What philosophers can contribute to the transformative processes in the aftermath of the Arab Spring (in particular with regard to Egypt and Tunisia) is to address the central transitional problems with the methods of moral, political and transcultural philosophy. The revolutionary movements were guided by normative ideas such as the determination and realization of human rights, the strengthening of toleration and the establishment of justice within a democratic order. Closely related to these ideas are questions about the formation of identities, historical justice and cultural cohesion. The complex structure of these ideas suggests an outreach to neighboring disciplines.

Thematic Focus
The planned conference on the conception of justice is motivated by the concern that constitutional assurance of political and religious freedom will not be sufficient for stabilizing the transitional process. In addition the political order is in need of a prospering economic order which reaches all groups of citizens and will be experienced as sufficiently just. What is needed here is the construction of a conception of justice which could be accepted as a common judging standard. With regard to the particular problems of transitional states, there are at least three aspects to consider.

1. Transitional Justice and Reparation
'Transitional Justice' refers to problems of the post-revolutionary passage towards a stable order of justice. The crucial question is how we may achieve national reconciliation by balancing punishment, compensation and amnesty. In dealing with previous injustices we generally refer to two competing conceptions of justice. 
- In a retrospective-retaliatory sense, justice requires to punish those who have done wrong. But do we have to consider only those wrongs which were unjust according to the old law or do we have to punish wrongs which were indeed allowed or even required by the previous regime? Clearly we need good reasons if we were to bypass the general rule against retroactive punishment. This raises the question what kind of violations of personal integrity could justify a suspension of this rule.
- On the other side, the teleological conception of justice focuses on those measures which are necessary for achieving a lawful peace. From this perspective, the abandonment of punishment might be justified even in cases of serious crimes as a necessary mean to stability and peace.

We will discuss how both conceptions might be combined and how an acceptable solution might look like. What kind of injustices might be tolerated for the sake of a peaceful transition to a democratic rule of law? Against the backdrop of this solution we can then determine the degree to which acts of reconciliation are reasonable and required. In addition we will have to clarify the role and rationale of material compensation.

2. Domestic Distributive Justice

The definition of the national reform goal deals also with retrospective and prospective aspects.

On the one hand we have to discuss the conditions under which the ownership structure, though set up under the previous regime, remains acceptable and in what cases correction is allowed or even required. Which forms and consequences of nepotistic benefits are tolerable and which are not?

With the establishment of democratic control over distributive policies arises also the question of a just distribution of the country's resources. The Tunisian and the Egyptian constitutions provide the referential texts for this discussion. However, we have to answer some basic questions on distributive justice also independent from this constitutional foundation: Which differences in wages and which relation between earned and capital income are just? How are, in attempting to alleviate poverty, economic progress and equality to be weighed against each other? In answering these questions we have to develop a moral and juridical framework for a just economic order. This relates not only to material resources, but to all kind of goods which are defined by the economic order. Crucial questions concern the access to the job market and the social security system (health insurance, pensions, etc.). According to both of the competing models two questions will be central:

- How is the framework for a morally acceptable solution to be constructed?
- Which participatory and decision making procedures are to be implemented from the point of view of an acceptable conception of justice? Are, for instance, parliamentary forms of representation sufficient or should they be accompanied by a special form of economic democracy?

3. International Justice
Dealing with problems of domestic justice it will become clear that the national scope for reforms is constrained by supranational norms (GATT, WTO, the global capital market, etc.). Hence, the hope for justice of the Arabic youth also concerns the reorganization of global institutions and regulations. Demands of global justice will be addressed to those states which dominate the global order. Here too, the construction of a reciprocally acceptable standard for justifying mutual demands seems inevitable.

And here too, these problems have a retrospective aspect: How much are governments of transitional states bound to international contracts signed by the illegitimate previous government and to what extent are international partners entitled to insist of the fulfillment of previously fixed contracts (with regard to credits, natural resources, etc.)? Are new governments entitled to demand the restitution of capital which has been brought out of the country by the old regime? And since these regimes were partly installed by former colonial powers we will also study the special historical responsibility of these powers and discuss legitimate ways of breaking post-colonial structures.

Thematic focuses

- The debate about transitional justice in transitional states
- Domestic distributive justice and problems of poverty and development
- Global justice: Injustice, just reforms and responsibility
- Justice and pluralism: a plurality of conceptions of justice or one multicultural conception?
- Justice between law, morality and religion

Important information

- The presentation of the papers is limited to 30 minutes.
- Every paper will be commented by another participant (5-10 minutes).
- The planned time for discussion is limited to 30 minutes.
- The papers have to be submitted no later than September 15th 2014 by email to the following address: dhouib@uni-kassel.de or sarhan2001th@yahoo.fr
- Every speaker has to hand out 40 copies of his paper.