

## **Beyond social cohesion: Global repertoires of living together – RePLITO**

In light of increased global interdependencies, *Beyond social cohesion: Global repertoires of living together (RePLITO)* takes neglected repertoires of living together as its starting point to rethink social cohesion from a transregional perspective. The project unites scholars with solid backgrounds in bridging different disciplines and epistemologies in teaching, research and international cooperation. By joining our expertise in the Middle East, Europe, Southern and East Africa, Central, Europe, South and Southeast Asia as well as Latin America, we engage in comparative and interdisciplinary research across these regions.

We deliberately use the term “living together” as an avenue to go European molded knowledge archives. Repertoires of living together serve as our conceptual starting point to explore how social actors or movements imagine and practice communal life and create bonds especially in politically and conceptually neglected regions of the Global South and within Europe’s margins. In revisiting social cohesion, we pursue three principle aims: to critically research social cohesion as a specific and powerful repertoire developed first in the advent of modern nation states for dealing with cultural, religious and social diversity, to systematically study and compare a variety of alternative repertoires of living together developed in different world regions, to explore interconnections and interdependencies present in the development of these different regional repertoires of living together.

Repertoires of living together can include: i) discourses of coexistence as inscribed in intellectual and theoretical reflections and represented in popular culture, art and literature; ii) institutions and norms developed for (self-)governing living together in and with inequalities and differences; iii) social practices, observed in everyday life and within institutions. Although we start from different localities and regions, we understand repertoires of living together as relational rather than geographical units of analysis. These repertoires have been constituted and continue to be negotiated and transformed in the context of dynamic interactions beyond localities, nation-states and regions.

Our project builds on comprehensive analytical and political responses to the challenges of living together, based on a multiplicity of approaches and knowledge traditions. We revisit histories and historical narratives of premodern societies in South Asia and the Middle East that were marked by a distinctive absence of majority/minority divisions. We examine emerging concepts and alternative discourses that critically engage with secular regimes of social cohesion in different regions. We investigate how ideas of living together are reconsidered and negotiated in post-conflict societies. We address popular and academic debates on multiple meanings of living together and on personhood in Latin America and Southern and East Africa (conviviality, buen vivir, ubuntu, utu).

In collaboration with Off-University RePLITO creates a dynamic and interactive digital archive that brings together and conceptualizes multiple repertoires of living together. This digital resource combines the functions of a knowledge archive of *Global Repertoires of Living Together* (digital library, an open-access publication series, and podcasts of public lectures) with a platform for collaborative teaching and research-oriented learning for researchers and students based in multiple locations and regions. Our aim is make available repertoires of knowledge and practices of living together that have so far not been accounted for, either because they were not institutionalized or because they did not count as “proper knowledge”.

Above all, RePLITO aims at problematizing and overcoming institutionalized divides between area studies and so-called systematic disciplines, by establishing long term collaborative research on a subject of acute academic and political relevance on a global scale. Area studies repertoires, we contend, should serve as both, sites of generalization and theory building as well as a strategic place to decenter the conceptual apparatuses of knowledge orders. Such global perspectives on social cohesion are even more urgently needed in light of increasing tendencies to restore and push national boundaries through exclusive hegemonic politics or enhanced border regimes, as to be witnessed in today's Covid-19 crisis.