

## **ECAS 2015 European Conference on African Studies Paris, 8-10 July 2015**

Following on Lisbon in 2013, the Sixth European Conference on African Studies (ECAS-6) will take place in Paris 8-10 July 2015 at the Sorbonne. The co-organisers are IMAF (Institut des mondes africains) and LAM (*Les Afriques dans le monde*).

The principal theme of ECAS 6, outlined below, is Collective Mobilisations in Africa: Contestation, Resistance, Revolt. This theme, however, is not exclusive. The scientific committee will also consider panel proposals on other themes, associated with emergent and more classical fields of study alike.

The ECAS 6 website will go live on 23 June 2014: <http://www.ecas2015.fr>. Panel proposals will be accepted, via the site, **from 23 June to 23 July 2014**. The ECAS 6 team looks forward to welcoming you in Paris.

### THEME

#### COLLECTIVE MOBILISATIONS IN AFRICA: CONTESTATION, RESISTANCE, REVOLT

The historic turn embodied by the Arab “revolutions”, whose repercussions are felt throughout the Sahel; anger, expressed in a range of ways, at the rising cost of living; mobilisations around issues of citizenship; manifold forms of religious revival: all seem to attest to a profound political reconfiguration underway across Africa. These and associated forms of contestation have pushed new actors to the front of the stage, at the crossroads of local and global dynamics. To fully appreciate the complexity of these developments, we must consider longer-term histories of uprising, stand-taking and engagement on the continent, casting a renewed gaze on jihads, slave uprisings, mass conversions and dynastic conflicts. Too, we must reflect in novel ways on the social trajectories of actors involved in present-day contestations and on the responses that the latter elicit from those in power. This in turn should bring us to pay close attention to repertoires of collective action, to modes of transgression and subversion, to takes on activism, and to ways in which all of these intersect with social, generational and gender statuses. In many settings, associations, religious groups and trade unions, all of which play a central part in the articulation of “civil society” – a concept whose pertinence as an analytical category is open to debate – function as mediators and manifest as forms of counter-power. In this capacity, however, they commonly entertain ambiguous relations with the powers that be. It remains to be seen whether political parties, beyond strategies they deploy to capture power and given their oft-observed role as clientelistic electoral reserves, can viably counter established authority. In parallel, attention needs to be focused on the increasing visibility of human rights associations, advocacy groups and related, cause-driven organisations seeking to position themselves as watchdogs of state action. Also requiring particular attention are international and transnational logics, notably of professionalisation, to which many emergent modes of collective action are intimately linked. To understand mobilisation processes, a focus on violence is required as well; the proliferation of militias, their modes of socialisation and politicisation, and the shift to armed protest that their action frequently entails require close scrutiny. The same is true of religious movements, new prophetic teachings, moralisation campaigns, processes of evangelisation and re-Islamisation, and the boom in faith-based NGOs, all of which play a key role in the construction of social imaginaries. Such imaginaries must be considered too in light of less explicitly political mobilisations. This is so, notably, in the realm of urban cultures or, more generally, of artistic and cultural expression. Here, rituals of inversion and rebellion, carnivals, music (Hip-Hop and Kuduro, to cite but two examples), literature, theatre and performance are of particular relevance.

### Call for panels

#### **The call for panels closes 23 July 2014 – 8pm.**

All panel proposals must be made via the online form. On the form, you will be asked to provide your first and last names and institutional affiliation, the title of your panel and an abstract of no more than 1500 characters (spaces included).

As AEGIS is a tri-lingual organisation, the organising committee would be grateful if panel titles and abstracts could be submitted in two languages – English and one of AEGIS’ other two working languages: French or Portuguese.

To facilitate the work of the scientific committee, when submitting a panel proposal, conveners are asked to identify the disciplinary field(s) that best describe(s) the panel’s subject matter. All panels will last an hour and a half and will include a maximum of 4-5 participants, including the panel convener or discussant.

On submission of the proposal, the proposing convenor will receive an automated email confirming receipt.

The list of accepted panels will be posted to the website in mid-September 2014.

ECAS requires all accepted panels to be open to paper proposals through the website: panels should not be organised as 'closed' sessions.

Delegates may only give one paper. They may, however, also convene one plenary session, panel, or roundtable, or be a discussant in one plenary session, panel, or roundtable.

### **ECAS conferences**

#### **AEGIS organises the biennial European Conference on African Studies (ECAS).**

**2015**

#### **ECAS 2015 Paris 8-10 July 2015 - Call for panels opening 23 June - deadline 23 July 2014**

AEGIS (Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies) was set up in 1991 in order to build upon the resources and the research potential available within Africanist institutions of the European Union. As the dynamics of contemporary change in Africa and the continent's response to globalisation are intimately linked, understanding the continent's evolution is the major academic and policy challenge AEGIS seeks to address. AEGIS consequently aims to:

- Share intellectual resources for research and advisory purposes
- Conceptualise new research themes
- Improve and disseminate knowledge about Africa
- Provide academic guidance and foster institutional exchanges of students, senior researchers and academic staff
- Promote interdisciplinary approaches to the study of Africa

AEGIS is registered as a Foundation in the Netherlands and is governed by a five-member Board. The Board implements the policies of the network as set forth in the AEGIS Annual Plenary Meeting. The Board is assisted by a series of specific Working Groups or Task Forces:

- The Scientific Advisory Committee acts as an academic reference group for projects and other scholarly activities of particular relevance.
- The Working Group on New Technologies is responsible for the AEGIS website and the use of electronic media.

The AEGIS network operates along a cost-effective principle. Its modest financial requirements are supported by regular annual contributions from its members and from ad hoc project/conference funding.

The AEGIS Board

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