Transitional Justice Workshop at LSE: Agenda

Inside the Local Turn in Transitional Justice: Local Actors in Micro-Level Interactions

Date and time: 2 JULY 2022, 9am-5.30pm

Venue: The London School of Economics and Political Science, Marshall Building MAR.2.09

09:00 – 09:30 am | Welcome and Introduction

Dr Denisa Kostovicova, Associate Professor of Global Politics, LSE

Dr Sanja Vico, Research Officer, LSE

09:30 – 11:00 am | Session 1: Mundane practices

Chair: Dr Sanja Vico, ERC-funded Postdoctoral Research Officer, LSE

Visual Peacebuilding At Home: the strategic use of photography to build community dialogue and to frame what matters to peace in Rwanda

Speaker: Dr Tiffany Fairey, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, King's College London

Discussant: Paula Mantilla-Blanco, PhD Candidate, Columbia University

An anthropology of postconflict indifference

Speaker: Sergen Bahceci, ESRC-funded PhD Candidate, LSE

Discussant: Dr Sarah Jankowitz, Lecturer, Queen's University

Reconciliation, normality, tolerance and belonging in a post-conflict, ethnically divided society

Speaker: Dr Sarah Correia, Lecturer, UCL

Discussant: Professor Rachel Kerr, Professor, King's College London

11.00-11.15 am | Coffee break

11.15 am -12.45 pm | Session 2: Artistic Interventions

Chair: Dr Denisa Kostovicova, Associate Professor, LSE

Art, Youth, and "Everyday" Transitional Justice in Cambodia: Between Empathy and Apathy

Speaker: Dr Adam Kochanski, Senior Researcher, University of Basel

Discussant: Germán Otálora-Gallego, PhD Candidate, Durham University

Curating Violence amid Transition: Institutionalization of Memories and Pedagogical Expectations in Colombia's Memory Sites

Speaker: Paula Mantilla-Blanco, PhD Candidate, Columbia University

Discussant: Dr Tiffany Fairey, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, King's College London

Curating a 'Living Museum': Art, history and everyday reconciliation at the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Hercegovina

Speaker: Professor Rachel Kerr, Professor, King's College London

Discussant: Dr Saghar Birjandian, Charles E. Scheidt Postdoctoral Fellow, State University of New York

12.45-2.00 pm Lunch

2.00-3.30 pm | Session 3: Activism

Chair: Lanabi La Lova, PhD Candidate, LSE

Community-based engagement with formal and informal transitional justice in Northern Ireland: The case of Healing Through Remembering

Speaker: Dr Sarah Jankowitz, Lecturer, Queen's University

Discussant: Dr Sanja Vico, ERC-funded Postdoctoral Research Officer, LSE

Decolonizing Micro-Level Interactions with Truth-seeking Initiatives in Canada: How Everyday Reconciliation became Necessarily Decentralized, Relationally Defined, and Contentious

Speaker: Dr Saghar Birjandian, Charles E. Scheidt Postdoctoral Fellow, State University of New York

Discussant: Sergen Bahceci, ESRC-funded PhD Candidate, LSE

Everyday Transformative Justice: Lessons from Colombia

Speaker: Germán Otálora-Gallego, PhD Candidate, Durham University

Discussant: Dr Adam Kochanski, Senior Researcher, University of Basel

3.30-4.00 pm Coffee/tea break

4.00-5.00 pm | Session 4: Dialogues and Discourses

Chair: Professor Rachel Kerr, Professor, King's College London

Social Media, Stereotyping, and War Legacy

Speaker: Dr Sanja Vico, ERC-funded Postdoctoral Research Officer, LSE

Discussant: Dr Sarah Correia, Lecturer, UCL

Grand-Standing Instead of Policy-Making: Legislators, Parliamentary Questions and Transitional Justice in the Croatian Parliament

Speakers: Dr Denisa Kostovicova, Associate Professor, LSE and Lanabi La Lova, PhD Candidate, LSE

Discussant: Dr Kohei Watanabe, Waseda University

5.00-5.30 pm | Closing discussion and remarks

Dr Denisa Kostovicova, Associate Professor of Global Politics, LSE

Dr Sanja Vico, Research Officer, LSE

6.00-8.30 pm | Conference dinner Ciao Bella, Lamb's Conduit Street, London

Abstracts:

Session 1: Mundane practices

Tiffany Fairey

The Home Stay Exhibitions: the home and the image as hyperlocal sites of peacebuilding.

The Home Stay Exhibitions is a community photography initiative, run by the Kigali Centre of Photography, in which young Rwandans are mentored to produce photo stories on subjects of their choosing. They exhibit these photo stories in their own homes, inviting neighbours and friends. In a context where, since the genocide in Rwanda communities have struggled to re-build trust and many families have closed their doors to neighbours, The Home Stay Exhibitions seeks to re-open the doors and, through photography, to start conversations on issues that young people think are important to Rwanda's future. Focusing on the home and the image, and the interactions that happen around them, as a hyper-local sites of peacebuilding, this article presents collaborative research on The Home Stay Exhibitions and an analysis of the young Rwandans' photography projects. It examines how intentional community-engaged photography projects work as forms of everyday peace photography that feed community level peace by fostering trust and open dialogue and enabling young people to define the conversations that matter to peace and reconciliation. Critically examining the opportunities and limitations of community based visual peacebuilding, it is argued that photography holds a significant, if constrained, potential to build small scale peace.

Sergen Bahceci

Towards an anthropology of post-conflict 'indifference'

In my paper I will analyse the 'indifference' (umursamazlık) that Turkish Cypriots from a particular village in northern Cyprus demonstrate towards the work of the UN Committee on Missing Persons (CMP). The CMP is a joint Greek and Turkish Cypriot effort that aims to locate, exhume, and identify about 2000 Greek and Turkish Cypriot persons who went 'missing' in Cyprus during the ethnic conflict in the 1960s and the war in 1974. In my

empirical context, the missing persons searched for are Greek Cypriot prisoners of war who were summarily executed and unceremoniously buried in a number mass graves in the village. It is suspected that several villagers, most of whom are now deceased, were responsible for these atrocities. However, the contemporary Turkish Cypriot villagers neither aid nor seek to hinder the investigative efforts unfolding near their homes. Instead, most villagers express a remarkable 'indifference' towards the CMP and the discovered or potential mass grave sites, and distance themselves from the 'events' under investigation. I argue that 'indifference' merits special attention as a local post-conflict disposition related to, but distinct from, 'silence', 'denial', and 'forgetting', and that it has analytical potential to explain why post-conflict reconciliation and justice efforts fail.

Sarah Correia

Reconciliation, normality, tolerance and belonging in a post-conflict, ethnically divided society

Based on ethnographic research carried out in the Bosnian town of Bijeljina, now part of Republika Srpska, the paper explores the themes of ethnic tolerance and normality in everyday life, to discuss the ideals of 'truth and reconciliation' and 'normalisation', as alternative frameworks to shape inter-ethnic relations after conflict. The paper sets these frameworks in contrast with grassroots, organic acts of redress and solidarity between ordinary people across the ethnic divide, which tend to be overshadowed by top-down approaches to "healing" and social peace. A town of great strategic value due to its location on the border with Serbia, and on the junction between the northern and the eastern parts of Republika Srpska, Bijeljina changed substantially during the war, with the expulsion of its Bosniak population, and the massive resettlement of internally displaced Bosnian Serbs. In the aftermath of the 1992-1995 Bosnian War, Bijeljina remained a hotbed of organised crime, ethnic violence, and extreme nationalism. In more recent years, however, the town went through a process of 'normalisation', through which the local ruling class adapted to the post-war environment and the constraints and opportunities created by the Dayton Peace Agreement. The paper analyses normalisation from an emic perspective, interpreting it as part of the process of consolidation of the political and socio-economic structures created by the war, through which, after a period of great flux and deep incertitude, more stable forms of identity are negotiated under a new set of norms.

Session 2: Artistic Interventions

Adam Kochanski

Imaging Truth:Visual Representations of Cambodia's Conflict Periods in Intergenerational Art Dialogues on the Khmer Rouge

The 'everyday' is usually depicted as a site of resistance where civilian agency is harnessed to challenge abusive power structures and hegemonic discourses in highly sensitive political environments. Assumptions about the everyday as a locus of resistance are especially strong in post-atrocity contexts, where speaking publicly about legacies of violence can be a highly delicate matter that can bring socioeconomic repercussions and even physical harm. To offset these risks, civilians often develop an array of crafty, subtle, and largely invisible strategies to defy the powerful and contest state-imposed discourses of the past. In particular, the arts have proven to be a trusted tool to circulate such 'hidden transcripts', empowering civilians to speak their truths, while dodging censure. This article discusses one such example: community-based intergenerational art dialogues on the Khmer Rouge, which pair a high school student, with a community member who survived the genocidal regime. In this process, the former draws the latter's narrated account of conflict in Cambodia. Participant observation in these dialogues, however, reveals a startling finding about the participants' public and hidden transcripts: while the survivors' public testimonies in front of the community always reproduced state-imposed tropes limited to the three-year, eight-month and 20-day rule of the Khmer Rouge, the images in the pictures at times deviated from this framing to depict other episodes of Cambodia's conflict periods.

Paula Mantilla-Blanco

Curating Violence amid Transition: Institutionalization of Memories and Pedagogical Expectations in Colombia's Memory Sites

In contexts of transition, memory sites such as museums and memorials have the dual responsibility of serving as spaces of redress and educating about the past. Drawing on interviews with curators, sites' staff, representatives from victims' organizations, and other

key informants working with state-sponsored memory sites in Colombia, this article explores how "memory entrepreneurs" (Jelin, 2002) navigate these dual responsibilities. Focusing on the processes behind memory sites, I analyze how different actors interact to curate histories of violence and resistance. Participants are situated within complex social and political contexts where their identities and professional networks shape relationships of trust and distrust that become crucial to the work of memory sites. The multiple educational roles that sites are expected to play emerge as one area of contention. Exploring perceptions and experiences of individuals who work with memory-oriented initiatives, this article highlights relevant dilemmas that arise when conceiving education as a mechanism for transitional justice. Memory sites act as mediators between victims and non-victims and exemplify the tension between memories that are central to the state and those that are peripheral to it. Curating violence thus appears as a unique practice of meaning-making embedded in social, political, and historical tensions.

Rachel Kerr

Curating a 'Living Museum': Art, history and everyday reconciliation at the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Hercegovina

How do 'local actors' that are not peacebuilding or transitional justice organisations interact with communities to engage with legacies of violence conflict, atrocity and human rights abuses? What is the contribution of these interactions to peace, justice and to reconciliation? This paper examines the recent work of the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Hercegovina (the Museum), based in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through a series of projects aimed at providing space for dialogue about the past and different aspects of remembrance, and variety of programs and activities, the Museum has brought in new audiences, including teachers, scholars, artists and students. A key element has involved bringing artists to work with the Museum's extensive collection of art and artefacts to create a 'Living Museum' and to reimagine its collections. This paper will assess the impact of these everyday interactions with the Museum's collections for post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Session 3: Activism

Sarah Jankowitz

Community-based engagement with formal and informal transitional justice in Northern Ireland: The case of Healing Through Remembering

Debates about how to reckon with the legacy of conflict in Northern Ireland have remained unresolved since the 1998 Agreement. In the absence of a formal, comprehensive TJ process, piecemeal mechanisms have chipped away at select cases and local civil society organisations provide sustained and critical contributions to the wider work of 'dealing with the past'. Interrogation of the specific practices and impacts of these initiatives, as well as the social and political structures they navigate at this contested 'local' level, has been limited. This paper seeks to contribute to more nuanced, critical explorations of local organisations in TJ and peacebuilding processes by analysing the work of Healing Through Remembering (HTR), a community-led peacebuilding organisation in Belfast that has engaged extensively with NI's evolving TJ landscape over two decades. A diverse and multifaceted initiative, HTR's work cuts across aspects of truth recovery, acknowledgement, storytelling, memorialisation, and commemoration. This paper focuses in particular on HTR's role in facilitating TJ processes through enabling public participation in debates and consultation on TJ issues, advocating the necessity of a formal TJ process through engagement with local, national and international stakeholders, and developing diverse networks for sharing expertise and learning with institutions tasked with implementing TJ initiatives.

Saghar Birjandian

Decolonising Micro-Level Interactions with Truth-seeking Initiatives in Canada: How Everyday Reconciliation became Necessarily Decentralised, Relationally Defined, and Contentious

This paper examines diverse approaches to decolonise truth-seeking and reconciliation initiatives working to address past and ongoing injustices against Indigenous Peoples in what is now known as Canada. The discussion draws on more than ten years of the author's experience working on state-led and provincial initiatives addressing historical and ongoing atrocities against Indigenous Peoples, as well as primary data generated

through key informant interviews and myriad secondary data produced about truth-seeking bodies and reconciliation. Findings show how micro-level interactions about truth-seeking mobilised constellations of diverse actors around relationally defined 'reconciliation' processes, including a complete rejection of the notion altogether. Crucially however, illustrative examples also establish that when diverse actors from different constellations interact with each other and the public, there is an implicit acceptance that the most effective way forward is to maintain multiple and often competing approaches to 'reconciliation' to prioritise combatting 'coloniality' through transitional justice. Such an approach helps to prevent marginalising affected populations' diverse knowledge systems, experiences, and interests, in effect reversing a root cause of atrocity violence in this context. Thus, creating space for ad hoc, co-generation of operational concepts for transitional justice in the everyday is one method being pursued to decolonise Canadian society.

Germán Otálora-Gallego

Everyday Transformative Justice: Lessons from Colombia. Paper proposal for *Inside the Local Turn in Transitional Justice: Local Actors in Micro-Level Interactions*

Despite abundant criticism towards how transitional justice works, proposals for alternatives are scarce. The transformative justice literature fills this gap by advocating for a shift from a mere transition towards a deeper transformation, calling for an understanding of transitional justice that tackles structural violence and the root-causes of armed conflict. This paper uses the transformative justice theoretical lens, as well as recent contributions from the everyday peace literature in the peacebuilding field to analyse local transitional justice initiatives led by women in Colombia. We make three different but connected arguments here. First, women and their organisations engage in hyper-local and micro-level interactions that have a tangible impact on the everyday lives of their communities. Second, their work has the potential to scale out —horizontally, to other individuals and organisations— and to scale up —to connect with broader transformative peace and justice dynamics. Third, there is a complex link between institutional and local approaches of transitional justice that defies the bottom-up/top-down dichotomy. Women-led organisations critically engage with institutional transitional justice processes to (re)claim their rights and demand socioeconomic transformations by connecting the harms suffered during the armed conflict and the inequalities that persist before, during, and after violence.

Session 4: Dialogues and Discourses

Sanja Vico

Social Media, Stereotyping, and War Legacy

Social media provide new spaces for addressing war-time atrocities, but we have little understanding of how visibility to broader audiences, both domestic and international, may impact on people's willingness to acknowledge human rights violations committed by an in-group. Drawing on evidence that the international society is based stigmatisation of norm-violating states and that individuals internalise this stigma, this study interrogates how the perception of being negatively stereotyped by the international society based on ethnic identity because of one's country's war conduct affects acknowledgement of ingroup responsibility for war crimes and what the implications of social media on this are. To this end, I apply discourse analysis to studying social media interactions, collected through key words, and face-to-face interactions, collected through focus groups, in Serbia regarding a commemoration of genocide in Srebrenica. I find that a fear of being stereotyped based on ethnic identity hinders the acknowledgement because of a perceived threat to one's reputation on an international level. People fear that by making such acknowledgement they reinforce the negative image about their group and that they may be viewed in the light of this negative group image. This is particularly pronounced on social media because of the exposure to foreign audiences as moral arbitrators. Consequently, people are less self-critical and less willing to make such acknowledgement on social media.

Denisa Kostovicova and Lanabi La Lova

Grand-Standing Instead of Policy-Making: Legislators, Parliamentary Questions and Transitional Justice in the Croatian Parliament

We know little about how legislators engage with post-conflict justice in contrast to our good grasp of the role of domestic and transnational civil society groups in policy deliberation. We study how politicians ask questions about transitional justice. Parliamentary questions, which can be oral and written, are an important tool used by legislators to hold government to account. We argue that publicness of parliamentary

questions matters. When a politician asks a question publicly in parliament, they are concerned about reputational costs to themselves and to their party. In post-conflict societies, the costs are determined by the degree of dissent from dominant nationalist norms. We analyze 738 parliamentary questions about transitional justice in the Croatian Parliament (2004-2018). We find differences between oral and written questions. Legislators belonging to nationalist parties use oral oral questions more than liberals, and more than written questions. Overall, the share of oral question about war veterans, the most privileged stakeholder, is larger than their share in written questions. Lastly, oral questions are used to demonstrate partisanship, while written questions are used for policy deliberation across party lines. We identify the limitations of public policy deliberation on post-conflict justice, where parliamentary questions are used for nationalist grand-standing.

Authors' biographical notes:

Tiffany Fairey is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow based in the Department of War Studies at King's College London. Her research focuses on arts-based peacebuilding and the role of images and image-making in building peace and dialogue. Her current research, Imaging Peace, is building the first multi-country empirical study of peace photography. Previous research projects include Art & Reconciliation and Izazov, a Changing the Story project. A specialist in participatory visual methods with over 20 years of experience, Fairey was co-founder of the awarding-winning charity PhotoVoice and acts as a photovoice advisor for researchers and NGOs. Her work has been recognised with various awards including the Royal Photographic Society's Hood Medal for outstanding advance in photography for public service

Sergen Bahceci is an ESRC funded anthropology PhD student at LSE. He conducted 20 months of ethnographic fieldwork in northern Cyprus among Turkish Cypriot war veterans. His dissertation analyses varieties of historical experience in northern Cyprus with particular attention to how these vary across intergenerational and political lines.

Sarah Correia is a Lecturer in International Relations and International Public Policy at UCL. Her research focuses on ethnic cleansing, reconstruction after conflict and memorialisation, from a grassroots perspective.

Adam Kochanski is a Senior Researcher at swisspeace, an affiliated research institute of the University of Basel. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Ottawa, with a specialization in International Relations. His research focuses on

transitional justice, post-conflict peacebuilding, and international norms. His book project, *Framing Atrocity: The Politics of Truth in Local Transitional Justice*, explores the effects of domestic politics and local-national power dynamics on accountability, memory, and reconciliation in communities recovering from armed conflict in Cambodia and Mozambique. His work has been published or in *Review of International Studies*, *International Studies Review*, *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, *Human Rights Review* and *Peacebuilding*. Numerous fellowships and external grants have supported his research, including from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, International Development Research Centre, and International Studies Association. He is a Research Affiliate at McGill University's Centre for International Peace and Security Studies, where he held a Canada 150 Research Chair postdoctoral fellowship. He has also held past appointments at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, UCLA School of Law's Promise Institute for Human Rights and Stanford University's Center for Human Rights and International Justice.

Paula Mantilla-Blanco is a PhD candidate in Comparative and International Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her research interests include education in post-conflict and transitional contexts, the construction and transmission of collective memories of violence, and the role of education in transitional justice processes. Her dissertation focuses on the pedagogical use of state-sponsored memory sites in Colombia. Paula holds an MA in Cultural and Educational Policy Studies from Loyola University Chicago and a BS in Mathematics from the Universidad de los Andes in Colombia. She received a Peace Scholar Fellowship from the United States Institute of Peace for the 2021-2022 academic year. Her pre-dissertation research was funded by the Institute of Latin American Studies and the Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict, and Complexity at Columbia University.

Rachel Kerr is Professor of War and Society in the Department of War Studies at King's College London. Her research focuses on post-conflict justice and memory, international criminal justice and Art and Reconciliation. Rachel co-convenes the War Crimes Research Group and the Visual and Embodied Methodologies Network at King's

Sarah Jankowitz is a Lecturer at Queen's University's School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work. Her research interests cut across sociology, victimology, social psychology and peace studies, though coalesce around critical and feminist analysis of how societies respond to and recover from violent conflict. She has conducted research

on the impacts of contested perceptions of victimhood on peacebuilding, transitional justice and reconciliation processes and the impact of the arts on reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

Saghar Birjandian is a Charles E. Scheidt Postdoctoral Fellow in the Institute of Genocide and Mass Atrocities Prevention, State University of New York at Binghamton. She is also a Consultant at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation housed at the University of Manitoba, where she is helping to develop a comprehensive guide and training materials for statement gathering. Saghar previously worked at British Columbia's Ministry of Children and Family Development, where she collaboratively worked to integrate an institutional reform framework aiming to reduce the number of Indigenous children in government care as part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action. She also had the honour of serving as Statement Gatherer for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, where she documented mass atrocities committed against Indigenous children, youth, and families through the colonial Residential School system.

Germán Otálora-Gallego is a PhD student at the School of Government and International Affairs, Durham University. His research focuses on transitional justice processes, particularly on the intersections between informal bottom-up initiatives and top-down institutional transitional justice mechanisms. He worked as an adviser at the Colombian Foreign Ministry for seven years before going to Durham University, where he completed a master's in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding. He also holds a master's in Political Science from Los Andes University, Colombia. He is a member of *Rodeemos el Diálogo* (Embrace Dialogue), a transnational network that works on peacebuilding in Colombia, and has previously worked as ad-hoc researcher for the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

Sanja Vico is currently a Postdoctoral Research Officer on an ERC-funded project *Justice Interactions and Peacebuilding* (JUSTINT) in the European Institute at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). She will be joining the University of Exeter as a Lecturer in Communications from the next academic year. Sanja holds a PhD in Media and Communications from Goldsmiths, University of London, having previously graduated from the LSE. Her research concerns digital media in the context of identity, migration, and post-conflict reconciliation. She is also an Associate of the LSE Research Unit on Southeastern Europe – LSEE.

Denisa Kostovicova

Denisa Kostovicova is a leading scholar of post-conflict reconstruction with a particular interest in post-conflict justice processes. She is the author of *Kosovo: The Politics of Identity and Space* (Routledge, 2005) and *Reconciliation by Stealth: How People Talk about War Crimes* (Cornell University Press, forthcoming), and co-editor of a number edited volumes, including *Transnationalism in the Balkans* (Routledge, 2008), *Persistent State Weakness in the Global Age* (Ashgate 2009), *Bottom up Politics: An Agency-Centred Approach to Globalisation* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), *Civil Society and Transitions in the Western Balkans* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), and *Rethinking Reconciliation and Transitional Justice After Conflict* (Routlege, 2018). Her work, which has also been published in top political science and international relations journals, has informed policy-making at the EU, UN and in the UK. Dr Kostovicova's research was funded by a number of prestigious grants, including those by the Leverhulme Trust, MacArthur Foundation and Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), among others. She is currently directing a major research programme funded by the European Research Council (ERC) Consolidator Grant, **"Justice Interactions and Peacebuilding: From Static to Dynamic Discourses Across National, Ethnic, Gender and Age Groups."** She has a PhD from the University of Cambridge. Prior to joining LSE, she held junior research fellowships at the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford.

Lanabi La Lova

Lanabi La Lova is a final year PhD Student at the LSE. She is interested in data science-based approaches in social sciences. She is involved in several projects at JUSTINT, European Institute, LSE. Additionally, she works on a dissertation at the department of International Relations, LSE, studying the role of state-controlled mass media in non-free regimes. She holds MSc in Political Science and Political Economy and BSc in Mathematical Economics.