

Call for Papers: Citizenship, Belonging and Political Community in Africa

Paper proposals are invited for an AEGIS thematic conference on the theme of 'Citizenship, Belonging and Political Community in Africa' in association with the 2011-12 Cambridge/Africa Collaborative Research Programme. The conference will take place at Newnham College, Cambridge on 15th March 2012. The deadline for submitting paper proposals is 15 January 2012, and panels will be confirmed by 22 January 2012.

The conference takes the theme of 'citizenship', broadly defined, as a means by which to explore key themes in Africa's history and contemporary politics. As demonstrated by the battles over inclusion and exclusion which have animated recent elections in Africa, struggles over citizenship are increasingly central to African political life. Yet though engagement with the concept of citizenship often privileges its character as a legal category relating the individual to the territorial nation-state, citizenship can also be historicised as simply one prominent conceptualisation amongst others of "belonging" to a political community, and so as part of a wider set of frameworks through which shifting and competing modes of political life have found articulation. Thinking historically and comparatively about citizenship and belonging calls for a reconsideration of important themes in African history and politics, including nationalism and ethnic identity, vocabularies of political accountability and claim-making, the limits and possibilities of liberal thought, and the relationship between individual and community.

Paper proposals are invited in the following areas:

- Citizens and Strangers: Defining the boundaries of citizenship in Africa past and present
- Citizens and Subjects: colonial regimes of citizenship
- The nationalist citizen in post-colonial Africa
- Citizenship and liberal thought
- Citizenship as a language of claim-making

For more information, please contact Emma Hunter (elh35 @ cam.ac.uk). Potential contributors may also be interested in a conference taking place in Cambridge on 16 and 17 March 2012, 'Languages of Citizenship in Translation: Conversations across Africa and the Indian Ocean'. Details on the CRASSH website: <http://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/events/1705/>