

CALL FOR PAPERS

Constitution Writing, Religion and Human Rights

An International Workshop

June 5-7, 2014

Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF), Bielefeld, Germany

With the ZiF Research Group

“Balancing Religious Accommodation and Human Rights in Constitutional Frameworks”

Workshop organizers: Asli Bali (UCLA) and Hanna Lerner (Tel Aviv University)

What sorts of constitutional solutions could reconcile the protection of human rights with the demand for incorporation of religious law in contemporary democratizing or democratic states? In recent years, tensions over religion-state relations have been gaining increasing salience in processes of constitution-writing and amendment processes around the world. In many of these cases, constitutional drafters struggle to mitigate conflicts over religious law and religious identity, which are issues intrinsically related to questions of human rights, gender equality and protection of vulnerable minorities.

The workshop aims at advancing our understanding of how constitutional drafters address these two goals - conflict mitigation and human rights protection - and to what extent the relationship between them are complementary or whether there is a trade-off between the two.

By drawing on comparative analyses of past and contemporary processes of constitutional drafting where questions of religious law and religious identity were at the center of debate, participants are invited to discuss the following questions:

- What is the role of formal constitutions in managing conflicts over religious law and identity, and to what extent is the relationship between religion and state designed outside of formal constitutions, in the realm of ordinary politics?
- How does constitutional ambiguity in provisions related to religious issues reconcile the protection of human rights with demand of religious freedom?
- In what way does the process of constitution-drafting affect the outcome of constitutional provisions concerning religion-state relations (e.g., through selection process for drafters, rules governing inclusiveness and decision-making procedures)?
- In cases where constitutional debates involved competing secular and religious perspectives, what types of human rights have eventually been better protected by constitutional provisions?

We welcome papers that explore the questions raised above from either comparative or theoretical perspective. Papers presented in the workshop may either investigate historical cases of constitutional debates on religious issues, discuss more recent, or on-going constitutional drafting processes, or present a theoretical discussion of these questions.

Travel funds and accommodation for three nights at Bielefeld will be available for paper presenters.

This workshop is organized in conjunction with the ZiF Research Group “Balancing Religious Accommodation and Human Rights in Constitutional Frameworks.” Please visit our [website](#) for more information about the group’s research, members, and events.

Please send an abstract of 400-500 words to Aaron Glasserman (aaron.glasserman@gmail.com) no later than **7 April 2014**. Acceptance notifications will be sent by 20 April 2014.