



afriBIAN

Africa-Bayreuth International Alumni Network

announces the symposium

AFRICAN MYTHS, SPIRITUALITIES AND FAITHS IN TIMES OF GLOBALIZATION

23rd to 28th October 2023

Moi University

Eldoret, Kenya

as part of the conference series

Rolling Religion on the African Map
Beliefs, Practices and Contentions in Times of Transition



AFRICAN MYTHS, SPIRITUALITIES AND FAITHS IN TIMES OF GLOBALIZATION

Call for Applications

The Africa-Bayreuth International Alumni Network (afriBIAN) announces its series of four conferences on Religion in Africa which will be followed by an academic publication.

This programme is supported by the DAAD and funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Foreign Office (AA) in the framework of a collaboration merging the University of Bayreuth and four African higher education institutions: University of Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah, Fes-Sais, Morocco; University of Jos, Nigeria; Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar, Senegal; and Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya.

Alumni who did their PhD or EIMAS studies at the University of Bayreuth and who have been working on Africa-related topics in all academic disciplines are welcome to send their applications for our next event in Eldoret. The symposium “African Myths, Spiritualities and Faiths in Times of Globalization” will be held at Moi University in Eldoret on 24th and 25th October 2023. This conference includes a field trip and will be followed by an alumni workshop, where the future of the afriBIAN network will be discussed. The participants will explore the western parts of Kenya by bus and visit the home universities of several Bayreuth alumni on the way to and from Eldoret.

We would like to capture the exact position of religion in the public domain, knowing that religion both in North and Sub-Saharan Africa is always on the move, influenced by the rise and fall of big theories and social organizations (i.e. socialism, (neo)liberalism), as well as the proliferation of forms of activism and social movements across geographies that make the concept all the more fluid. In the course of such debates, we encourage questions around the existing tensions comprising categories like South and North, West and East, Self and Other, while shedding light on current inter- and intra-faith dynamics in the continent.

How Muslims and Christians situate themselves in relation to one another, and in relation to other (non) religious groups is key in understanding identity politics in many African countries. It is interesting to see how identity concerns are expounded in media, urban spaces, literary writings, cinema, political discourse, and social action. In so doing, we will study how religion is individualized, collectivized, institutionalized, historicized, politicized, poeticized, intellectualized, commoditized, museumified, and beyond. Equally important, we aim to understand through the four portions of this trans-intellectual intake (also involving artistic performances, exhibitions, audiovisual display) the changing interpretations of concepts like divinity, faith, sacredness, and morality and how they get influenced by trans-border movements, artistic performances, media discussions, socio-political mobility. It is important to see how these concepts adapt to the recent and most urgent transformations taking place at home and away, perpetually configured by the immediate intervention of settings like the mosque or church, university, family, and the internet.



This conference invites applications from all academic disciplines to explore topics that deal with – but that are not restricted to – research projects analysing religion and secularism, local and translocal religious flows and influences, religious fundamentalism, religion and youth, religion and the future between utopia and apocalypse, ethno-religious struggle, minorities and religious discourses, religion and art/literature, religion and myth, positing them all in the crossroads of the broader thematic trajectories of religions and transition, reform and faith, socio-political activism, memory and nation, the (un)holy, nation and security, identity and human rights. How religion mobilizes youth cultures, emotions, collective perceptions of the future, gender relations, political schemes, state building mechanisms, nation politics, inter-faith dialogues, social conflicts, media propaganda, racial debates is worth examining. What are the emerging gods and goddesses of the modern era, in figurative and literal sense? Who are its new messengers, profane or sacred? What miracles are in play today? Do power icons, as they operate between guidance and godliness, offer any salvation to today's problems? How does faith lead to ruptures in modern history? Has faith any effect on modern environmental campaigns? What are the spaces of faith today compared to classical sites of prayer? Is there any space in religion for comedy?

Please send your abstract (max. 400 words), your CV and a copy of your passport to afriBIAN@uni-bayreuth.de.

Deadline: **10th September 2023**

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