



World Forum on Theology and Liberation
Forum Mundial de Teologia e Libertação
Foro Mundial de Teología y Liberación
Forum Mondial de Théologie et Libération

Call for Abstracts

World Forum on Theology and Liberation

Tunis, Tunisia, March 23-29, 2015

Conceived inside the World Social Forum at Porto Alegre, Brazil, in January of 2003, the World Forum on Theology and Liberation (WFTL) is sending out a call for abstracts for its sixth Forum in Tunis, March 23-29, 2015. The World Forum on Theology and Liberation takes on the themes and viewpoints of the WSF but from religious and theological points of view. The Forum deliberately uses “Theology and Liberation” in its title because it is not focused on “Liberation Theology”, which can be understood as a particular type of theology, but on theologies that emerge from all processes of human liberation, social movements and social organizations that work and fight in order to liberate and promote human dignity in all places, regions and continents. The WFTL encourages proposals from all thinkers and activists concerned about the constructive role religions and theologies can play in creating another possible world.

In keeping with trajectories engaged at our last Forum, the WFTL will have **three (3) sessions in the WSF** with each aligned along one of these three broad themes: ***Gender, Feminisms and Democracy; Justice, Peace, Ecology and Integrity of Creation; Religion, Politics and Liberation***. These themes are interwoven and transversal and are differentiated only to give some thematic coherence to each session. The WFTL therefore encourages proposals that engage their transversal linkages.

1. Gender, Feminisms and Democracy

Women made great achievements in the Twentieth century mainly during its second half, when they gained greater presence in schools and universities, acquiring power positions in almost all spheres of society. Gender was the category that defined the social relations of inequality between women and men and allowed the deepening of academic studies about men’s domination over women. At the same time, out of the Academy, many women, in feminist movements, lead the struggle for women of all classes and races/ethnicities to achieve equal opportunities and leading positions in politics and all human enterprises. The proposal of this thematic axis is to deepen the reflection of men and women on the inequality of gender and propose new actions to transform the inferior role of women in our Churches and societies.

2. Justice, Peace, Ecology and Integrity of Creation

Signs of disintegration of life have become conspicuous in today’s world in the ever louder groans of subjugated humans and of our violated earth. The profit driven market economy and related development pursuits have led to the displacement of marginalized people and their

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blatant exclusion from the benefits of progress. Global capitalism marked by greed leads to colonization of the powerless sections of society. The overt and covert violence inherent in the domination-subjugation mode of hierarchical dealings in human relationships that mark class, caste, gender and racial differences find expression also in the violent conquest of the earth and its resources. The ecological devastation and environmental pollution leading to the unpredictable climatic changes and natural calamities are the obvious manifestations of the corruption of human relationships with each other and the earth. In this context, laying the axe at the roots of this system of greed and destruction becomes imperative if we are to save human life and life of nature from irreversible damage. The nexus between the social structures of human domination and sin and the violation of the earth needs to be laid bare. Conversely, we need to acknowledge and affirm the life-sustaining commitment on the part of the poor, particularly the indigenous peoples, in upholding bio-diversity and harmonious living with nature. Life is a network of inter-connected and inter-dependent relationships. A prophetic task of the hour is commitment to an inclusive and integral growth of human beings in partnership with the rest of creation. Human initiatives and movements promoting the cause of justice, peace and ecological sustainability go a long way in safeguarding the integrity of life. Recognizing and promoting this is crucial for all who are committed to the universal responsibility of defending life.

3. Religion, Politics and Liberation

As we encounter a pluralism of social and religious actors working in different areas of society how do we, as religious and theological activists, accept the challenge to engage the complexities of the dilemmas we all face in our societies today and in possible futures? We need religious and theological tools to think in more complex ways and commensurate languages to express these thoughts. Where and how must we find, analyze, thematize and articulate the presence of God's challenges in our midst? In what ways can we authentically express the liberative potential and reality of religion and religious reflection today? How do we speak of enriching spirituality to a world that generally holds to "spiritual" belief but not to religious associations? In what ways can we promote religious and theological reflection when it seems that religions and religious institutional actors routinely side with dominant political economies at the expense of victims, submerged voices, displaced and dehumanized members of our societies? We have to find ways to theologically share the powerful presence of the Spirit supporting us in our commitment to justice. Exploring the broad and multiple interrelationships spawned between religion(s), politics and liberative praxis may give us the thematic space to shape ideas, languages and activities that can address some of these concerns. In addition, it is increasingly urgent to open such spaces for contemporary young people in different religions so that youth leadership can emerge.



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Guidelines

1. The proposal abstract must be between 250-500 words (*online form*).
2. It must contain the participant's name and institutional affiliation (*online form*).
3. Proposals should indicate which of the 3 broad thematic areas it addresses (*online form*).
4. The deadline for submission of abstracts is **December 15, 2014**.
5. It is expected that proposals accepted for the forum in Tunis will be developed into a first draft of the full paper by **February 15, 2015**. These papers, after a final edit, will be published in the proceedings of the Forum.
6. Please submit your final text to the WFTL secretariat, permanentsecretariat@wftlofficial.org with a copy to boodoog@duq.edu.
7. Proposals and the first draft of the papers may be submitted in any language but the final draft of papers must be translated into English for the publication of the proceedings.