

## **CFP: “Law and Literature in Sub-Saharan Africa” (ACLA 2016)**

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Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

September 23, 2015

Location:

United States

Subject Fields:

African History / Studies, Colonial and Post-Colonial History / Studies, Immigration & Migration History / Studies, Law and Legal History, Literature

CFP: “Law and Literature in Sub-Saharan Africa”

American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting

March 17-20, Harvard University

Organizers: Nicholas Matlin, NYU

Nienke Boer, NYU

African writing—both fiction and literary non-fiction—has long engaged with questions of legitimacy, law, justice, and governance, as even a cursory look at texts by writers from the continent confirms. For writers as diverse as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, Calixthe Beyala, Ayi Kwei Armah, Antjie Krog, and others, literature can serve to challenge the dominant legal order, question legal norms, and highlight the discrepancies between legal truth and apparent reality. Oftentimes, it can be a venue for imagining alternative legal orders and diverse forms of inclusive governance. Building on the work of law and literature scholars like Julie Peters, Richard H. Weisberg, and Peter Goodrich, as well as theorists like Jacques Derrida and Giorgio Agamben, this session aspires to expand the range of texts usually discussed in law and literature scholarship while at the same time developing new comparative approaches and conceptual vocabularies for African and postcolonial studies.

Our session builds on work by scholars like Mahmood Mamdani, Achille Mbembe, Mark Sanders, Adam Sitze, Joseph Slaughter, Luise White, and others, who have all in diverse ways examined the intersections between legal discourses and cultural production in colonial and postcolonial Africa. We

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invite papers engaging with all aspects of law and literature in an African context, including, but not limited to, questions of:

- (Il)legitimacy and the rule of law
- Prison experiences and bureaucracies
- Censorship and/or blasphemy
- Copyright
- Political activism as/and criminality
- Segregationist law (including apartheid)
- Legal pluralism
- Legal reform and/or alternative/imagined legal orders
- Corruption and satire
- Reconciliation within a legal framework
- Law and justice in detective fiction/dictator novels
- Land ownership and reform
- Human rights

Seminar Keywords: Africa, law and literature, postcolonial, Global South

Abstracts should be submitted through the ACLA website portal, which closes September 23<sup>rd</sup>. at 11:59pm Pacific Time. <http://www.acla.org/seminar/law-and-literature-sub-saharan-africa>.

Contact us at [nb1105@nyu.edu](mailto:nb1105@nyu.edu) and [nick.matlin@nyu.edu](mailto:nick.matlin@nyu.edu) with any questions!

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