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**Transitional Justice:
An Ethnographic Perspective on the Social
Lives and Moral Worlds of Reparation**



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TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE SOCIAL LIVES AND MORAL WORLDS OF REPARATION

Guest Editors

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Submissions are now open for the next issue of *Antípoda. Revista de Antropología y Arqueología*. The journal welcomes original research articles, visual articles, and book reviews submitted between **15 February and 31 March 2027**. Research articles and visual articles should be submitted through the journal's online submission system at: <https://revistas.uniandes.edu.co/index.php/antipoda/about/submissions> while book reviews should be sent to antipoda@uniandes.edu.co. Manuscripts may be submitted in Spanish, English, or Portuguese. Full details of the editorial process and the author guidelines are available at: <https://revistas.uniandes.edu.co/index.php/antipoda/editorial-policy>

Introduction

Nearly two decades have passed since *Antípoda* published issues 4 and 5 on violence, reparation, memory, and transitional justice. During that time, the field of transition has expanded into new social, legal, embodied, and moral arenas. Truth commissions, special tribunals, reparations programs, memory policies, human rights archives, and psychosocial support initiatives have travelled across a wide range of contexts, generating public vocabularies through which harm, responsibility, reconciliation, and collective futures are understood and negotiated.

This special issue explores the social lives of transition by asking how justice is experienced, administered, translated, and contested once its institutional mechanisms begin to shape everyday life. Here, transition is approached as a field of practices, affects, documents, bodies, human remains, objects, landscapes, experts, rituals, silences, and forms of authority. It is within these settings that public truths are produced, legitimate memories are established, recognizable victims are constituted, perpetrators become classifiable, witnesses acquire authority, suffering is rendered reparable, and some realms of experience remain only partially translated.

Contributions that place ethnography at the center of international debates on transitional justice are especially encouraged. Ethnography makes it possible to trace the concrete ways in which experiences of violence become testimony, archives, evidence, reports, acts of reparation, or forms of public memory. It also brings into view what circulates at the margins of these processes: silences, shame, forms of mourning, family memories, religious affects, bodily traces, moral disagreements, and expectations of recognition.

The special issue engages with legal anthropology, the anthropology of the state, moral anthropology, the anthropology of the body, archaeology, biological and forensic anthropology, as well as scholarship on public religion, humanitarianism, violence, gender, and the ethnography of documents. It approaches transitional justice as a social formation in which legal and political languages intersect with expert knowledge, state practices, humanitarian grammars, archival technologies, forensic techniques, the materialities of violence, rituals of reconciliation, and situated ways of understanding personhood, the body, evidence, and suffering.

Topics for Discussion

One central theme concerns the role of anthropologists and other social scientists as practitioners, mediators, or translators of justice. Across a range of transitional processes, anthropologists, historians, psychologists, social workers, lawyers, forensic experts, archivists, memory practitioners, and community leaders contribute to the production of categories, listening protocols, reports, documentation methodologies, and public spaces of recognition. Their involvement raises ethical and epistemological questions about the place of social research within the worlds it seeks to describe, the authority of the ethnographic voice, and the tensions between understanding, expert testimony, accompaniment, activism, and the institutional administration of harm.

A second line of inquiry focuses on the moral production of figures such as the victim, survivor, witness, perpetrator, former combatant, family member, the disappeared, the repaired, and the reconciled. These categories crystalize expectations about pain, innocence, agency, guilt, remorse, vulnerability, and responsibility. As they circulate, they create new possibilities for recognition while also establishing thresholds of intelligibility: some forms of suffering acquire a public language, whereas others remain confined to fragmented, embodied, familial, religious, or silent registers. Particularly relevant are questions surrounding hidden victims, victimized perpetrators, wounded masculinities, uncomfortable memories, and bodies that exceed the humanitarian grammar of trauma.

The body also provides a privileged site of inquiry. Sexual violence, torture, disappearance, exhumation, forensic identification, illness, disability, mourning, the ageing of survivors, and somatic memories all reveal that transitional justice acts upon bodies situated within intersecting relations of gender, kinship, territory, race, class, nation, and religion. The body emerges as an archive, a form of proof, a human remain, evidence, a moral sign, and a limit to legal translation. Archaeology and forensic anthropology have likewise shown how objects, landscapes, graves, human remains, and the materialities of violence actively participate in the production of truth, memory, and reparation, raising fundamental questions about the relationship between expertise, evidence, and recognition.

The special issue also explores the temporalities that unfold after transition. We are interested, for example, in how final reports, recommendations, acts of apology, symbolic reparations, and promises of non-recurrence give rise to long temporal horizons marked by waiting, unfulfilled commitments, reappropriation, institutional fatigue, renewed violence, intergenerational legacies, and the ordinary ways in which people live alongside what cannot be repaired.

We welcome articles based on ethnographic, documentary, historical, or forensic research on justice, memory, reparation, post-conflict, and post-violence across a range of national and transnational contexts. Contributions addressing Colombia, Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe, Indigenous peoples, diasporas, international human rights archives, and comparative processes are especially encouraged. We are looking for manuscripts that bring together situated empirical materials and international theoretical debates in anthropology, demonstrating how transitional justice gives rise to social worlds, moral languages, and historically specific forms of humanity.

Guest Editors' Academic Profiles

Cynthia Andersen Sarti is Full Professor of Anthropology at the Federal University of São Paulo. She holds bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in Social Sciences and Anthropology from the University of São Paulo and earned her *livre-docência* at Unifesp. Her scholarship lies at the intersection of anthropology, the social sciences, public health, and public debates on vulnerability, examining how family, the body, illness, poverty, pain, violence, memory, and gender become embedded in concrete forms of social life. Beginning with her research on working-class urban families in Brazil, particularly in *A família como espelho*, she has explored the situated production of personhood, family relationships, everyday moralities, and the forms of recognition that shape experiences of precarity, care, and belonging. Her later work turns to suffering associated with violence, the social production of the victim, the figure of the witness, memories of Brazil's military dictatorship, exile, bodies marked by illness, and the public languages of vulnerability. Throughout her work, she traces the mediations through which intimate experience becomes narrative, moral claim, political inscription, or archival memory, while attending to the institutional, therapeutic, legal, and academic frameworks that render such experiences intelligible. She has played a leading role in establishing and consolidating the Humanities at Unifesp, serving as Academic Director of the Guarulhos Campus, Coordinator of the Graduate Program in Social Sciences, Director of Editora Unifesp, and Deputy Coordinator of the Edward Saïd Chair of Contemporary Studies. Her publications include *A família como espelho*; *Corpo, dor e violência: a produção da vítima*; and *A construção de figuras da violência: a vítima, a testemunha*.

Marco Julián Martínez-Moreno is an anthropologist trained at the National University of Colombia, where he earned his undergraduate degree, and holds both a master's degree and a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Brasília. He is currently conducting postdoctoral research at the Federal University of São Paulo on sexual violence against men, testimony, and truth in transitional justice processes. His work examines the historical forms of personhood assumed and produced by contemporary humanitarianism, the ways in which suffering comes to function as a marker of truth, and the frictions that this moral grammar generates in contexts shaped by egalitarian reforms, conservative moralities, and competing claims to victimhood. His academic trajectory has developed between Colombia and Brazil, tracing the transformations of violence as it moves through public policy, courts, gender pedagogies, therapeutic interventions, moral archives, and the languages of rights. Beginning with his research on masculinities and the judicialization of violence against women, he has explored the situated production of the aggressor, the victim, the reformable

man, the rights-bearing subject, and the morally recognizable person. More recently, his research has turned to contemporary regimes of victimization, unsettling forms of alterity, the political right and its moral grammars, and the agonistic relationship between humanitarian reforms, egalitarian sensibilities, and conservative reactions. He has held postdoctoral positions at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, and has been a visiting professor and researcher at institutions in Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico. His publications include *A agência humana e a força: emoção, conversão e resistência na judicialização da violência contra a mulher*, as well as articles published in *Mana*, *Vibrant*, *Anuário Antropológico*, *Cadernos Pagu*, *Revista de Antropologia*, *Anthropologica*, and *Anales de Antropología*.

Andrés M. F. González-Saíz is an anthropologist from Universidad de los Andes. He holds an MSc in Social Anthropology Research from Goldsmiths, University of London, and a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Rutgers University. He currently serves as a Cultural Analyst at Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) and as Publications Coordinator for the Program for Critical Studies of Political Transitions (PECT) at Universidad de los Andes. His work lies at the intersection of the anthropology of the state, violence studies, transitional justice, and national security bureaucracies. Drawing on ethnographic research conducted within military institutions, victims' organizations, and peacebuilding settings, he has examined transformations in Colombian military culture, disputes over memory and the attribution of responsibility, and the political circulation of categories such as victim, human rights, and reconciliation in contexts of conflict and post-conflict. His research also addresses the ethical and methodological challenges of conducting social research with actors connected to experiences of violence, as well as the ways humanitarian, legal, and moral discourses are appropriated, reinterpreted, and mobilized by state institutions and political actors. He has published on historical memory, violence and morality, ethnographic methodologies, the militarization of human rights, and the contemporary far right. His recent publications include the article "Entre 'alteridades reprochables' y 'otredades irredimibles': violencia, moralidad y los límites de la comprensión etnográfica", published in *VIBRANT*, and the book chapter "Curadurías del martirio: victimización, afectos y guerra cultural en las (nuevas) derechas". He is currently researching contemporary struggles over truth, memory, and political legitimacy in Colombia.