



# ASAI



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITA DI BOLOGNA

## ASAI V

**Fifth Conference of the Association for African Studies in Italy**  
*(Associazione per gli Studi Africani in Italia)*

### **Plural Africa.**

### **Politics, knowledge and social dynamics in time and space**

Department of Political and Social Sciences – University of Bologna  
5-7 September 2018

Although they share many major historical experiences, African countries also display a plurality of social dynamics, political realities and cultural manifestations that the constant representation of a homogeneous Africa, out of time and space, continue to marginalise. By interrogating the multiple research sources available and by promoting the interdisciplinary nature of African studies, we can address, for example, the historical continuities and ruptures, the dynamics of power and the organization of space, the forms of connection and disconnection between actors working both within and outside the African continent.

The Fifth Conference of ASAI aims, first of all, to analyse the ‘Africas’, that is, the plurality of the phenomena that make up the wealth of diversity of the African continent and determine its deep asymmetries. This means also looking at the role the continent and its populations play in international social and political dynamics, which also makes Africa a privileged point of observation to study the most important processes of global phenomena. Secondly, the Conference intends to overcome the vision that deprives the ‘voice’ and the ‘agency’ of Africans of their fundamental relationships with the political-economic forces and with the social processes that move through the continent.

With all this in mind, it is important to reflect on elements such as: the modalities of construction and transmission of the identitarian imagination within African political systems as well as in the African diasporas inside and outside the continent; the relationship between political pluralism and the plurality of the forms of power; the relations between the transnational representations of Africa/the ‘Africas’ and their social impact on the countries of the continent; the ‘polyphony’ of historical narratives; the ‘multifunctionality’ of

the forms of mobility; the stratification of forms of political legitimation in the internal, regional and international policies of the African political systems.

ASAI V therefore encourages the presentation of panel proposals along the following thematic lines:

- Plurality as **pluralism** in Africa in history and politics: forms of power and legitimacy.
- Plurality as a **multiplicity** of intra- and extra-continental **African diasporas**: social impacts, constructions, representations.
- Plurality as **polyvalent forms of mobility** in Africa: economic, social and political strategies.
- Plurality as the **'multifunctionality' of Africa in international relations**: connections, disconnections, perspectives on 'the global'
- Plurality as **complex dynamics of marginalisation and poverty** in Africa: opportunities and constraints of the global consensus on development
- Plurality as **'polyhedric' social and cultural propositions**: production of knowledge, linguistic strategies, literary expressions
- Plurality as the **variety of research methods** on the 'Africas': issues of access to fieldwork and sensibility of the research subjects.

**Panel proposals** can be open to the submission of papers or can already include the papers (with a maximum of 4 papers plus a non-compulsory discussant). Panel proposals in two sessions (maximum 4 + 4 papers) will be evaluated by the Scientific and Organizing Committees in consideration of the general framework of the proposals received and of the available slots in the timetable.

Panel proposals should be sent in Word format to the e-mail address **[bologna2018@asaiafrica.org](mailto:bologna2018@asaiafrica.org) by 28 February 2018**. They should consist of:

- Title
- Abstract (maximum 200 words)
- Panel coordinator profile (maximum 50 words).
- Titles, short abstracts (max. 150 words) and authors' short profiles of the papers (max. 4 for each panel/session) included in the panel proposal (when this applies).

Panel proposals can be written in one of the three working languages of the conference (Italian, English, French), but in all cases they must be sent with their English translation.

The list of the panels accepted by the Scientific Committee will be will be made public as from 30 March 2018. A Call for papers will follow.