

'Transformative Constitutionalism' and the borderlines of liberalism

The project aims to analyse non-liberal conceptualizations of social transformation and their relationship to the liberal script. It takes the concept of transformative constitutionalism (TC) as a central site for the articulation of a non-liberal vision of (future) order – with a particular interest in its role in India and the Global South more generally. It takes TC as an entry point to investigate alternatives to the liberal script as they emerge in the Global South. We seek to focus on alternatives that are non-liberal rather than illiberal. Whereas illiberal conceptualisations of social and political order constitute a direct attack on core principles of the liberal script, non-liberal alternatives exist on the borderline between the liberal script and its explicit contestants. Grounded in different philosophical traditions and cosmologies, non-liberal conceptualizations might differ in the ways they think about the self and society, time and space, stability and change etc, but they are not necessarily incompatible with the core normative aspirations of the liberal script. Our research project starts from the assumption that notions of TC constitute a privileged site for the reconstruction of such non-liberal conceptualisations of social and political order.