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## Localizing Transitional Justice: interventions and priorities after mass violence (review)

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development: 'Culture is the object and medium of development; it is not a barrier to it. So development might mean better schools, roads and hospitals, but it might also mean better burials, weddings and dances' (p. 157). Perhaps the most challenging leap, for conventional development thinking based on territory, is the home associations' focus on the development of a 'people'. This means that mutual moral support in the diaspora (for example, comforting the bereaved abroad) in ways that build community and enhance their foothold in a foreign society, is for many associations as relevant as building schools in the village. Thus while place is the rationale for home associations, home associations are part of the reproduction of place in ways that have unsettling implications for conventional understandings of development.

This remarkably well-written and engaging book should also be read by anyone interested in reimaginings of development, and in the roles of civil society, particularly its translocal and transnational dimensions. It nuances and advances our thinking on the role of migration and diasporas in development.

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ROSALIND SHAW and LARS WALDORF, with PIERRE HAZAN (eds), *Localizing Transitional Justice: interventions and priorities after mass violence*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press for the Stanford Studies in Human Rights. (hb \$75 – 978 0 80476 150 5). 2010, 352 pp.

Shaw and Waldorf's collection represents an insightful critique of transitional justice in its theoretical paradigm and actual uses. By means of a wide-ranging analysis of the concept in its relationships with local contexts, this work pushes the boundaries of intellectual as well as applied approaches to post-conflict realities, questioning the ethical implications and the validity of the transnational concept of justice (Teitel, Introduction). The editors have collected contributions from different disciplines and organized them to guide the reader from the conceptualization of transitional justice to its practical inconsistencies. In particular, the case studies presented here evaluate and compare the truth-telling politics on which the concept is primarily based to strategies of silence and resistance often adopted by local actors. While transitional justice promotes a 'revealing is healing' policy, the authors show how some of the involved parties may prefer to focus their efforts toward peace simply on dealing with the present rather than remembering the past.

In Part I, the editors reflect on the international political construction of transitional justice and its embedded moral authority, traced by Hazan to the post-9/11 US anti-terrorism campaign. Despite the progressive shift toward local forms of jurisdiction, supported by the increasing number of surveys used to consult people in post-conflict areas about their priorities, Weinstein, Fletcher, Vinck and Pham underline how local justice remains a complement to tribunals and truth commissions, which still prioritize the post-Second World War Nuremberg Trial approach and UN international norms over local needs and experiences.

This paradox and its aftermath are further analysed in Part II, in which particular attention is paid to the crystallization of social actors into rigid categories of victims/survivors and perpetrators, with the consequent annihilation of their political power. Thus, Theidon points out how Peru's victims of Sendero

Luminoso have been manipulated by the government in order to dispose of anti-terrorism laws and put in place 'the victor's justice' (p. 104); Ross analyses the failure of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in dealing with victims of rape; Shaw investigates the process of reintegration of former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) combatants in Sierra Leone and the problems caused by the lack of involvement of local communities.

Some country-specific responses to truth-telling politics are taken into account in Part III. Finnström's work in post-conflict Uganda highlights the role played in some Acholi communities by specific rituals, called *nyono tong gweno* and *mato oput*. Finnström shows how these rituals have been transformed to address the need to reintegrate former Lord's Resistance Army combatants. Peace, in this case, is preferred to foreign justice. In considering Burundi, Nee and Uvin focus on the politics of reconciliation. Mindful of a long history of violence and mistrust, Burundian communities seem to prefer local mechanisms to promote dialogue and overcome ethnic divisions. On a similar issue, Waldorf draws a clear profile of post-genocide Rwanda Truth and Reconciliation politics through a detailed description of the so-called 'traditional courts' or *gacaca*, seen as intertwined with local practices of retaliation and resistance.

The aim of Part IV is to explain the importance of place-based responses in heterogeneous contexts. The importance of engaging localized practices of justice emerges through the case of Guatemala, where violence had so many faces that it became counterproductive to follow tight national programmes of reconciliation and retribution. Arriaza and Roth-Arriaza analyse how, by focusing on local communities, it is possible to identify what people intend justice to be and to realize community-based interventions. The same gap between national and grassroots commemorations is stressed by Dudai and Cohen in the context of the Israeli–Palestine conflict. Despite the actuality of the war, both Israelis and Palestinians, sometimes separately and sometimes together, embody and perform personal and local memories, transmitting them to their own social environments. Falvey, finally, expresses similar concerns about transitional justice in Burma, emphasizing that locally grounded approaches are necessary to deal with the diversity of the country and the complexity of suffering, as well as with contrasting ideas of peace and reconciliation.

In the Afterword, Okello points out the necessity to further investigate and question the necessity of a universal mechanism of justice. 'Universality', he argues, reflects in this case the pinnacle of Euro-American values and beliefs regarding the so-called developing countries, and a prejudicial racial superiority.

This book addresses key questions and presents thoroughgoing critiques through a broad and yet detailed approach, providing an essential grounding for further investigations into the contemporary realities of transitional justice.

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MIRANDA VAN REEUWIJK, *Because of Temptations: children, sex and HIV/AIDS in Tanzania*. Diemen: AMB Publications (pb €35 – 978 9 07970 022 6). 2010, 248 pp.

The sensitivities around children and sex are such that research on the subject almost inevitably focuses on the problems of sex – unwanted pregnancy, HIV