



Centre for Asian Legal Studies  
Faculty of Law



International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES)

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### RELIGION AND CONSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES IN ASIA

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR ETHNIC STUDIES, SRI LANKA

9 – 10 November 2017

Religion is a highly salient feature of many Asian societies and its significance extends beyond the private sphere. In countries like Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia, religion was a key factor in driving nationalist and anti-colonial consciousness, and it remains a key tool for social and political mobilization. In other countries, religion is intimately tied with ethnic identities, and in some, the salience of religion found its way into constitutional texts and arrangements. There is thus great diversity in how religion manifests itself in the social, political, and legal (constitutional) settings of these Asian countries.

The International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) and the Centre for Asian Legal Studies (CALs), National University of Singapore (NUS) are pleased to solicit paper proposals for a Conference on “Religion and Constitutional Practices in Asia”. The Conference will be convened by Dr Dian A. H. Shah (Research Fellow, CALs) and ICES, and will be held at ICES in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 9 – 10 November 2017.

This Conference seeks to explore – broadly speaking – the interaction between religion and constitutional law in Asia, especially in those countries where strong religious identification exists in the social and political spheres. We particularly welcome paper proposals that address constitutional history and constitutional practices in matters implicating religion from a comparative perspective. Relevant questions may include: How do constitution-makers and constitutional drafters take religious divisions and identities into account and how do these considerations affect constitutional arrangements on religion? What is treated in practice as the “constitution” in matters involving religion? How does constitutional recognition or non-recognition of religion affect constitutional law and development? How do courts resolve constitutional contestations on religion? Do particular constitutional arrangements directly drive (or at least encourage) particular state policies and paths of judicial interpretation? What are the broader norms and dynamics that might explain existing policies and practices?

The first day of the Conference will feature presentations by scholars working on a variety of jurisdictions, including Myanmar (Dr Nyi Nyi Kyaw, NUS), Indonesia (Dr Alfitri, IAIN Samarinda), India (Rehan Abeyratne, Chinese University of Hong Kong), Sri Lanka (Gehan Gunatilleke, University of Oxford), Malaysia (Dr Dian Shah, NUS), Singapore (Dr Jaclyn Neo, NUS), Pakistan (Dr Matthew Nelson, SOAS), Bangladesh (Taslima Yasmin, Dhaka University) and Thailand (Eugénie Mérieau, Sciences Po). Selected papers from the Conference will be published in the Asian Journal of Comparative Law (AsJCL) as a Special Issue on Religion and Constitutional Practices in Asia.



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### **Abstract Submission**

Abstracts must be original and the work must not have been published previously. Interested scholars are invited to submit an abstract of no more than 300 words and a biographical sketch of about 100 words by **10 July 2017** to [dian.ahshah@nus.edu.sg](mailto:dian.ahshah@nus.edu.sg). Successful proposals will be notified by 31 July 2017 and scholars are expected to submit full papers (10000 words including footnotes) by **20 October 2017**.

Papers presented at the Conference may be considered for publication in the CALS Working Paper Series and/or ICES Research Paper Series.

### **Logistical Costs and Arrangements**

There is no cost to participate in the Conference. Meals will be covered throughout the Conference but participants are expected to seek their own sponsorship for travel expenses.