice:**

**From a “duty to remember” to pluralistic memoryscapes?**

**Sixth International Expert Seminar on Transitional Justice**

**KU Leuven 25-26 October 2017**

There has been an observable urge to commemorate human rights violations and serious international crimes. This has been driven by a ‘duty’ to remember past injustices and a global demand for remembrance captured in imperatives such as ‘never again’. In line with these developments, non-judicial and symbolic forms of justice aiming at memorialisation and memory-making are gaining prominence as significant building blocks in the expansion of the field of Transitional Justice (TJ).

The mainstream TJ discourse concurs that memorialisation practices such as memorials, commemoration ceremonies, the renaming of schools or streets as much as history education will lead to reconciliation, democratisation and a ‘healing’ of society – and therefore contributes to justice-making through non-judicial measures of TJ. However, the mechanisms through which memory practices facilitate these positive outcomes of transitions remain elusive.

Indeed, critical voices have raised various concerns about this simplistic perspective on memorialisation as a symbolic form of reparations. Such scholarship has argued that memory of past injustices can easily turn into a ‘symbolic minefield’, can perpetuate victim-perpetrator hierarchies, can be instrumentalised by memory entrepreneurs in order to legitimise certain agendas or be used by political elites to (re-) build state sovereignty on the back of the memory of human rights abuses.

Memorialisation as symbolic reparation is often a key site of contestation, which often determines processes of exclusion and inclusion of different groups of justice claimants and their various understandings of the past. The key problem therefore is to make narratives of the past ‘thick’ enough to capture the complexity of past injustices and at the same time to integrate different and often opposing versions of the past in order to make those accessible to a wide range of individuals and groups across an often fractured post-conflict/authoritarian society.

Against the backdrop of these current debates, this seminar focuses on memorialisation practices and their role in meditating the manifold meanings narratives of the past can have for present and future expectations in transitional justice settings.

In addition to the contributions of two keynote speakers, the expert seminar will be structured around two panels that each tackle different aspects of memory and transitional justice such as, politics of memory and its entrepreneurs, the question if contested memories can be reconciled and whether there is a space of recognition for individual accounts of the past in the public sphere.

**Issues of particular interest across the seminar theme are:**

* How do particular contours of violence (e.g. state violence, colonial violence, civil war, genocide) shape the emergence of different memory entrepreneurs and in turn of different memoryscapes?
* Who is involved in memorialisation for what purpose?
* How can memorialisation practices accommodate, mediate and mitigate the tensions between different mnemonic communities?
* How can memorialisation practices account for the dynamic and fluid nature of memory work and how does this play out in terms of the complexity of meanings allocated to the past across different groups?
* Is remembrance always a good approach or could forgetting be a better avenue depending on the social and political context, the prevailing power struggles between, memory entrepreneurs and the timing of such interventions?
* How can personal accounts become part of collective remembrance practices without being appropriated, losing their essence or being flattened?
* Are all personal accounts of the past, including those of perpetrators or of bystanders, legitimate? Should they and can they be acknowledged in all transitional settings?

We invite papers to address one or more of these questions either from a conceptual vantage point and/or drawing on country case studies. Overall, papers are encouraged to reflect on how memorialisation practices can be linked to accountability, truth and social justice, especially in contexts where one or the other justice priority may stand out as a particular driver in TJ processes.

Some papers will be selected to be included in an edited book collection that investigates non-judicial justice mechanisms such as memorialisation practices in transition contexts. The book will be edited by Mina Rauschenbach, Julia Viebach and Stephan Parmentier.

Please send an abstract between 500-600 words and a short biography (2-3 sentences), including your institutional affiliation to [mina.rauschenbach@kuleuven.be](mailto:mina.rauschenbach@kuleuven.be), [julia.viebach@crim.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Julia.viebach@crim.ox.ac.uk) and [stephan.parmentier@kuleuven.be](mailto:stephan.parmentier@kuleuven.be) by **10 July 2017**. You will receive notification within two weeks.

Please note that there are no funds available to pay for travel expenses to and accommodation in Leuven. However, refreshments will be provided.

You are also warmly invited to attend the Distinguished Lecture on Transitional Justice given by Yasmin Sooka (Chair of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan) in the evening of 26th October 2017.

This international seminar is co-organised by Stephan Parmentier (KU Leuven), Mina Rauschenbach (KU Leuven and University of Lausanne) and Julia Viebach (University of Oxford) and is financially supported by the Fund on Transitional Justice, University of Leuven. It is the sixth seminar in a longer series organised since 2008 by the Research Line on Human Rights and Transitional Justice of the Leuven Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, KU Leuven (Belgium). Earlier editions have focused on traditional forms of transitional justice, rule of law, interdisciplinary approaches, victim reparation policies as well as truth and its linkage to the duty to remember, all designed to discuss cutting-edge issues in transitional justice from a global perspective.