



Association for the Study of Religion in Southern Africa

45th Annual Conference

3-4 October 2024

Religious Studies
University of KwaZulu-Natal

Deadline: 15 July 2024

All proposals should be submitted to:
asrsagroup@gmail.com

We strongly encourage in-person participation, although this conference will be conducted in a hybrid format, especially to accommodate those ASRSA members who are unable to travel to Durban for an in-person presentation.

Individual papers:

an abstract of 200 words to be submitted by the presenter.

Session Proposals:

The title of the panel, one abstract (300 words)

Roundtable discussion:

A 200-word abstract and the names of the participants

The decision of acceptance: **31 July 2024**

Call for Papers

Religion, Power and Empire/ Hegemony

As we draft this call for papers, the world feels divided along social and religious lines long feared. The conflict over Palestinian land continues to threaten not just stability in the Middle East, but also contests over sovereignty in many parts of the world. In France, Germany and the USA students and university faculty find that their support for Palestinian sovereignty invited harsh institutional and physical consequences as police crack down on protests. In Southern Africa, the appeals have provoked fierce but welcome public debates, and we wish to see this conference engage critically with questions of religion, power and sovereignty/ hegemony that emerge from this historical moment.

In his 2007 book *Exterminate all The Brutes*, Sven Lindqvist argues that the colonising project was not simply driven by a desire to discipline and dominate, but ultimately to exterminate. Similar sentiments related to domination have been expressed by others such as Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak, Rigoberta Menchu, and more recently by Sara Ahmed in their various efforts to make sense of the persistence of othering and the impulse to dominate and to erase/ negate the humanity of the other. Scholars of religion such as Anthony Reddy (2010), Farid Esack (1997), Mitri Raheb (2020) and Steven Friedman (2023) have sought to examine questions of hegemony and religion in different historical moments, and in this tradition, we invite contributions to this longer set of activist and scholarly conversations about the multiple ways that religion, power and sovereignty are entangled in postcolonial contexts, both on the African continent and elsewhere.

We hope to curate a blend of critical and activist reflections, and it is against this backdrop, that the 45th ASRSA conference calls for papers and panels that address the convergences, fractures and new vectors for understanding the interrelationship between religion, power and sovereignty/ hegemony as it presents in this historical moment, globally, and from our perspectives in Southern Africa.

We thus invite contributions related to methodological nationalisms and religion (Glick-Shiller 2003, van der Veer 2013), human rights as the last utopia (Moyné 2010, An Nai'im 2021), religion and sovereignty (Grimm 2015), religious oppression, displacement and genocide (de la Torre and Raheb 2022) and the general postcolonial critiques of religion and its entanglements with coloniality and empire (Grosfoguel 2007). In the same way, we hope to enjoy discussions related to aesthetics of resistance and protest (Settler 2019, Kuster 2021), regional and transnational movements concerned with resisting hegemony, gender and the hermeneutics of disruption in religious communities (Mahmood 2004, Seedat and Shaik 2022), and performances of (religious) solidarity and allyship in the face of genocide (Edwards 2020, Giddy 2020).