

Call for papers, APAD (Association for the Anthropology of social change and Development) conference, 22-24 May 2024

Panel title:

Lawyers between politics, legal globalisation and capitalism

Co-organized by Sophie Andreetta (Université de Liège) and Sara Dezalay (Université catholique de Lille)

Short abstract

This panel aims to explore the reciprocal roles played by lawyers in transforming the relationship between politics, legal globalisation and capitalist expansion on the African continent, and the impact of these variables on the daily work of legal professions. Deliberately multi-disciplinary and multi-scalar, we welcome papers examining local changes in African/international settings or wider macro transformations, from the daily work of lawyers to asylum justice, international criminal justice or international arbitration.

Long presentation

In the past 15 years, the African continent has regained prominence due to intensifying global competition over so-called 'critical' minerals and the lure of new markets for telecommunications and infrastructure.

Lawyers play a critical role in these transformations. Private legal markets have undergone a dramatic expansion across the continent over the last decades.

In addition, law – whether in the form of contracts between multinationals and African states, strategic litigation, international dispute settlement mechanisms or asylum justice – plays a core role in shaping and justifying Africa's relationship with the world economy.

However, there continues to be an empirical and theoretical gap to account for the professional strategies of lawyers involved in these wide dynamics of legalization of trans/national politics.

On the other hand, more recent works, mainly focusing on judges, tends to focus on the micro level of legal professionals' daily practices, interactions with litigants, and professional dilemmas in a context of poor working conditions.

Against this backdrop, this panel will investigate legal professionals as central actors in political and economic globalization at the domestic and trans/national levels. It aims to explore the reciprocal roles played by lawyers in transforming the relationship between politics, legal globalisation and capitalist expansion on the African continent, and the impact of these variables on the daily work of legal professions and their

relationships with domestic politics. Deliberately multi-disciplinary and multi-scalar, we welcome papers examining local changes in African/international settings or wider macro transformations, from the daily work of lawyers to asylum justice and international arbitration.

If you are interested in submitting a paper please send a title and abstract by the 15th November to sara.dezalay@gmail.com and sophie.andreetta@gmail.com

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