

# Justice Sites and the Fight against Atrocity Crimes

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*This article develops a new conceptual framework designed to critically study how locality and transversal power relations structure activity and developments in the global field of international criminal justice. The framework is built around the concept of “justice sites,” defined as localities in which organized and social labor—in this case, working with international criminal justice—takes place. The potential effects of social labor performed in specific sites of justice are structured partly by their locality and the resources to which it gives access and partly by their structural position in wider transversal chains of cooperation and competition that cut across different globalized and national fields. In addition to structuring the connections between justice sites, transversal power relations link sites of justice to “practice sites” embedded in other fields in which localized, social labor is not routinely engaged with international criminal justice. Such linkages demonstrate how the framework, developed to study how locality and transversal relations shape the fight against atrocity crimes, can also be used to investigate sites engaged in and across other globalized and national fields of justice, law, governance, and security.*

## INTRODUCTION

On March 14, 2012, Thomas Lubanga Dyilo was convicted of enlisting and conscripting children under the age of fifteen and forcing them to participate actively in hostilities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).<sup>1</sup> Whereas his crimes were committed primarily in relation to conflict in the Ituri province of the eastern DRC, the judgment against him was delivered by the International Criminal Court (ICC), which, at the time, was located in a rented office building in a commercial district in The Hague, The Netherlands.<sup>2</sup> Here, three international judges concluded adjudication of events that had unfolded ten years earlier in a context separated from the courtroom by the Mediterranean, the Sahara, and several national boundaries across more than thirty-seven hundred miles (over six thousand kilometers). The crime site was temporally, geographically, judicially, and professionally separated from the site of adjudicatory justice.

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This project has received funding from the European Research Council under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Program (JustSites: StG-802053).

1. *Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo*, Judgment pursuant to Article 74 of the Statute, Case no. ICC-01/04-01/06-2842, 14 March 2012.

2. The International Criminal Court (ICC) moved to its permanent premises in The Hague in December 2015.

To most observers of international criminal justice—and of international law and politics in general—the separation between international criminal courts and the crimes they deal with is likely to be of little surprise. By design and as an empirical phenomenon, international criminal justice has to mediate challenges related to working across different degrees of distance to sites where crimes were committed during conflict. This is the case for the international criminal courts that have been created since the 1990s as well as for a range of other responses to atrocity crimes developed in the same period. In what can be perceived as a wider system of legal initiatives targeting perpetrators of such crimes and building structures to help their victims, international criminal courts coexist, for instance, with the adjudication of war crimes cases in national legal systems outside of the country in which the conflict took place as well as with diverse justice processes in countries where the hostilities occurred. In this global field of justice, judicial institutions cooperate and compete with a range of other types of organizations and stakeholders. These relations often unfold across national borders, geographical distance, and professional boundaries. Spread out across the world, the cooperative and competitive practices and more structural power relations of organizations involved in producing international criminal justice shape its successes and failures.

The importance of such practices and relations are visible, for instance, in the cases from Ituri that were referred to the ICC by the DRC government under the court's rules of complementarity. Whereas these rules, activated by the referral of the situation to the court by the DRC, gave the ICC legal jurisdiction over the situation in question, the court did not have direct access to the crime scene or to classic forms of police power, including the legitimate use of physical force that is historically tied to the nation-state (Bittner 1970). To build cases, the court therefore relied on work performed by organizations located in the DRC and Ituri. For instance, to build evidence of the committed crimes, the ICC's Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) leaned on political support and practical assistance from DRC government structures, both in the capital of Kinshasa and close to the conflict in the eastern provinces. The OTP also relied on support from UN peacekeepers and on the assistance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) whose proximity to the crime sites and local networks allowed them to mediate access to witnesses and evidence (Buisman 2012, Johnson 2012, Shatzman 2021). Situated along a continuum of distance from the sites of crime with which they deal, agents in these organizations, or "justice sites," all worked together and, at times, against each other to produce international criminal justice, often also disseminating perceived results or challenges to outside audiences. In a wider perspective, such transversal practices—cutting across jurisdiction, geography, and social spaces—are crucial objects of study because they reveal patterns of power that structure activity in, and developments of, the fight against atrocity crimes.

In the definition developed in this article, the "justice sites" (or "sites of justice") are localities in which social labor—often, professionalized work tied to specific organizations—takes place. In the case of the sites of justice analyzed in this article, this work has the aim of affecting practices and goals in the field of international criminal justice. The notion of international criminal justice used here underlines how activity in this field and its sites is not only related to criminal law proceedings but also consists of other initiatives targeting, for instance, reparations for victims or analyses

of this form of justice and the injustices it seeks to address. Sites of justice engaged in international criminal justice include, but are not limited to, the internationalized criminal courts, NGOs, national enforcement authorities (for example, war crimes units), forensic exhumations missions, international/national investigation mechanisms, law firms, think tanks, media outlets, and diplomatic services and conferences. Although injustices related to crimes committed during conflict are felt and discussed in society more broadly, it is often in these sites of justice that specialized work targeting atrocity crimes takes place. As such, these sites are crucial for the production and reception of atrocity justice analyses, ideals, and practices—in the process, often broadcasting perceived successes and failures to wider audiences. They affect not only the state of international criminal justice but also public and political perceptions about the fight against atrocity crimes.

Built around the notion of justice sites, the developed conceptual framework combines insights from different social science traditions to demonstrate how the social labor in such sites is structured by their location (its endogenous and exogenous dynamics) as well as by the transversal practices and relations that bind them together across jurisdictional and geographic space as well as across different social fields. Endogenous dynamics include, most importantly, the facilities, processes, and resources present in specific sites of justice, whereas exogenous factors relate to its immediate physical context and what resources and knowledge it gives social labor access to build. At the same time, as the article demonstrates, these deeply connected dynamics are partly structured by, and have important structuring effects on, the transversal practices and relations that link the sites of justice as they cooperate and compete to define, produce, and disseminate international criminal justice. To make intelligible how transversal practices and relations cut across social space as well as how agents performing labor in sites of justice interpret and work across jurisdiction and geography to fight atrocity crimes and ensure victims' rights, the framework shows how sites of justice engaged in the field of international criminal justice are also embedded, in parallel, in other globalized or national fields. These double relations, which are different for distinct sites of justice, help shape how international criminal justice unfolds as well as its effects and potential power.

Whereas the contribution of this article is mainly conceptual, the framework developed around sites of justice was crafted to provide thinking tools that can enable critical and empirically informed analyses of the reality of international criminal justice as shaped by the location of the sites of justice as well as by their transversal practices and power relations. Transversal practices are understood as cutting across social, geographic, and jurisdictional distance between sites of justice. Consequently, transversal power refers to the ability of social labor in one justice site to affect the goals and direction of one or several other sites across such degrees of distance. Besides enabling critical studies of the sites of justice and their transversal relations, the developed framework can be used to study the linkages between these localities, routinely involved with international criminal justice work, and other “practice sites” or “sites of practice” that are not regularly engaged with or that have stakes in international criminal justice. Such practice sites can have goals and norms that are either convergent with, or oppositional to, those of the sites of justice, and such relations help structure the development of international criminal justice. In this perspective, the framework can also be used to study wider linkages between the field of international criminal justice and other global or national fields of

practice, including transformations in such relations that are likely to (re-)structure what sites of justice can and cannot do. In addition, the framework has potential for studying localities where agents engage in social labor that targets other forms of justice—something that can be conceptualized as sites of justice working, for instance, with human rights claims, Indigenous rights, gender justice, rights of migrants, global economic or distributive justice, and environmental justice such as fair and just transitions from climate change.

To construct its argument, the article proceeds in four sections. The first section provides a short introduction to international criminal justice before outlining how the existing scholarship is organized around three perceptions of the space in which its practices and power unfold: scholarship that understands this space, its practices, and power as either tied to the different forms of legal and political jurisdiction; as physically rooted human geography in which localized stakeholders have diverging forms of power and perspectives; or as a more abstract social space in which particular organizations or social groups (typically elites) collaborate and compete to define international criminal justice. This section also outlines and deepens the basic definition of the “justice sites” that combines insights from different social science traditions to show how they are shaped by both their locality and the transversal practices and relations that bind them together and structure their differences. The second section further develops the sites of justice framework and expands on how it is shaped by both endogenous and exogenous characteristics not only linked to locality but also affected by transversal dynamics. The third section builds on the conceptualization of locality to demonstrate how the transversal relations between sites of justice are shaped by their engagement in international criminal justice and parallel embeddedness in other national or globalized fields. This also allows the framework to analyze relations between justice sites and sites of practice situated in other fields, thereby opening it to use in other socio-legal areas. The conclusion highlights the conceptual takeaways of the article and points to their potential value for studies of justice sites active in other fields and legal domains.

### THREE CONCEPTIONS OF SPACE AND POWER

As international criminal justice developed from the mid-1990s, it was built around the idea of supplementing national legal jurisdictions with alternative, often international or hybrid, criminal justice initiatives. In cases where national systems were fraught (or perceived to be fraught) with legal or political (sometimes weaponized) obstacles to the effective and legitimate administration of criminal justice, international criminal courts were created and premised on different degrees of legal, political, professional, and, often, geographic separation to the context in which crimes occurred. The ad hoc International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)—established in 1993 and 1994 respectively—were both placed outside of the countries in question: the ICTY in The Hague and the ICTR in Arusha, Tanzania. From the late 1990s, hybrid tribunals were set up in response to other conflicts (Mégret 2005a; Williams 2012; Kersten 2018). Placed both inside and outside of the countries in which the relevant conflict took

place, these institutions were created with significant support from the international community (Kjeldgaard-Pedersen 2015). Based on such support, the Special Court of Sierra Leone (SCSL) and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia were both placed in country. In contrast, the proceedings of the Extraordinary African Chambers, which concerned crimes committed in Chad, was placed in Senegal. Two other hybrids—the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and the Kosovo Specialist Chambers—were placed in The Hague, a city that promotes itself as the international city of peace and justice (Roodenburg and Stolk 2020; Schwöbel-Patel 2021, 225–30).

In addition to these initiatives, the ICC began operations in 2002. The Rome Statute that established the court underlines that all member states have “the duty to exercise its criminal jurisdiction over those responsible for international crimes.”<sup>3</sup> If cases are not tried before national courts, they can be referred to the ICC by national systems as well as by the United Nations (UN) Security Council. The court can also open investigations on its own initiative in situations where it considers national systems unwilling or unable to prosecute the crimes in question.<sup>4</sup> As a result of this legal foundation, the ICC has complementary jurisdiction over the so-called international core crimes (genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes) in all of its 123 member states (and beyond them if a case is referred to the court by the UN Security Council). Since 2018, the court also has jurisdiction over the crime of aggression with regard to states that have signed this protocol.<sup>5</sup> Whereas most scholarship on international criminal justice has focused on the different international and hybrid criminal courts created since the 1990s, these institutions coexist with other layers of justice at work in the countries of conflict (Nettelfield 2010; Palmer 2015). These layers of justice often include both a punitive mandate that targets the prosecution of perpetrators and more reparative or restorative elements focused on the plight of victims. Such layers are also visible at the international level—for instance, in the ICC’s Trust Fund for Victims, which implements reparations and provides support to victims. As part of these different levels of justice, atrocity crime cases have increasingly been brought before national courts outside of countries of conflict, something that has also been the subject of scholarly interest (Kaleck and Kroker 2018; Langer and Eason 2019).

To analyze activity in international criminal justice—characterized by different types and degrees of distance from, and proximity to, where atrocity crimes were committed—existing scholarship builds on three different conceptions of the space in which this form of justice unfolds. Each of these conceptions of space is closely related to specific ideas about power and how it structures international criminal justice. The first type of scholarship perceives space as jurisdictional in the sense that it is characterized mainly by legal and political rules, practices, and power relations that govern distinct international and national systems. The second type of literature builds on a conception of the space of international criminal justice as being mainly geographic and often focuses on different and physically embedded perceptions and practices of

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3. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998, 2187 UNTS 90, preamble.

4. Rome Statute, Art. 17.

5. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Adoption of Amendments on the Crime of Aggression, Doc. C.N.651.2010.TREATIES-8, 11 June 2010.

justice that unfold across distinct scales (local, national, transnational, international) where they are associated with particular forms of power. Finally, the third type of literature builds on conceptions of social space defined by the practices and power relations between stakeholders in and of the field itself. These three perceptions of space and power can often also be found among stakeholders in this field, including states and civil society organizations. In addition, each of these conceptions is related to wider traditions of thinking that have also affected neighboring fields of research such as transitional justice, human rights, international law, police and security studies, and international relations more generally. As such, and whereas the literature review focuses primarily on international criminal justice scholarship, this scholarship is not seen as *sui generis*, and important contributions from broader socio-legal scholarship are also discussed. That said, the review highlights in particular how researchers have developed and used the three perceptions of space to contribute to international criminal justice scholarship.

The idea of jurisdictional space is pervasive in international criminal justice scholarship. The term “jurisdictional space” refers here to the perception that legal and political boundaries shape how international criminal justice works and has effects. Consequently, the formal power of law is analyzed as complementing or conflicting with political power—often, in this case, state power. This frequently (international) court-centric perception is evident in two different literatures on international criminal justice published by legal scholars and political scientists. In legal scholarship, a reliance on an implicit concept of jurisdictional space is dominant. Often taking the legal foundations and jurisprudential developments of the internationalized criminal courts as its point of departure, this scholarship studies and discusses the jurisdictional rules of these institutions, how they are used, and, at times, their relationship to national counterparts (Zahar and Sluiter 2008; Schabas 2011; Bassiouni 2013; Cryer 2014; Stahn 2018; Cryer, Robinson, and Vasiliev 2019). This perspective focuses on the formal competences written into legal arrangements, and it has contributed crucial discussions of how judicial powers can be deployed in different ways. For instance, legal scholarship has investigated the complementarity principle of the ICC (Mégret 2005b; Heller 2012), including how jurisdictional dynamics affect its authority and performance (Nouwen 2013; C. Moran 2018). With regard to war crime cases in national systems outside of the country of conflict, studies have often focused on jurisdictional challenges related to the use of universal jurisdiction (Reydams 2003; Langer 2011, 2015).

Some political science scholarship also builds on perceptions of jurisdictional space but focuses on the political structures that define the legal boundaries. As such, this scholarship reverses the perspective of legal scholars and perceives the space in which international criminal justice unfolds as being primarily defined by political forms of power that ultimately define or at least help shape the workings of legal jurisdictions. Such perspectives have contributed important knowledge about the role of states in developing, criticizing, and defining the functions of international criminal justice (Peskin 2008; Roach 2011; Bosco 2014; Cullen, Kastner, and Richmond 2018; Makaza 2018; Ba 2020; Brett and Gissel 2020; Orina 2020; Randhawa 2022) that often complement critical legal scholarship (Koskeniemi 2002; Mégret 2002; Akhavan 2009). Whereas both legal and political science scholarship have contributed important findings, their reliance on ideas of jurisdictional space, practices, and power means that

they often tend to reify law or the state as hierarchical entities and focus less on practices and power associated with stakeholders that work outside of the internationalized criminal courts or state politics.

The second conception of space and power active in international criminal justice scholarship is organized around geographic ideas. Such perceptions often highlight the importance of physical rootedness and practices embedded in specific localities and contrast them to what happens at the international level of the courts. Theoretically, this conception draws inspiration from the spatial turn in social science (Lefèbvre 1974; Konau 1977; Massey 1984; Soja 1989; Warf and Arias 2008; Löw 2013) that led to the creation of the discipline of human geography, including the subfields of political (Harvey 1996) and legal geography (Blomley, Delaney, and Ford 2001; Braverman, Blomley, and Delaney 2014; D. Moran 2016; Butler and Mussawir 2017). In studies of international criminal justice, conceptions of geographical space have been used by both political and social scientists to disentangle how spatially situated practices and perceptions shape involvement with this type of justice. Relying on ideas about, for instance, the political dynamics of localized spaces, scholars have pointed to disjointed perceptions of (criminal) justice visible in a schism between internationalized (and often highly institutionalized) ideals and practices and competing ideas embodied in agents closer to the theatre of crime (P. Clark 2018; Hinton 2018), something also visible in the ICC's efforts to engage with victims and victim communities (Katan and Komakech 2017; Tenove 2018).

Related studies have shown how localized stakeholders, especially in the global South, understand and try to influence international criminal justice practices (Clarke 2009, 2019), and how different layers of atrocity justice play out in national and local settings (Clarke 2009; Kelsall 2005, 2009; P. Clark 2010; Karstedt et al. 2012; Palmer 2015; Ingelaere 2016). As such, these perspectives are related to concepts of different “scales of justice” that combine ideas about jurisdiction and geography (Pearson 2008; Fraser 2009; Valverde 2015). They also have affinities with legal scholarship on inter-legality (de Sousa Santos 2002) and, from social science more broadly, glocalization studies (Robertson 2018). By pointing to the geographical space that distances the international courts from where they have effects, this scholarship has contributed crucial correctives to more jurisdictional (legal or statist) perspectives of space, practices, and power. In particular, this scholarship has highlighted the multidirectional dynamics of power in the globalized field of international criminal justice. However, perceptions of geographic space have often contributed less knowledge about the linkages between physical embeddedness and wider structures of social, specifically professional, power.

The third approach conceptualizes international criminal justice as a more abstract social space. The most prevalent concept used to make this social space intelligible is that of the “field.” Whereas other field concepts exist (Moore 1972; DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Fligstein and McAdam 2012), most scholarship of international criminal justice has been inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's development of the term (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Hagan and Levi 2005; Dixon and Tenove 2013; Christensen 2015; Savelsberg 2015; Mégret 2016; Dezalay 2017; Batesmith 2021). For Bourdieu, a field is defined by the objective relations between the different positions active in a given social space (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 95–105; see also more generally Bourdieu 1996, 2013). Studies of international criminal justice inspired by this concept

have contributed important knowledge about professional stakeholders (often elites) and how particular accumulations of capital—defined as embodied assets that can be invested toward affecting particular fields of practice (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992)—structure the competition to shape atrocity justice developments (Christensen 2016, 2022; Christensen and Kjeldgaard-Pedersen 2018).

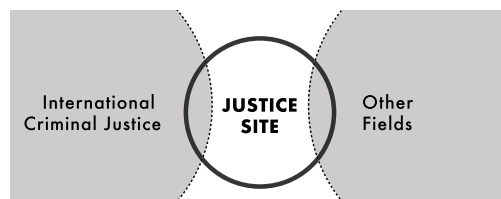
Especially relevant for the framework developed in this article, and building also on Bourdieu's terminology, Peter Dixon and Chris Tenove (2013, 408) have examined the types of authority accumulated and deployed in the field of international criminal justice, often by agents working in internationalized institutions and organizations rather than by "place-based" victims who do not enjoy the benefits of transnational mobility (Bauman 1998). Dixon and Tenove highlight how place-based victims tied to a specific location are rarely able to deploy moral authority (and practical power) without relying on other agents—for instance, internationalized NGOs that have a pivotal role in international criminal justice (see also Madlingozi 2010; Haddad 2018; Lohne 2019; Zvobgo 2020). More generally, many socio-legal studies, including those using a field perspective, have focused primarily on the internal and socio-professional structures and practices active in international criminal justice, often in and around its international courts (Hagan 2003; Hagan and Levi 2004; Levi, Dezalay, and Amiraslani 2017; Christensen 2019, 2021; Powderly 2020), although some scholars have studied how professional agents in national jurisdictions outside of the countries in which conflict took place have worked to build cases on war crimes (Seroussi 2012; Christensen 2018). Complementing the study of practices linked to the international criminal courts (Meierhenrich 2013; Stappert 2020), some scholars have taken a broader perspective on the transnational networks crucial in pushing for the creation of these institutions (Glasius 2006; Turner 2006; Sikkink 2011; Corrie 2015). Other researchers have developed concepts that show how "transnational legal orderings" such as international criminal justice are shaped by broader legal, social, and political dynamics (Shaffer and Aaronson 2020). Collectively, these studies have contributed crucial knowledge of the agents that work in and around the international criminal courts. In contrast to many of these studies of elites and practices organized in the international criminal courts or the wider social space around them, the developed framework takes the locality of different sites of justice as its point of departure and shows how their relations are structured in transversal ways that are not organized by the stakeholders themselves and, as such, are not often captured by elite or social network studies.

Placing the sites of justice at its center, the developed framework shows how agents working in these localities have to mobilize action across jurisdictional, geographic, and social forms of space to have effects. To make intelligible both the local embeddedness of these sites and the transversal relations that structure activity and power in international criminal justice, the concepts developed in the framework combine ideas from different social science traditions. As such, the sites of justice framework offers an alternative to more hierarchical, jurisdictional perceptions as well as to scalar thinking related to geographic perceptions of space and power. At the same time, focusing on locality and transversal relations, the framework shows how social labor performed in the sites of justice is affected by jurisdiction and geography, something that sets the framework apart from most elite studies.



The core contribution of the developed framework is the crafting of concepts that can connect and be used to study locality and transversality of the sites of justice. This is a crucial component in critical understandings of how justice sites have effects on each other and the wider world. As sites of justice work together and exercise different forms of power over each other, the social labor performed in one site can affect that performed in another, at times against the will of the agents working there, something reminiscent of Max Weber's (2007b, 180) definition of power. Sites of justice can also have less direct forms of effects in other localities by producing resources, products, and knowledge needed in other sites and through forms of symbolic power visible, for instance, in the capacity to set the agenda for work with international criminal justice. In different ways, the labor performed in the sites of justice targets having transversal effects in other sites.

The concept of transversal is used to make intelligible the idea that linkages and patterns of power active in international criminal justice cut across jurisdictional, geographic, and social spaces (Basaran et al. 2016; Bigo 2020). As such, the transversal approach does not take for granted a hierarchy between different types of justice sites (for example, international courts and local NGOs) but, rather, makes their locality, relations, and the ways in which they are able to affect each other the central object of study. Transversal lines cut across the three dimensions identified above: justice sites are rooted in different geographic contexts and have to mediate both locality and distance when working together or against each other—something visible, for instance, with regard to the allocation of resources or the mobility of professionals. Social labor performed at the sites of justice has to work in and across different jurisdictions that shape both how it engages with international criminal justice as well as how such practices are structured by other legal regimes, including immigration, taxation, and rules that govern, for instance, civil society in different countries. Such national or local rules also affect the endogenous and exogenous workings of sites of justice. In addition, sites of justice are typically and simultaneously folded into different social fields that affect their goals and perspectives—for instance, as social labor in them is engaged with both international criminal justice and other justice claims. These double relations to different fields also affect how agents in the sites of justice work across jurisdiction and geography.

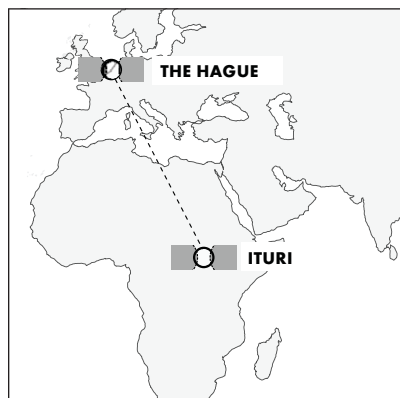


**Figure 1.**  
A site of justice as embedded in separate social fields

Figures 1 and 2 visualize the core idea of the sites of justice framework.<sup>6</sup> In Figure 1, the circle represents a justice site in which social labor is affected by locality (and its

6. I would like to thank Charissa Santos for her loving help with visualizing the sites of justice.

endogenous and exogenous dynamics that will be further developed below). The figure also shows how the sites of justice are often folded into both the field of international criminal justice and other fields. Such double relations to different fields are part of the transversal dynamics of the sites of justice that are both written into these localities and affect their linkages to other sites. These transversal linkages also cut across jurisdiction and geography as visualized in [Figure 2](#), which is exemplified as relations between sites of justice in The Hague and Ituri. Whereas a range of other structural linkages could have been depicted, [Figure 2](#) shows very simply how the fight against atrocity crimes plays out across sites of justice that are connected across jurisdictional, geographic, and social spaces. Together, [Figures 1](#) and [2](#) visualize how justice sites are shaped by locality and transversal structures that affect their ability to have effects.



**Figure 2.**  
Transversal relations between sites of justice in The Hague and Ituri

On the basis of this basic conceptualization of sites of justice, the next section elaborates on the framework with a focus on how their endogenous and exogenous dynamics affect the localized social labor taking place within them. This section also sets the stage for discussing how locality is shaped by, and helps shape, the transversal practices and potential power of these sites of justice.

## JUSTICE SITES AND THEIR ENDOGENOUS AND EXOGENOUS DYNAMICS

Justice sites are at the core of the conceptual framework. The concept has some affinities to previously developed ontologies of locality (Schatzki 2002; Marston, Jones, and Woodward 2005), but it is also different as it shows how sites of justice are also embedded in distinct social spaces that are both affected by and affect their transversal relations and power. Justice sites are conceptualized as physical localities where social (often professionalized and organizationally embedded) labor with international criminal justice takes place. In this definition, sites of justice include, for instance, internationalized criminal courts, the field offices of these courts, national war crimes units,

forensic exhumations teams working on the ground, internationalized investigative mechanisms, think tanks, NGOs, law firms, political sites including diplomatic institutions, academic research centers, and media outlets. In all of these sites of justice, agents perform social labor with the goal of affecting international criminal justice in individual cases or in overall norms and direction that are also related to initiatives that do not directly concern prosecutions.

By stressing the crucial role of localized sites of justice in the fight against atrocity crimes, the framework moves away from court-centric conceptions of international criminal justice, related to a wider practical and scholarly focus on large international institutions (Kennedy 1987), and toward an empirically informed perspective on the conditions that structure social labor in this field more generally. As such, and inspired partly by scholarship focused on the context of international courts and how it affects their authority (Alter, Helfer, and Madsen 2016; Caserta 2020), the developed framework sees the context of all types of justice sites—the social labor performed in them and how it affects the transversal practices and power relations in a globalized field—as crucial objects of study. In other words, avoiding formal institutional identifiers that often carry specific connotations and can format analytic results, the concept of justice sites underlines that social labor with international criminal justice is structured around very different types of (localized) organizations. At a more philosophical level, the sites of justice framework can be seen as moving away from theories of justice focused on institutions (Rawls 2020) and toward a more global, pluralistic, and relational idea of the fight(s) against injustice (Sen 2009). Taking a sociological approach, the present framework aims to provide conceptual tools that make intelligible the social conditions that structure different, and at times competing, claims of justice.

Moving away from an institutional- (often court-) centered approach, the sites of justice concept covers different types of localities in which social labor to end or understand injustice linked to atrocity crimes takes place. Some such sites are permanent, whereas others are temporary and created for a specific duration of time or for specific tasks. In addition, some sites are large bureaucracies (Weber 2007a)—for instance, the ICC and other courts are often the main focus of scholarly attention. Other sites of justice, however, are smaller and more loosely organized units operating in specific localities, as is the case, for instance, of NGOs operating in conflict zones. In other words, not all sites have the formal characteristics associated with organizations or institutions in a classic sense (Selznick 1948; Archer 2014). Whereas the sites of justice framework is less radical than flat ontologies of space that insist on self-organizing or onto-genetic dynamics (Marston, Jones III, and Woodward 2005, 422), it demonstrates how understanding the local organization and rootedness of social labor performed in sites of justice is of central importance for critical studies of the global fight against atrocity crimes. Unlike most flat ontologies, the framework insists on investigating both locality and the transversal relations that are both shaped by and help shape it.

The concept of social labor was developed to underline an integral element of the conceptual framework, specifically that organized work performed by groups of agents in localized sites of justice is always related to the wider field (or social space) in which it targets having effects. As such, this work is social in the sense that it is always relational. It is embedded in the organization of specific sites and structured by an ambition to have (transversal) impact on the field of atrocity justice. In other words, the concept of social

labor zooms in on the social conditions that structure work performed with the goal of having specific forms of effects, in this case related to international criminal justice. Whereas they are structured partly by the locality where social work is performed, these conditions are also affected by transversal linkages, including to other fields, as well as by jurisdictional and geographic patterns of power. Building on the idea of social labor, a site is seen as hosting organized work performed by more than one individual. At times, however, singular agents can be seen as representatives of a site of justice.

This is the case, for instance, for staff of international NGOs that are sometimes deployed to work in close proximity to the scene of the crime. In such cases, it becomes important to reconnect the work of singular agents to the social labor performed in the particular sites of justice in and with which they work. Their role in such organized labor structures the potential influence of singular agents as well as the power that comes with the status of being seen as a legitimate representative of a site of justice. For instance, one group that often seems to be free from organizational and physical constraints are academics. They often appear as singular authors in publications and conferences (or as co-authors), but their work is still connected to the site in which they work. Academic institutions offer very different access to resources for conducting research that is related, for instance, to teaching loads, help from research assistants, and finances that can be used to travel or to conduct fieldwork, as well as dynamics related to specific scholarly networks and markets. As such, the role of such agents in the field of international criminal justice is linked to social labor that goes on in particular localized sites, some of which offer resources that allow for global mobility and some of which do not. More generally, the importance of the locality of social labor has both an endogenous and an exogenous side.

The endogeneity of sites of justice relates mainly to the formal and informal rules that govern their practices (formal rules being linked to jurisdictional dynamics) as well as to the facilities and capabilities that support social labor inside these sites and help shape their workflows and processes. Such capacities, for instance, can relate to the ability of sites to devote workforce and resources to specific tasks and to the extent to which this ability is flexible and adaptable. With regard to the rules that guide such work, specific rules govern the activities of the international criminal courts as well as their interactions with other justice sites. In the case of the ICC, the Regulations of the Office of the Prosecutor, for instance, have rules for how to conduct investigations, including how to avoid re-traumatizing victims through cooperation with the court's Gender and Children Unit.<sup>7</sup> The ICC Code of Conduct guides the work of the OTP, which is also bound by the Rules of Procedure and Evidence.<sup>8</sup> With regard to relations between the ICC and its so-called intermediaries, a set of guidelines apply,<sup>9</sup> and the court also has a Code of Conduct for Intermediaries.<sup>10</sup> Importantly, other justice sites, in which such intermediaries often work, often have other more flexible rules and are at times also able to redirect their workforce faster and more flexibly than large

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7. Regulations of the Office of the Prosecutor 35(3), Doc. ICC-BD/05-01-09, 23 April 2009; see also Rome Statute, Art. 54(1)(b)

8. Code of Conduct for the Office of the Prosecutor, Doc. OTP2013/024322, 5 September 2013; Rules of Procedure and Evidence, Doc. ICC-PIDS-LT-02-002/13\_Eng, 2013.

9. Guidelines Governing the Relations between the Court and Intermediaries, 14 March 2014.

10. Code of Conduct for Intermediaries, March 2014.

bureaucracies, something that social labor performed in such sites can sometimes leverage to its advantage.

Other endogenous dynamics relate to the facilities available in sites of justice, including, for instance, access to online resources and software as well as physical equipment such as hardware, means of transportation, and so on. The unequal distribution of such goods is underlined by the fact that many digital tools developed in international criminal justice are rooted in, or financed by, global North sites of justice (Clarke and Kendall 2019; Tenove 2019; Richmond 2020; Vecellio Segate 2021; Sandvik and Lohne 2021). More generally, whereas digitization has created new ways of organizing social labor across borders, it seems to have also reproduced or even exacerbated divides between the global North and the global South (Kwet 2019; Norris 2020), something that is also tangible with regard to transnational crime control (Stambøl and Solhjell 2021). Such endogenous dynamics can be studied using ethnographic methods (Latour 2010), some of which have been deployed to understand work in and around the international criminal courts (Anders 2014; Campbell 2014; Eltringham 2013, 2014). Endogenous dynamics, which are different for each site of justice and structured partly by transversal dynamics, help give some sites the ability to affect others and thereby to exert power in the field of international criminal justice.

The exogenous dynamics of sites of justice are related mainly to how their physical embeddedness and proximity to different networks, facilities, or resources shape the social labor in them and its potential effects. In the immediate physical and social context of specific sites of justice, distinct resources are available—for instance, in terms of access to knowledge that is important for the site of justice and its relation to other sites. An example of the importance of the immediate physical context of sites of justice is the production of evidence as a resource for crafting criminal law cases. As mentioned in the introduction to this article, the production of solid evidence has been a constant challenge in international criminal justice (Baylis 2009; Combs 2010; Klamberg 2013) and is characterized by patterns of proximity and distance, which mean that evidence is often produced in transversal chains of collaboration that hinge on one part of the chain being able to physically access crime sites to collect *prima facie* evidence from the perpetrating structures or to mobilize witnesses and victims typically used as a crime base or linking evidence (Brown and Wiley 2020). In such chains, international criminal courts have often depended on so-called intermediaries (Haslam and Edmunds 2013; Ullrich 2016; De Silva 2017). Such intermediaries, in fact, are often folded into social labor in specific sites that help structure their role in producing evidence of value for international criminal courts or other justice sites.

An example from the eastern DRC shows how both endogenous and exogenous dynamics can shape the ability to produce evidence that can have potential transversal effects. The Women's Initiative for Gender Justice (WIGJ), which is headquartered in The Hague, has been active in this region and reports, more generally, of working with "6,000 grassroots partners, associates and members across multiple armed conflicts" (WIGJ 2019). In North and South Kivu, the WIGJ has contributed safe transit housing for women subject to abuse and worked on advocacy and capacity building in the form, for instance, of gender justice training; legal representation, mobile courts; as well as documentation and strategic accountability. As part of its presence in the eastern DRC, the WIGJ has worked with local NGOs—for instance, the Ligue pour la

Solidarité Congolaise and the Association des Femmes pour les Droits et le développement. On the basis of its presence on the ground, the WIGJ has pushed to include sexual violence in several charges on the basis of thirty-one eyewitness testimonies collected from Ituri province, but it failed to convince the OTP that evidence of sexual violence pointed to the existence of a systematic pattern of crimes (Chappell 2014, 181–88). Despite this effort being unsuccessful, it shows how sites of justice—in this case, the WIGJ—can use resources and the ability to devote social labor to building evidence, in cooperation with local partners that had access to local knowledge, to try to affect other sites of justice—in this case, the charges issued by the ICC.

Reaching for this form of influence, some NGOs have specialized in generating evidence that can be used for trials, something that forms an element of what has been referred to as “entrepreneurial” or “networked” justice (Burgis-Kasthala 2019; Tenove 2019). Often, this specialized role builds on the flexibility of these justice sites in terms of global mobility, a flexible workforce, and the ability to work across geography and jurisdictions, something that is often aided by their formal rules often not being as rigid as those of large judicial bureaucracies such as the ICC. For instance, evidence processed by the Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA), an atypical NGO staffed with former investigators registered in The Netherlands and funded mainly by European Union (EU) countries, supported the first atrocity crimes case against Syrian officials in the court in Koblenz, Germany (Koleva and Vigh 2021). This production of evidence relied on collaboration with individuals working within Syria who helped smuggle evidence out of the country, often at significant personal risk. This NGO has also built up the infrastructure, analytical competences, and networks that allow it to collect and systematize original, *prima facie* evidence of atrocity crimes and to share it with relevant authorities. In this case, the relevant authorities included the German Federal Criminal Police, which also hosts the Central Unit for the Fight against War Crimes. The trial was prosecuted by the Office of the German Federal Public Prosecutor, which handles war crime cases.

The CIJA example underlines how, in order to be able to produce solid evidence, sites of justice have to have the relevant resources—for instance, in relation to the working hours it can devote to specific tasks as well as the competences of professionals engaged in its social labor. To produce evidence, NGOs have to combine strong and endogenous facilities and capacities with the ability to enter into, and work in close proximity to, the setting in which crimes happened. They have to be able to devote social labor to working across jurisdictions and geography, enabling them to pass their evidence to other relevant sites of justice in ways that make it possible to prosecute. In the case of the CIJA, this ability was fortified by it being a private entity that does not have to deal with the same legal and bureaucratic requirements of large public bodies, something that has affected the transversal linkages of this NGO as it works across geography and jurisdictions.

Before moving to the conceptual analysis of such transversal practices and relations, it is important to note that neither endogenous nor exogenous dynamics are static but that they change over time. Exogenous dynamics, for instance, can develop depending on the intensity of international intervention in former conflict zones, something visible in the number of foreign sites of justice setting up shop in such areas. Substantial investments, often following large peace-building interventions, can lead to a growth of,

for instance, the NGO sector and of other institutions involved in organizing transitions to peace (Autesserre 2014), including gender justice (Lake 2018). This is visible in the administrative capital of North Kivu, Goma, where international intervention has affected the urban makeup of, and professional opportunities in, the city (Büscher and Vlassenroot 2010; Büscher 2016), something also visible, for instance, in Gulu in northern Uganda (Büscher, Komujuni, and Ashaba 2018; see also more generally Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel 2016) a post-conflict context where NGOs are also very active (Kirabira 2021). In a broader perspective, international interventions affect the resources that flow into local justice sites, at times funding their very foundation. An NGO working with international criminal justice in Goma, for instance, is likely to have a better chance of securing funding for international criminal justice work than one located elsewhere in the country.

In summary, sites of justice have endogenous characteristics linked to their rules, facilities, workflows, and resources. They also have exogenous dynamics linked to their location in a specific social and physical context that gives them access to specific resources and opportunities, including to the potential production of evidence and access to victims. Whereas the value of products produced by specific sites of justice for other sites is perhaps most obvious when it comes to the production of evidence of atrocity crimes or with regard to supporting victims of such crimes—something that might also set international criminal justice apart from other globalized fields—physical rootedness might affect sites of justice in other ways. For instance, being able to bump into international criminal justice colleagues from other sites of justice in one of the restaurants and bars on Anna Paulownaplein, a popular square in a relatively affluent part of The Hague, might be indicative of deeper advantages that help structure activities in NGOs, diplomatic missions, courts, and think tanks based in hubs in the global North. Many NGOs engaged in the field of international criminal justice have offices in the city and, as such, can observe and report on trials and arrange events in connection to the annual Assembly of State Parties to the ICC that takes place in The Hague and in New York. We know little about what practices this proximity allows sites of justice to develop or what forms of power this allows them to exert on the field more generally. We do know, however, that the sites of justice placed in The Hague often have the facilities and resources that allow them to build strong transversal lines of interaction that also have effects in the global South. The coordination of choices among justice sites located in The Hague, or, more tacitly, the ways in which proximity allows them to differentiate choices and practices from each other to be competitive for funding and attention, can lead to effects far beyond the city. This points to how the ability to affect the field of international criminal justice in many ways hinges on the endogenous and exogenous characteristics of the sites of justice—on what resources and workforces they can direct and on what access they have to specific networks—something that often favors sites in the global North but that also hinges on cooperation with and between global South sites.

## JUSTICE SITES IN AND ACROSS DIFFERENT FIELDS

Whereas the sites of justice framework borrows from human geography scholarship when underlining the importance of locality and localized social labor, the theoretical

anchoring around sites of justice also makes their transversal linkages intelligible. These transversal lines cut across jurisdiction, geography, and social spaces. This section focuses on the parallel embeddedness of sites of justice in different fields. As such, it focuses on the social side of the transversal dynamics of sites of justice. The social side of transversality, linked to the endogenous and exogenous dynamics analyzed above, is important because it helps structure how the labor performed in the sites of justice interprets and manages jurisdictional and geographic distance. To have effects in the field of international criminal justice, the social labor performed in sites of justice has to be able to transcend their locality to affect other sites of justice often rooted in other parts of the world. In such efforts, the social labor of the sites of justice is often affected by its double relations to both international criminal justice and other fields of practice that are at times folded into the sites themselves. Outside of international criminal justice, this perspective also allows for studies of the linkages and relations between sites of justice in this field and other “practice sites” that are typically embedded in other social spaces.

The linkages between sites of justice can be conceptualized with inspiration from Robert J. Sampson’s (2012, 61–62) analysis of different types of interaction between Chicago neighborhoods. Although used in a completely different context, Sampson underlines the importance of exchanges of resources and information between neighborhoods as well as elite networks that cut across them. Translated to the sites of justice framework, the circulation of elites, products of social labor, resources, and ideas between sites of justice link specific sites and can help lay bare the length and strength of transversal lines of interactions between them. These interactions can serve as a stepping-stone to analyzing the power of specific sites to determine what constitutes good international criminal justice and to investigating the power relations between such localities as well as their linkages to sites of practice in other fields.

In conceptualizing the fields in which justice sites are embedded, the framework is inspired by the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu conceives of a field as a social space characterized by the objective relations between the forces active in it (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 101). In the sites of justice framework, this conception is retooled to enable critical studies of how justice sites are engaged, in parallel, in the globalized field of international criminal justice and affected by power structures related to other globalized or national fields. In insisting on the importance of locality, the framework departs from most other studies inspired by Bourdieu. Whereas Bourdieu did analyze how physical space reflected social space in the national setting (Bourdieu 1980, 2018), the present framework reverses this perspective to study how locality and physical access to specific, locally rooted resources can be translated, under specific conditions, into social value in a globalized field. In other words, endogenous and exogenous dynamics help structure the potential power of social labor of justice sites, a power that is relational to the wider social spaces into which these sites are folded and that have their own structures and power dynamics.

A perspective that underlines how physical embeddedness can be used to have (or strive for) transversal effects is suggestive of how sites of justice are both engaged in international criminal justice and embedded in other, often national, fields that help structure the capacities and potentialities of these sites (both endogenous and exogenous). Distinct fields often exert different gravitational pulls on sites of justice. As such, to analyze the transversal practices and power relations between sites of justice, their



double relations to different fields must be made intelligible. For simplicity, this article uses the concept of double relations, although sites of justice can be folded into more than two social spaces. Whereas this double relational perspective perhaps does not lend itself as easily to using methods that quantify internal relations in specific fields of practice (Lebaron 2009), these relations can be studied, for instance, by employing anthropological methods to investigate individual sites of justice or, as in other Bourdieu-inspired sociology of international legal fields, using semi-structured, qualitative interviews to understand the transversal relations between them (Dezalay and Garth 2002).

Deploying the field concept to understand the diverse economies of power in which sites of justice are embedded brings the framework into conversation with other research on international law and relations inspired by Bourdieu. This scholarship has highlighted how the power relations that characterize such fields differ from the national spaces, although they are often populated by elites hailing from the state (Dezalay and Garth 1996; Cohen and Madsen 2007; Vauchez 2015). To make explicit differences between national and globalized fields, sociologists have highlighted the structural weakness of specific internationalized fields of law as they lack autonomy *vis-à-vis* the state (Vauchez 2011; Mudge and Vauchez 2012; Dezalay 2017). However, despite some focus on the differences and linkages between national and globalized fields, most scholarship has focused on how the latter developed after the end of the Cold War, although some scholars have also tied developments of such spaces directly to dynamics visible in national fields of practice (Madsen 2010; Cohen 2012).

Generally, however, this research has contributed less knowledge about how locality has social effects and about the double relational positionality of sites in different fields. Developing a terminology that can capture both locality and transversality as shaped by double relations to different fields gives the sites of justice framework the potential to contribute to Bourdieu-inspired scholarship as well as to other research focused on the meeting between different legal, political, and social spheres. Most notably, the sites of justice framework can be used to critically study how these entities come into contact with and are linked to what can be conceptualized as other “sites of practice,” which are understood here as localities situated in other social spaces in which organized, social labor takes place that is not routinely invested in international criminal justice. In cases where such localities are engaged in social labor targeting other forms of (global) injustice, they can be conceptualized as sites of justice active in other fields of law and governance. As such, the double relational perspective makes the wider linkages between fields concretely analyzable in the social labor performed in specific sites within them as well as in the transversal relations between such localities. As such, the framework can be used to contribute to scholarship on the linkages and overlaps between fields as they occur in and between specific sites (Evans and Kay 2008; Medvetz 2008; Eyal 2013; Liu 2021).

Overlaps between fields can perforate the inside of sites of justice and are at times visible in their divisions of labor. As such, in addition to the way in which sites of justice are affected by both endogenous and exogenous dynamics in their physically rooted functionality and capacity, they are also affected by the linkages to different social spaces that help structure the social labor in them. For instance, some of the defense

counsel that work with international criminal justice cases are part of larger law firms that have a wider specialization. To give a prominent example, lawyers from London-based chambers—Doughty Street Chambers—have been involved in several high-profile cases in international criminal justice. The cofounder of Doughty Street, Geoffrey Robertsen, QC, for instance, has argued cases before the ICTY and served as an appeals judge in the SCSL, but he has also been involved in many other human rights cases before regional and national courts. Collectively, members of the Doughty Street Chambers have appeared before most, if not all, international criminal courts and have also argued both war crimes cases and other human rights claims in national jurisdictions. Their team includes well-known names in international criminal justice and human rights litigation more generally, including Amal Clooney, John R. W. D. Jones, and Wayne Jordash. This raises important questions about the role and value of international criminal justice in a larger human rights and justice market. Studying how sites engaged in different fields of law and justice prioritize social labor, or how different social groups may push for a specific focus of the workforce in specific sites of justice, can yield important findings on the position and perceived value of international criminal justice as one field of justice among many.

Something similar, although subject to different divisions of labor, can be identified in the practices of NGO and academic sites of justice that are also often engaged in different fields. Since the 1990s, human rights NGOs generally have recalibrated human rights norms and practices to include international criminal justice (Engle 2014, 2016; Lohne 2019) as a form of “penal humanitarianism” (Lohne 2018). This general change of direction has also affected divisions of labour within NGOs between groups working on human rights projects, often not organized around punitive norms, and those engaged with international criminal justice. The practices and ideals of distinct practices can pull sites in different directions, something that is often evident in former conflict zones where international criminal justice and other peace and reconciliation efforts coexist. The contest between different ideals and practices can have substantial consequences, and scholarship has pointed to tension between international criminal law interventions as they potentially undermine human rights, monopolizing justice efforts and pushing out other rights and justice claims (Branch 2011; Nouwen and Werner 2014; Engle, Miller, and Davis 2016).

Outside of being visible inside the sites themselves, when producing international criminal justice, the sites of justice engage with each other as embedded in different social fields. Transversal relations with relevance for international criminal justice play out between the sites of justice as well as between these localities and sites of practice embedded in other fields. With regard to the linkages between sites of justice within this field, the discussed example of generating evidence shows how transversal chains of interactions shape activity in the field and can be leveraged to have influence. Outside of the production of evidence, a multitude of other structural relations, linkages, and lines of interaction format developments in international criminal justice. For instance, social labor in the ICC’s field offices often depends on establishing good relations with national and local leaders, representing political, religious, and other societal lines of division. To build such relations and to ensure reception of its work in core constituencies, the ICC has diverted significant resources toward outreach to local

citizens close to former theaters of conflict, often in close cooperation with sites of justice located in close proximity to sites of crime (J. Clark 2009; Bens 2020).

At the borders to the field of international criminal justice, transversal practices that cut across fields are at times also organized around networks that coordinate information and share knowledge. For instance, national war crimes units have used the Genocide Network, linked to social labor in the EU's judicial cooperation organization, Eurojust, to share knowledge and coordinate efforts. However, when returning home to their national context, these professionals have to build and try war crimes cases in institutional contexts that at times see the transversal practices necessary to establish solid evidence as problematic and, essentially, not very productive in the eyes of the wider bureaucracy (Christensen 2018). Whereas such transversal linkages worked in the Koblenz case where specialized justice sites were involved, sites of practice in other criminal justice systems may be less focused on building and bringing to court complex war crimes cases that have not taken place in their own jurisdiction. In such situations, there may be significant differences between how sites of practice in national fields of power and justice deal with international criminal justice.

The effects of national fields of law and politics on sites of justice have sometimes been highly controversial. Recently, for instance, new government policies have contributed pressure on the NGO sector in Uganda (Biryabarema 2021), something also seen in other parts of the world (Chaudhry 2022). Following the justice sites framework, this example shows that the potentials and opportunities of specific sites of justice are structured by the national field of power in which specific policies are implemented through distinct sites of practice—for instance, ministries and government offices. This can relate to the form of government in particular countries and the freedoms that it allows private citizens and organizations as well as to more bureaucratic preferences in national criminal justice systems. In national fields of power, agents working in sites of practice do not necessarily see eye to eye with agents engaged in social labor with international criminal justice. At times, such sites of practice can even be seen by agents in justice sites as working for injustice.

Whether this is the case or not, at least it is clear that other political and legal sites have at times had divergent perspectives on how to respond to legal requests from sites of international criminal justice. Divergent perspectives between national political and legal sites of practice have shaped controversial developments. This was the case, for instance, with regard to the ICC's arrest warrant for the president of Sudan, Omar Al-Bashir, that was especially controversial during his 2015 visit to South Africa (Tladi 2015; Ssenyonjo 2018). An emergency order was issued by a Pretoria High Court, but Al-Bashir was ushered out of the country, something that was later criticized by NGOs in the national context and by international lawyers as well as in an ICC decision on the non-compliance of South Africa.<sup>11</sup> In this context, the High Court can be seen as a site of practice that does not routinely work with international criminal justice but was activated through jurisdictional rules as well as massive pressure from

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11. ICC, Decision under Article 87(7) of the Rome Statute on the Non-compliance by South Africa with the Request by the Court for the Arrest and Surrender of Omar Al-Bashir, Doc. ICC-02/05-01/09-309, 11 December 2017.

civil society sites of justice. This pressure, however, did not seem to affect decision making at the political level.

Being folded into different fields affects social labor performed in sites of justice as well as the transversal practices that affect and tie them together. The ability of a site of justice to start or coordinate chains of social labor that cut across jurisdictional, geographic, and social space depends partly on its endogenous and exogenous dynamics and partly on their parallel embeddedness in different social spaces. As such, critical and empirically informed studies of the transversal practices and relations that make or break international criminal justice have to be able to investigate how they are affected by the double relations that are visible inside sites of justice and in their linkages to other sites that are situated in different social fields. This poses challenges for research—its methods and data—but holds significant promise in terms of contributing a better understanding of how international criminal justice works in and through justice sites and how social labor in these entities is related to other sites of practice that help structure their work and potential effects.

## CONCLUSION

Social labor that is engaged with the production and development of international criminal justice is a collaborative and competitive endeavor. Multiple agents across the globe work to create justice for victims and prosecute perpetrators of atrocity crimes. Organized in specific justice sites, the labor of these agents targets having effects in and outside the field of international criminal justice. The ability of labor performed in specific sites of justice to have an effect is structured partly by the locality of these sites—conceptualized in this article as endogenous and exogenous dynamics—and partly by their double relations to the field of international criminal justice as well as to other globalized or national fields. This local and double relational embeddedness helps structure the broader transversal relations between the sites of justice, including how they are able to work and to have an effect across jurisdictions and geographical distance. Organized around these core concepts, the sites of justice framework was designed to enable critical and empirically informed studies of the local and transversal conditions that shape social labor with international criminal justice and how it structures its broader effects.

Besides contributing a new conceptual framework, the concepts built around the sites of justice open new questions about the field of international criminal justice, how it works, and the effects that it has. Seen from outside of the justice sites framework, some of these questions relate to larger political or even philosophical debates about justice or to more normative questions on how legal or political action can and should support (or stifle) strong sites of justice. However, seen from within this framework, such debates can also be made the object of social scientific study as social labor in different justice sites competes to define the normative parameters of this field, what it is supposed to do, and how it relates to social labor in sites of practice that are active in other fields. In other words, collaboration and competition between sites of justice also take place at the symbolic level—for instance, as agents engaged in social labor within them legitimize specific practices using conceptual frames that are either orthodox or

heterodox in this field or at the borderlines between fields. In addition, in the process of trying to affect the field according to their perspectives, agents in these sites of justice are often also at the frontlines of public debates about atrocity crime justice. As such, the contest to define international criminal justice can spill over into public and political perceptions of atrocity crimes justice that also impact the relations between sites of justice and other sites of practice, including the funding of, and support for, efforts to end these crimes and contribute justice to its victims.

Focusing on how cooperation and competition to define international criminal justice plays out across locality and transversal power relations, the developed framework can be used as conceptual support for critical scholarship that goes beyond court- and Euro-centric perspectives. Such research could, for instance, focus on how sites of justice in the global South are engaged in international criminal justice, how this engagement is characterized by their locality, how they are folded into distinct global and national fields, and how these dynamics structure their transversal potentialities and ability to affect the materiality and symbolism of atrocity crime justice. In this context, studies could also investigate how the power relations between justice sites, as well as their relations to other sites of practice, transform over time. Whereas the power relations of these sites, visible in their cooperation and competition, hold part of the structural key to their own transformations, over time these relations may also be affected by larger, at times global, disruptions such as wars (including on drugs and terror), financial crises, natural disasters, and pandemics.

The double relations of sites of international criminal justice—visible in their divisions of labor and linkages to other fields—also open avenues for more heuristic uses of the developed framework. Whereas some dynamics of international criminal justice, such as the necessity of generating evidence through transversal chains of cooperation, might be specific to this field, the sites of justice framework can be used to study conditions of social labor in, and power relations between, localities that work with other, sometimes linked, types of justice. This could include sites of justice working with human rights or a variety of other forms of justice. Sites engaged with other forms of justice will likely have distinct local and transversal dynamics that format their potential cooperation and competition as well as their relations to localities engaged with other forms of social labor. Across different justice efforts and fields, such transversal relations crisscross the globe to form a virtual constellation of justice sites that are both linked and differentiated. This constellation of different justice sites, created by the relations between them as well as their linkages to other sites of practice that cut across jurisdictions, geographic contexts, and distinct social fields, structures if and how responses to injustice have, and are perceived to have, societal effects.

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