

Conference: "Islamic Reform and Public Life in Africa", University of Cape Town, 12-14 October 2011

This conference places the formations and expectations in relation to religious leaders and education. Both are taken in their widest possible meanings - the conference does not limit itself to narrow definitions of leaders and education. The choice for religious leaders and education is partly arbitrary, and partly intrinsic to the field of Islamic studies. Many of our students are engaged in research topics that touch on ulama and on education. We hope that the conference will showcase their work, and push their findings to greater subtlety and reflection. More substantially, the choice for leaders and education have been identified in the field in general. Education is one important and perhaps distinctive activity of Muslim religious life, and takes place and shape in mosques, homes, classrooms and on the Internet. The conference will be an opportunity to look closely and comparatively at the impact and meaning of reform in Muslim public life related to religious leaders engaged in some form of educational activity.

It is also envisaged that the conference will seek to relate reform and public life within the framework of the comparative study of religion. Religious leadership and education are closely connected to fundamental issues of Prophecy, knowledge and change. Education might be seen as an attempt to keep alive the event of Prophecy, with the responsibility to both preserve and maintain relevance. With close attention to detail, this conference will aim to deepen our understanding of education and religious reform.

Presenters will be expected to present their research on the themes chosen in African societies in the present and the past, and subject them to deep reflection within the study of religion. The geographical location chosen includes the African diaspora, and networks in the past and present that include Africa. Moreover, case studies should particularly avoid focusing only on the production of reform and education among male protagonists.

Proposed Themes: Reform and Public Life - Tajdid, gender, creativity; Reform, Education and Public Life; Reform, Leadership and Public Life; Doing Reform in Public Life.

Please send detailed abstracts to Nabowayah.Kafaar@uct.ac.za before 30 July 2011. All local expenses (hotel accommodation and meals) will be covered for paper presenters. Limited funds are also available for travel upon application, and where this is not available from University institutions.

Graduate Students are Encouraged to Submit papers or posters. A special opportunity will be provided for participants to speak to their posters. We expect that the conference will lead to at least one edited volume of some of the papers presented at the meeting.

Confirmed participants: Ebrahim Moosa (Duke University); Roman Loimeier (Göttingen University); Sani MS Umar (Northwestern University); Benjamin Soares (Leiden University); Scott Reese (Northern Arizona University); Abdulkader Tayob (Univ. of Cape Town)

Information:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Q0lcH5pSuzSfM2ZfMIUpOF6VMHXvKGZfvhBrymfAaMI/edit?hl=en_US&pli=1#

Conference hosted and organized by Prof. Abdulkader Tayob, University of Cape Town,
Chair: Islam, African Publics and Religious Values