

## **South Africa in Africa workshop and seminar series Co-hosted by SIGLA and the Department of Sociology, Stellenbosch University**

**Tuesday 2 April 2019**

**09.00-12.00 am**

**Department of Sociology,  
Stellenbosch University**

**Room 401. Arts and Social Sciences Building  
82 Ryneveld St, Stellenbosch Central**

Seminar:

**Between Political Islam, identity and radical expressions?**

Moderator.

Prof. Thomas Mandrup, SIGLA

Programme

- *Political Islam between Reform and Restoration*,  
Prof. Hussein Solomon, University of Free State and Research Fellow, SIGLA
- *“Foreign Fighters”: The search for meaning in war*,  
Prof. Dietrich Jung, Professor and Head of Department at the Center for  
Contemporary Middle East Studies, University of Southern Denmark
- *Winning the War of Words: Al Shabaab, AMISOM and the media battle in Somalia*,  
Prof. David Anderson, Professor of African History, University of Warwick

Registration to Prof. Thomas Mandrup, Email: [thomasm@sun.ac.za](mailto:thomasm@sun.ac.za) by 29 March 2019

## **Bios:**

### **Speakers**

**David M. Anderson** is Professor of History in the Global History & Culture Centre at the University of Warwick, and holds visiting positions at Stellenbosch University and the University of Cologne. His research focuses on insurgency, counter-insurgency and political violence, with particular emphasis upon eastern Africa. His books include, including *Histories of the Hanged* (2005), *The Khat Controversy* (2007), *The Routledge Handbook of African Politics* (ed., 2013), *Politics & Violence in Eastern Africa* (ed., 2015), and *Allies at the End of Empire: Loyalists, Nationalists & the Cold War* (ed., 2017). His recent articles include important studies of al Shabaab's activities and the role of the KDF within AMISOM.

**Dietrich Jung** is a Professor and Head of Department at the Center for Contemporary Middle East Studies, University of Southern Denmark. He holds a MA in Political Science and Islamic Studies, as well as a Ph.D. from the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, University of Hamburg, Germany, and has large field experience in the Muslim world. His most recent books are *Orientalists, Islamists and the Global Public Sphere: A Genealogy of the Modern Essentialist Image of Islam*, Sheffield: Equinox (2011); *The Politics of Modern Muslim Subjectivities: Islam, Youth and Social Activism in the Middle East*, together with Marie Juul Petersen and Sara Lei Sparre, New York: Palgrave (2014); *Muslim History and Social Theory: A Global Sociology of Modernity*, New York: Palgrave (2017).

**Hussein Solomon** is Senior Professor in the Department of Political Studies and Governance at the University of the Free State, a Research Fellow of the Security Institute for Governance and Leadership in Africa at the University of Stellenbosch and he is Visiting Professor at Osaka University in Japan.

### **Moderator:**

**Thomas Mandrup** is an Extraordinary Associate Professor at Stellenbosch University, South Africa and Associate Professor at Royal Danish Defence College, Denmark. His co-edited books includes *The African Standby Force – Quo Vadis ?* published by Sun Media in October 2017, *Towards good order at Sea – African Experiences* was published by Sun Media in February 2015 and *The Brics and Coexistence – an alternative vision of world order* was published by Routledge in October 2014, and *On Military Culture: Theory, Practice and African Armed Forces* was published by Cape Town University Press 1st October 2013. His recent articles includes studies of SSR in Peace-building, AU Peace Missions, and South Africa's peace mission deployments.

## Abstracts

David M. Anderson:

### *Winning the War of Words: Al Shabaab, AMISOM and the media battle in Somalia*

Since its beginnings as a small urban militia in Mogadiscio, al Shabaab's media operations have extended hugely and grown immensely in sophistication. Amongst international terrorist organizations, they are recognized as being amongst the most effective and responsive. This paper will review the development of al Shabaab's media, relating this to the propaganda and messaging programmes adopted by AMISOM, its member militaries, and their allies. Key points will be made about the target audience for this media, the significance of the historical and cultural resonance of the content, and credibility of spokespersons and platforms used. The successes and limitations of AMISOM's propaganda efforts will be analysed, and the paper will conclude with a discussion of the interventions that are required to improve the media messaging of AMISOM and its allies in order to counter al Shabaab propaganda.

Dietrich Jung:

### *"Foreign Fighters": The search for meaning in war,*

The lecture builds on a comparison of the foreign fighter phenomenon in contemporary Syria and the civil war in Spain (1936-39). In this way, it puts current Jihadist war volunteers into historical perspective. According to the hegemonic liberal imaginary of the emancipation of a reflexive, rational, self-interested and expressive individual, modern subjectivity formation is supposed to take place in a pacified world. A phenomenon such as foreign fighters who were raised in liberal democratic societies, therefore, appears to be pathology of modernity. This is visible in the dominant radicalization narrative according to which the decision to join Jihadist militias is at the end of an individual process of cognitive and/or behavioral radicalization. Violence, then, appears as the ultimate consequence of a social process in which individuals deviate from the unquestioned normality of social coexistence in a peaceful way. Yet, is the foreign fighter phenomenon indeed a pathology of modernity? Or does it represent an alternative "good life" to the hegemonic liberal narrative?

Hussein Solomon:

### *Political Islam between Reform and Restoration,*

The lack of political freedom in the Muslim world is palpable. The short-lived Arab Spring brought either war and chaos as in Libya and Syria or brought hard-line Islamists to power as in the Muslim Brotherhood's ascent to power in post-Mubarak Egypt or Recep Erdogan's Turkey. The failure of the democratic project in the Arab world has resulted in calls for a Muslim Reformation along the lines of Martin Luther's rebellion against the Vatican. Those calling for an Islamic Reformation also call for secularism, thereby keeping religion out of the public sphere. Rejecting such a position and borrowing from the work of John Locke, this paper argues that one can have both religion and state operating harmoniously in the public sphere to advance the democratic project.