Prevention and accountability

This theme correlates with the understanding of rights as principal tools for restraining the proclivities of the states to abuse and oppress their citizens, and for exposing and interdicting actual state policies and conduct that are manifestly oppressive. Projects inspired by this concern have sought to identify the primary obstacles (legal, political, social, economic and technological) to advancing human rights, and how they can be overcome. Research questions include:

● How does the interplay of international, national, regional, and interest-based institutions prevent human rights abuses?

● What are the tensions between foreign policy and human rights considerations?

● What are the conditions for improving state accountability in the contemporary world?

● How can the international community improve accountability for violations of particularly heinous crimes, such as genocide, torture, and crimes against humanity?

● Are regional and sub-regional institutions better placed to protect rights, build peace, maintain security and enforce state responsibility? Are they more legitimate or effective than international institutions and foreign actors? What do ideas and categories of “governance,” “democracy,” “citizenship,” “law,” and “human rights” mean in local contexts? Are other local categories more relevant? How do historical and local understandings help this inquiry?