

RELIGION: SHAPING COLONIALISM AND DECOLONIALISM

2024 REPORT



OXFORD (UP) CENTRE FOR
RELIGION, PUBLIC LIFE, AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

&

AFRICA OFFICE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR
AFRICAN STUDIES

COLLOQUIUM ABSTRACT

The intersection of religion, colonialism, and decolonialism in Africa presents a complex and multifaceted terrain of inquiry. This colloquium aimed to explore the historical, social, cultural and political dimensions of how religion has functioned both as a tool for shaping colonial structures and as a site for resistance and decolonization efforts on the African continent. Through panel discussions and paper presentations, participants investigated how religious beliefs, practices, institutions, and discourses intersected with colonial power dynamics and processes of decolonization across different regions and historical periods in Africa. Key themes addressed included the historical role of religious justifications in colonial expansion and domination, the impact of missionary activities on Indigenous belief systems and cultural practices, the resilience of Indigenous spiritualities in the face of colonial impositions and the contemporary challenges and possibilities for utilizing religious resources in promoting social justice, reconciliation and post-colonial healing. This colloquium aimed to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between religion, colonialism and decolonialism in Africa by fostering interdisciplinary conversations and collaborative scholarship.

**RELIGION:
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01 August 2024

CONVENED BY
OXFORD (UP) CENTRE FOR RELIGION, PUBLIC LIFE AND
SECURITY IN AFRICA



Faculty of Theology
and Religion
Religieusie Studies en Kerklewe
Religion in Theology and Society



&

AFRICA OFFICE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY CENTRE
FOR AFRICAN STUDIES



Venue: Javett Art Centre, University of Pretoria, Hatfield Campus
In-person attendance per invitation only

USE THE FOLLOWING LINK TO JOIN ONLINE

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/0c7fc26e7408497da9159168ae569>

FOR ANY INQUIRIES CONTACT:

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OR MS. IWANA HARTMANN AT HARTMANNIWANA@GMAIL.COM

It also aimed to generate innovative insights and methodologies for teaching, research and advocacy within the field of Religion Studies and beyond. The colloquium focused on decolonizing knowledge production and promoting inclusive approaches to studying and engaging with religious diversity in African contexts. The outcomes of the colloquium included the publication of scholarly contributions in a dedicated volume or special issue to establish networks and partnerships among participants and institutions. The colloquium prompted critical reflection and dialogue on the roles and responsibilities of scholars and practitioners in addressing the legacies of colonialism and advancing decolonial agendas in the study of religion and society.

WELCOME & ARRIVAL



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

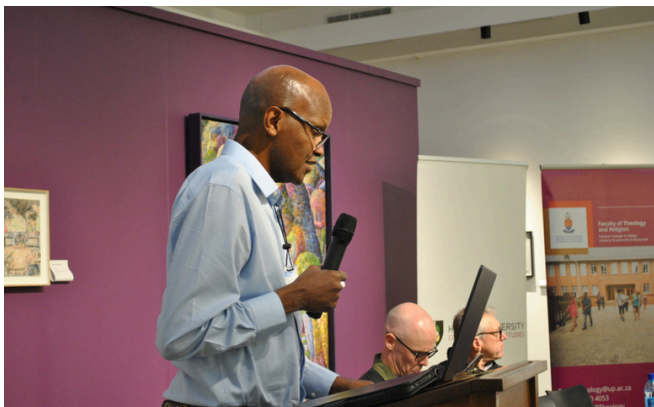
REV. FRANK CHIKANE

Frank Chikane (Rev) is Emeritus Pastor of the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA (AFM); a member of the NEC of the Integrity Commission (IC) of the African National Congress (ANC). He is a Visiting Adjunct Professor at the Witwatersrand (Wits) School of Governance; a Trustee of the Kagiso Charitable Trust (KT); Chair of the Board of Kagiso Tiso Holdings (KTH); Chair of the Board of DHL Forwarding South Africa; and a member of the Board of Kagiso Capital. He is a former Moderator of the Churches Commission on International Affairs (CCIA) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) which deals with conflict situations in the world and support initiatives for peacekeeping, justice and overcoming poverty; a former General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), a former Vice-President of the SACC, and a former Director of the Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT).

Rev. Frank Chikane addressed the following topic: “Decoloniality, Religion, Public Life and Security in Africa”. He spoke with words of wisdom about past and current problems caused by colonialism and how religion frames this problem.



DECOLONIZING RELIGIOUS NARRATIVES & INDIGENOUS AFRICAN RELIGIONS AND RESISTANCE



PANEL ONE

The panellists examined efforts to decolonize religious discourses, symbols, and practices in post-colonial Africa. The panellists explored how traditional African religious beliefs, practices and worldviews were used as tools of resistance against colonial subjugation and cultural erasure.



RELIGION & SOCIAL JUSTICE



PANEL TWO

The panellists investigated the potential of religious institutions and leaders as agents of social change and liberation in Africa. They discussed initiatives for addressing poverty, inequality, human rights and environmental sustainability through religious activism and advocacy.

RELIGIOUS JUSTIFICATIONS FOR COLONIALISM

PANEL THREE

The panellists examined efforts to decolonize religious discourses, symbols, and practices in post-colonial Africa. They explored how traditional African religious beliefs, practices and worldviews were used as tools of resistance against colonial subjugation and cultural erasure.



THANK YOU FOR JOINING!





CONTACT US

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