

Politics of home, identity and transnationalism in the Congolese diaspora

Congo stream at African Studies Association of the United Kingdom (ASAUK) conference, 6-8 September 2012

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This panel seeks contributions exploring the intersection of diasporic identities and practices within contemporary Congolese transnational social fields. Papers shall explore the links and networks between homeland (The Democratic Republic of Congo - DRC) and diasporic communities and how they relate to politics of 'home' and belongings in different contexts and configurations. A particular focus will be on analytical approaches which connect the symbolic, social and the material dimensions of the diasporic experience, but also which examine the politics and contestation of a wide range of identities in the Congolese diasporic public spheres, within different geographical contexts (in Europe, North America and beyond). The panel will attempt to locate these social and political dynamics of the Congolese diaspora against important backdrops and current events - such as the 50th anniversary of the independence of the Congo in 2010, the general elections in 2011 or the war in the East of the country.

Themes include:

- The intersection between religion and politics in the Congolese transnational field
- Identities in diaspora, in relation to nationality, ethnicity, gender, religion, class or popular culture
- Role of diaspora in the 2011 elections
- Circulation of ideas and images between the Congo and the diaspora
- Mobility of pastors, politicians and elites
- Long-distance nationalism and radical politics in the diaspora
- Transnational political participation and civic engagement
- 'Development' and transnationalism
- Intergenerational dynamics, youth involvement and transnational social fields
- Comparative exploration of diasporic contexts
- Post-colonial issues

Propositions of paper (title + abstract of no more than 200 words) should be sent before 27 April 2012. Thanks to log on to the ASAUK website and submit your abstract using the web interface: <http://www.asauk.net/conferences/asauk12.shtml>

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