Experiencing justice: researching citizens' contacts with judicial practices

Brussels, March 5th and 6th 2015

Call for papers

The central theme of this conference, organized within the framework of the IAP research programme “Justice and Populations: The Belgian Experience in International Perspective” (IAP 7/22, Belgian Federal Science Policy Office), is research on "experiences of justice". It focuses on justice-society relationships from the viewpoint of the citizen, as both subject and client of legal and judicial systems. Although (historical) research on law and justice is often focused on judicial institutions and their staff, the aim of this conference is to put a spotlight on the role of citizens in judicial practices, from a bottom-up perspective. This kind of approach makes it possible to explore the experiences, attitudes and motivations of “clients” of legal and judicial systems and examine the complex ways in which they interact with judicial/police authorities. Citizens are not merely to be seen as passive subjects meekly acquiescing in state practised repression; rather, they are forces that turn to, and make use of, the police and the courts to actively serve their own ends.

This conference will be organised along three major themes: the conceptualization of "experience"; methodological issues (which sources and approaches can be mobilized to research "experience"?); interdisciplinary and comparative reflection on the results of ongoing empirical research into "experiences of justice".

In order to open up new perspectives, we invite papers which can contribute to one or more of these dimensions of experiencing justice.

For paper proposals, please submit a title, a 250-word abstract and a short biography in English by December 15th, 2014 to experiencingjustice.conference@gmail.com. Authors will be sent notifications of acceptance or rejection by email before January 15th, 2015 and (draft) papers will be due on February 25th, 2015. Selected proceedings of the conference will be published.

A limited budget to help with travel and/or accommodation expenses may be made available (with preference given to junior and low-income scholars). Please note that these funds are very limited: participants are therefore encouraged to find their own sources of financial support.

For more information, please contact: experiencingjustice.conference@gmail.com

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