

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
2019 CHUSS SYMPOSIUM
MAY 15-16, 2019 MAKERERE UNIVERSITY MAINHALL

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

A New East African: Agency and Identity Debates

In 2018, CHUSS hosted the first Humanities and Social Sciences Symposium with the resolve that this intervention would become an annual academic event in the college. The symposia series are organised in pursuant with the college's mandate, among which, is the need to foster a vibrant academic environment in the university and the country that can promote intellectual debate and knowledge production in the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences. Consequently, the 2018 symposium brought together the region's Humanities and Social Sciences scholars to debate issues affecting the Eastern African polity in the Fourth Industrial milieu. The central thesis of the discourse focused on the new tools and methods needed to interrogate the new world order ruled by information technology. It also argued that the long tradition of Humanities and Social Sciences' leadership provides answers to perennial problems affecting the world and located these disciplines at the centre of envisioning new futures of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in the region. The symposium arrived at two important conclusions. First, information technology had and was fundamentally changing East African society and subjectivity. Second, that because of and/or in spite of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the East African region and its peoples had witnessed major changes and shifts in the political, social and economic arenas.

The 2019 CHUSS Symposium takes major shifts in the East African society that have occurred in the last two decades as its point of departure in order to explore how agency and identity of the regions subjects have morphed during this period. Such a discursive foundation cannot only extend, but also deepen and/or broaden debates related to how the region and its peoples have changed in the last two decades of the twenty-first century. This thematic concern concedes that the landmass that is located at the western rim of the Indian Ocean has for millennia acted as a contact space between the different worlds and worldviews. Consequently, agency and identity are always in a state of flux.

However, the forces of nationalism, regionalism, trans-nationalism, trans-culturalism, globalism, commerce, conquest, racism and other cultural-political and socioeconomic processes have overlapped to produce a uniquely and complexly East African ethos that has reshaped and remapped the very idea of 'East Africanness' as manifested in violent eruptions, dispossessions, displacements and re-alignments, including but not limited to the three examples below.

The College invites scholars interested into issues of agency and identity generally and the questions underlined below particularly to engage into conversation congregated by the 2019 CHUSS symposium.

- How has Eastern African agency and identity changed and/or is changing in the interregnum?
- How have political, ethnical, sexuality and economic disruptions changed and/or facilitated change of the region's people?
- How have relationships with politics, economics, culture and social organisation changed and informed and/or been a consequence of change in the region?
- How has the Eastern African polity/society changed and/or adopted to new changes occasioned by many factors in this era?
- What new knowledges, epistemes, ethics, aesthetics are being created and circulated by and/or about Eastern African agency and identity in the contemporary moment?
- What do we learn about Eastern African agency and identity as reflected in discourses in the public sphere?

Scholars interested in grappling with important questions about Eastern African agency and identity in an era of rapid change or those with work in progress related to the theme of the symposium are invited to submit an abstract of 200 words to graduate.college@chuss.mak.ac.ug by **Friday 19th April 2019**. Accepted papers should be ready for presentation on the **15th May 2019**. The authors of selected papers will be asked to revise their papers before submission for publication in a special issue of **MAWAZO**.

KEY POINTS TO NOTE

