

8th African Association for the Study of Religions Conference in Africa

*Revisiting Religion, Politics, and the State in
Africa and the African Diaspora*

The University of Zambia and Justo Mwale University
Lusaka, Zambia

1-4 August 2018

The African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR) invites proposals for individual papers, panels, roundtables, and poster presentations for its biennial conference to be held at the Justo Mwale University, Lusaka, Zambia, from 1-4 August 2018.

See the AASR website for more information: <http://www.a-asr.org/meetings/>



CALL FOR PAPERS

Globally, there is recognition of tensions arising out of increased levels of inequality, anxieties about migration, citizenship, and belonging, and the concomitant democratic recession. The reality of and consequences of inequity and democratic backsliding has gained momentum in Africa as well. The 'Africa Rising' euphoria has waned because economic growth has eluded large sections of society, depriving Africans of peace and security, and resulting in a fertile ground for political instability and leadership crises. Poverty and inequality are linked to the human rights and development debate, in the wake of exclusionary political practices, which have dispossessed citizens of the rights to equal participation in negotiating the social, economic, political, and cultural realities of their communities. Religious leaders, generally still regarded as the most trusted leaders in society, are under pressure to respond to this evolving situation. It is within this context, that the AASR seeks to revisit the relationship between religion(s), politics, and (non)state actors in Africa and the African Diaspora, to improve our understanding of how various actors and institutions are responding to the current challenges, and envisage their role in the future.

The conference invites panel and paper proposals that address this theme and related issues, taking into consideration the specific contexts of Africa and the African diaspora. Papers that engage any of the following and related issues are invited for presentation at this conference:

- Methodological and Theoretical Perspectives
 - Media and religion
 - Religion, law, and human rights
 - Political implications of academic research
 - Methods for researching African states and political actors
- Religion and Politics
 - Comparative studies of religion and states in Africa
 - Poiliticization of religion and religionization of politics
 - Religion in quest and exercise of power
 - Religion and solutions to political crises
- Religion and Society
 - Secular constitutions and/in religious nations
 - Society and religious pluralism
 - Religion for education in African States
 - Social responsibility
- Social Cohesion: Religion, Citizenship, Identity, and Nationalism
 - Gender and leadership
 - The politics of sexuality
 - Internal migrations and refugees in Africa
 - Religion and Xenophobia
 - Citizenship and land
 - Citizenship and difference
 - Religious nations

Religion, Violence, Security, and Peacebuilding
Religion and radicalization
Religion and solutions to security and peace
Religion and Sustainable Development
Their role and impact of the African on the State(s) in Africa
African politico-economies and religious landscapes
Diaspora in the context of:
Retentions and transformations in the Atlantic World
International and Mediterranean immigration
Religious Ministries in the Diaspora

Proposal Submissions:

- Please use the proposal form available on the AASR website: <http://www.a-asr.org/meetings/>
- Abstracts should not exceed three hundred (300) words.
- Authors should ensure that abstracts reflect the title of their paper(s).
- Author's contact details (name, institutional affiliation, email address, and phone number) must also be provided.
- All proposals should be emailed to: aasrzambia@gmail.com
- The deadline for abstracts is **31 January 2018**.

Prospective participants in this conference will be registered as a participant only after they have joined AASR by paying the AASR membership dues for 2018, and after they have paid the registration fee. Its amount, and how it may be paid, will be announced later.

To join the AASR and/or to pay for AASR annual dues, see: <http://www.a-asr.org/membership/>

For further enquiries, please contact:

- Dr. Marja Hinfelaar: marja.hinfelaar@gmail.com
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KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Muna B. Ndulo

Professor of Law; Elizabeth and Arthur Reich Director, Leo and Arvilla Berger International Legal Studies Program; Director of the Institute for African Development, Cornell University.

PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY

Muna Ndulo is an internationally recognized scholar in the fields of constitution making, governance and institution building, international criminal law, African legal systems, human rights, and international law and foreign direct investments. He has published 19 books, 29 book chapters and over 100 articles in academic journals. He is Honorary Professor of Law, Faculty of Law, University of Cape Town, Extraordinary Professor of Law, University of the Free State South Africa, Extraordinary Professor of Law, University of the Western Cape, South Africa, and was formerly Professor of Law and Dean of the School of Law at the University of Zambia. He has been an arbitrator under International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

Professor Ndulo has served as a Legal Officer in the International Trade Law Branch of the United



Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), Political and Legal Adviser with the United Nations Mission Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) and to the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General to South Africa, Legal Adviser to the United Nations Assistance Mission to EAST Timor (UNAMET), Legal Expert to the United Nations Mission to Kosovo (UNAMIK), and Legal Expert to the United Nations Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA).

He has acted as consultant to the African Development Bank (ADB), World Bank, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), National Democratic Institute (NDI) United Sates Institute for Peace (USIP) and International Development Law Organization (IDLO). He has also acted as consultant to the Kenya 2010 Constitutional Process, Zimbabwe Constitutional Process, Somalia, and Sudan.

Professor Ndulo is founder of the Southern African Institute for Public Policy and Research (SAIPAR) and member of its Board of Directors. He is also a member of the Board of the African Association of International Law, the Advisory Committee of Human Rights Watch Africa, and he formerly served as Chairperson for Gender Links, a South African NGO.

PLENARY SPEAKERS

Gerrie ter Haar

Gerrie is emeritus professor of Religion and Development at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University, Rotterdam. A scholar of religion specialising in the religious traditions of Africa and the African diaspora, she has authored or edited more than twenty books, including translations into French, Italian, Spanish and Japanese. She is currently co-editor of the book series *Religion in Modern Africa* (Ashgate). She has published in a wide range of academic and professional journals and has served on various editorial boards. Apart from specific themes in African religions, her publications reflect her main research interests over the years: development, human rights, conflict and peace, religion and politics, religion and migration.



Gerrie ter Haar has held many international positions, including as Vice-President of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR). In 2005 she was the Academic Programme Director of the XIXth IAHR World Congress in Tokyo. She is also a founding member of the African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR). Gerrie has a wide experience of media work, both national and international, and continues to participate in public debates on issues concerning the role of religion in contemporary society. She has been a consultant to international bodies and been active in formulating policy advice for several government bodies and international organisations. In her previous career Gerrie worked at Utrecht University and for the Dutch section of Amnesty International, from where she retains a strong interest in human rights.

Erin Wilson

Dr. Erin K. Wilson is Director of the Centre for Religion, Conflict and the Public Domain and Associate Professor of Religion and Politics, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen, The Netherlands. Her research is positioned at the intersection of religious studies and International Relations, with particular interest in the impact of secular worldviews in areas of global justice, human rights, forced migration, development and gender, and the development of alternative theoretical frames beyond 'religious' and 'secular'. Her books include *The Refugee Crisis and Religion: Secularism, Security and Hospitality in Question* (co-edited with Luca Mavelli, Rowman and Littlefield International 2016), *After Secularism: Rethinking Religion in Global Politics* (Palgrave 2012), and *Justice Globalism: Ideology, Crisis, Policy* (with Manfred B. Steger and James Goodman, Sage 2013). She has co-edited *The religious as political and the political as religious: the blurring of sacred and secular in contemporary International Relations* (Special Issue of *Politics Religion Ideology*), and her articles have appeared in *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *Globalizations*, *Politics Religion Ideology* and *Global Society*.



SPECIAL SESSION FOR STUDENTS & EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS

ACADEMIC JOBS, GRANTS, AND PUBLISHING

Led by **Prof. Afe Adogame**, the Maxwell M. Upson Professor of Christianity and Society at Princeton Theological Seminary, USA.

Afe is a leading scholar of the African Diaspora. He holds a PhD in history of religions from the University of Bayreuth in Germany and has served as Associate Professor of World Christianity and Religious Studies, and Director International at the School of Divinity, New College, at The University of Edinburgh in Scotland. His teaching and research interests are broad, but tend to focus on interrogating new dynamics of religious experiences and expressions in Africa and the African Diaspora, with a particular focus on African Christianities and new indigenous religious movements; the interconnectedness between religion and migration, globalization, politics, economy, media and the civil society.



ABOUT THE AASR

The African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR) is an academic association that promotes the study of religions in Africa through international collaboration in research, publishing, and teaching. AASR was founded in 1992 in Harare, Zimbabwe at a Regional Conference of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR). The AASR has been an affiliate organization of the IAHR since 1995. In particular, the AASR aims to stimulate the academic study of religions in Africa in the following ways:

- By providing a forum for multilateral communications between scholars of African religions
- By facilitating the exchange of resources and information
- By encouraging international collaboration in research between scholars and institutions in Africa and those outside the continent
- By developing publishing opportunities particularly for scholars based in Africa
- By establishing a travel fund to enable scholars to attend academic conferences
- By organising conferences in Africa and panels on the religions of Africa
- By establishing a newsletter and website to increase communication between scholars of African religions
- By creating a directory of scholars in the field of African religions