

Panel Proposal for ECAS 4 Conference - Uppsala, June 2011

Panel title: Secessionist movements in Africa (OR: Borders and Secessionism in Africa)

Name(s) and affiliation(s) of panel proposer(s): Wolfgang Zeller (Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh) and Jordi Tomàs (African Studies Center-IUL, Lisbon).

Names and affiliations of possible panel participants: Paul Nugent (Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh); Ester Massó (CSIC-Madrid); Jean Michel Mabeko Tali (University of Washington); Vincent Foucher (CEAN-Bordeaux); Justo Bolekia (University of Salamanca); Francis Nyamnjoh (UCT Cape Town); Piet Konings (ASC Leiden); Abdelkader Aghali (Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales-Marseille / Lasdel, Niamey); Gregor Dobler (Basel University); Pierre Englebert (Pomona College)

This proposal for a double panel is part of an ongoing project by members of the African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE.org) to produce an edited volume comprehensively examining all serious attempts at territorial secesión in Africa since independence. Individual cases studies and some works dealing with secessionism in Africa in a comparative fashion (Englebert 2005; Keller 2007) exist. But a comprehensive book on a topic of such fundamental importance to recent history, post-colonial state formation and politics in Africa does not exist yet.

A first meeting of some contributing authors will take place in Åbo, Finland in late 2010. The double panel at ECAS 4 would be a suitable platform to present authors' revised chapters, the theoretical and comparative debate within the overall project to a wider audience. Participants will primarily be confirmed contributors to the book, but other scholars working on separatist movements – particularly in a comparative and/or theoretically-oriented nature - are invited to submit abstracts as well.

The proposers expect the panel to address and debate the following topics:

- secessionism versus irredentism
- mono-ethnic secessionist movements versus pluri-ethnic "secessionist nationalism"
- colonialism, borders and secessionism
- cross-border migration, diaspora and secession
- transitions from peaceful opposition to violent movements and the role of state repression
- mineral resources feeding secessionism
- land ownership laws, expropriation and conflicts
- the role of educational, religious and other elites in secessionism
- the diffusion of secessionist ideas via new information technologies