

# Historical Memory and Transformative Justice - Place for 1 PhD candidate

## Chair group

Historical Memory and Transformative Justice

[Embedded in larger chair group on [Citizenship And Humanization of the Public Sector](#) ]

## Chairholder

[Prof. dr. Nicole Immler](#), professor of Historical Memory and Transformative Justice

## Short introduction into the research field

<b>Chair</b>	Historical Memory and Transformative Justice
<b>Supervisors</b>	Prof. dr. Nicole Immler, Dr. Niké Wentholt, Dr. Siri Driessen

### Field of Research: Historical memory and transformative justice

The chair group Historical Memory and Transformative Justice is concerned with the relationship between history, memory and justice. We welcome projects on transformative justice: how to do justice after institutional and systematic injustice? How do public institutions take responsibility for human rights violations in the past, and to what extent are these perceived as humanizing? To what extent do citizens experience efforts to do them justice as recognition of the suffering inflicted on them and thus as restoration of their full citizenship? When do they experience legal redress or financial compensation as recognition and when not? What role do social movements play in this? Why is it necessary to talk about history and memory when it comes to justice?

The field of Transitional Justice explores all the mechanisms and processes by which a society tries to come to terms with a violent or

injust past – such as criminal trials, historical commissions, parliamentary enquires, reparations, apologies, museums, monuments, commemorations, education – exploring to what extent those instruments help to generate change and a more just society. Transformative Justice has emerged within the realm of Transitional Justice, aiming to identify the 'root causes' of structural and systemic violence, rather than addressing just the 'symptoms'. Without knowledge of the past, knowing the 'root causes' of injustices, meaningful redress seems often impossible. Our aim is to identify parameters when we can speak of justice in a more structural sense, where we can speak of changing power relations and deep change. Therewith we aim to find a balance between backward-looking accountability and a forward-looking responsibility in terms of social justice.

As a complement to our project Dialogics of Justice ([www.dialogicsofjustice.org](http://www.dialogicsofjustice.org)); we welcome similar research projects to widen its comparative approach. We look for typical and atypical cases of (historical) injustice, processed by individuals or a group of people wronged by powerful institutions; and therefore seeking justice inside or outside the courtroom. We explore the role of claimants and institutions/government involved; to reach beyond a victim approach. We use dialogical approaches to look into power inequalities in these social spaces; aiming for data that helps to create better 'solutions' and creating tools to translate the new knowledge into practice. Therewith we hope to bring an individual perspective on well-being and meaning-making and the institutional perspective on humanising society closer together. Case studies that are particularly welcome would be the gas-exploitation in Groningen, the (court) cases around adoption and 'afstandmoeders' (see also [Elvira Loibl - Universiteit voor Humanistiek](#)), and repair for colonial crimes and slavery injustice. We also consider broader proposals, including theoretical investigations, examining the recognition claims of citizens, the various measures taken by the state to 'repair' and the experiences with those instruments.

<b>Examples of research questions</b>	Why do many recognition measures keep people in marginalized positions rather than moving them forward? What are the challenges of recognition policies?
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	<p>What qualifies transformative recognition or transformative justice?</p> <p>In which way does dialogue matter in those processes and which forms of dialogue? How useful is the lens of multi-voicedness for the postcolonial debate and to make the colonial past a shared past?</p> <p>How is recognition, apology and reparation talked about in the Dutch parliament (analyzing minutes with discourse analysis and dialogue theory).</p>
<b>Examples of theses we currently supervise:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender social justice in (post-)conflict Syria: <a href="#"><u>Carla Boulos – Homepage</u></a></li> <li>- Recognition of (sexual) historical institute abuse in the Catholic Church: <a href="#"><u>Naomi Ormskerk – Homepage</u></a></li> <li>- Repair of environmental damage and human rights violations caused by Shell: <a href="#"><u>Obiozo Ukpabi – Homepage</u></a></li> <li>- Restitution of colonial archives: <a href="#"><u>Leah Niederhausen - Universiteit voor Humanistiek</u></a></li> </ul>
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