



African Studies Centre

2023 Newsletter



UNIVERSITY OF
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Director's Report



Ghana's Hon. Minister for National Security Albert Dan-Kapaah, who eloquently explored the profound challenges to liberal democracy in West Africa, explained the efforts of the region's governments to address interlinked economic, environmental, and human security crises, and demonstrated why these regional concerns affect and matter to the wider world.

While the Sudan military conflict was largely anticipated unexpectedly by outside observers. The urgency of the country's crisis was powerfully foretold at a special ASC seminar in December 2022: speakers in Khartoum and Oxford brilliantly explained the origins of the crisis and the prospects for both progressive political change. It was evident that achieving peace and democracy in Sudan would require the active participation of civic associations and society as a whole, something that remained sadly lacking in international engagement with Sudan in the run-up to the outbreak of war in Khartoum. The conflict directly affected two of our MSc African Studies cohort conducting research in Khartoum: the difficulties they faced in getting out of the country, and their eloquent explanations of the crisis and the ongoing humanitarian disaster facing Sudan's peoples as I write, are testament both to the hazards of documenting Africa's realities from within, and the importance of doing so.

Oxford University's African Studies Centre has during the 2022-23 academic year been shaped by, and sought to understand and explain, the profound challenges that have affected the African continent and its peoples over the past twelve months. As the Covid-19 pandemic receded, the spillover effects of the Ukraine conflict alongside rising food and fuel costs manifested in a renewed economic crisis in much of Africa. The continuing role of jihadism in the Sahel combined with new authoritarian governments to spur new military alliances and threats to democracy, while in April 2023 Sudan's ongoing revolutionary crisis exploded into all-out warfare in the country's capital Khartoum. Elsewhere on the continent, elections provided hope for the reflection of popular will in democratic form, but many aspirations went unfulfilled.

As African Studies Centre speakers, faculty and students were variously affected by and sought in their research and initiatives to explain these new and enduring issues, they emphasised the centrality of Africa-specific concerns to the wider world. In October 2022, Dr Doris Okenwa organized a groundbreaking conference that, in the run-up to the Nigerian elections, proposed 'redesigning democracy' to ensure it more effectively represented the country's vibrant civic activism and gave expression to the concerns of Nigerian youth. In February 2023, the Centre hosted

Our students had returned safely to Oxford by the time that our ASC Annual Lecturer, Professor Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò (Cornell University), spoke 'On the Idea of Freedom in Modern African Political Philosophy'. In a powerful and intellectually rigorous address, Prof Táíwò emphasized the centrality of universal notions of freedom and modernity to African demands for political and legal rights. Drawing on his influential book *Against Decolonisation* (2022), he criticised the tendency of 'decolonial' thinking to conflate African modernist thinkers with negative 'Western' influences and – in his exchanges with the audience during a lively question and answer session – insisted on recognizing Africans' historical and ongoing contribution to these universalist traditions.

Among much change and debate, the ASC continues to experience welcome continuity in the quality and diversity of its amazing cohort of MSc African Studies students – you can read about just some of their personal journeys and research trajectories elsewhere in this Newsletter, as well as those who, having completed the MSc in previous years, have gone on to great success in both academic and non-academic fields. The steady and sustained increase in the proportion of African-origin students (currently between 60% and 65%) of our MSc cohort of 25-26 students is enabled by the generous provision of scholarships from, among other donors, the family of Patrick Duncan, FirstRand and ENI. As the Mastercard Foundation

scholarships for African postgraduate students increases, we can anticipate a steady increase in the number of full-funded scholars of African origin, at Oxford University in general and at the African Studies Centre in particular. I am deeply grateful to the ASC Faculty – MSc Course Director Dr Peter Brooke, Prof Miles Tendi, Prof Rebekah Lee, Dr Doris Okenwa, Dr Rachel Taylor and Dr Abigail Branford – for delivering our characteristically intense teaching programme while simultaneously pursuing their own research and fieldwork activities. Research Associates Carli Coetzee and Tiziana Morosetti complemented our teaching provision and, along with all our Research Associates and Academic Visitors, enriched the Centre's intellectual and social life with their ideas and energy. Aimee Crane and Adrita Mitra provided exemplary administrative and events support along with our colleagues in the School of Global and Area Studies.

As I hand over the Directorship of the African Studies Centre to my colleague Miles Tendi, and move on to pastures new after a decade at the University of Oxford, I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity it has provided me to work with and learn from the hundreds of brilliant students, colleagues, speakers and visitors it has been my privilege to engage with here. I look forward to returning to the Centre as a visitor in the years to come, knowing that – as should always be the case – its future cohorts of Africanist scholars will be busy challenging, rethinking, overturning and renewing all that we have done before.

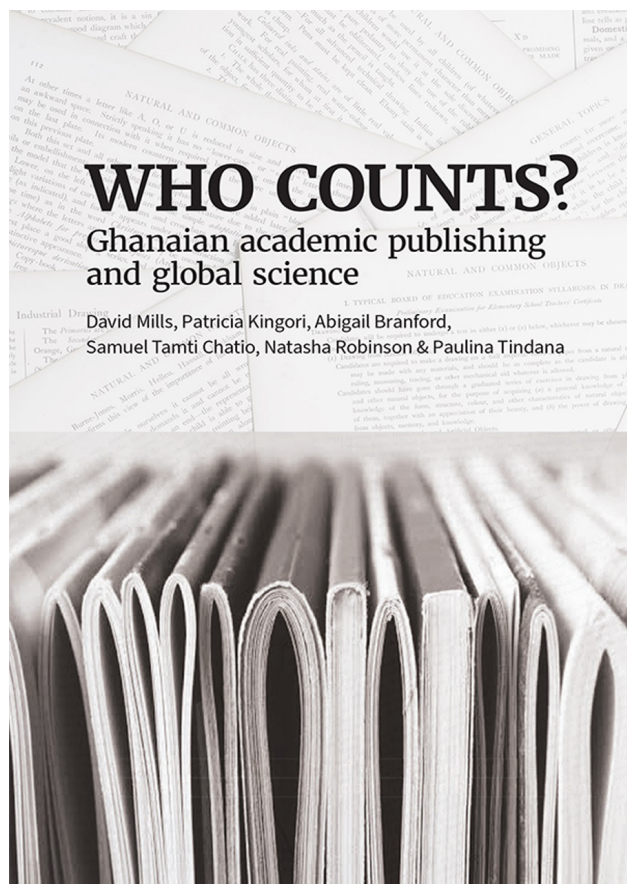
Miles Larmer
Director, African Studies Centre.



Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò speaking at the Annual Lecture

Exploring Education: from the influence of bibliometric coloniality in West African academia to colonial discourses in England's schools

Abigail Branford



As a graduate of the MSc in African Studies, it was incredibly special to return to the department and teach on the MSc this academic year. I provided sabbatical cover for Dr Miles Tendi, lecturing on the Core Course “Themes in African History and the Social Sciences” in Michaelmas and Hilary terms. Hilary provided the opportunity to conceptualise a new topic for Week 8 where I developed a lecture on The Politics of African Education Systems. Here we discussed the relationship between education and inequality while critically engaging the claims made about marketised and digital ‘solutions’ to educational inequalities. In framing this conversation, it was helpful to draw on the work of another African Studies MSc alum, Nanjala Nyabola, who in her work on digital democracy in Kenya remarked that “the digital amplifies things that have been happening before.”

In January, the African Studies Centre kindly hosted the UK launch of our book *Who Counts? Ghanaian Academic Publishing and Global Science*, published online and open

access by African Minds. The book explored how Ghanaian academics navigate escalating pressures to ‘publish or perish’. Their experiences spoke to an unequal global science system where commercially owned citation indexes increasingly define ‘legitimate’ academic knowledge. Co-authors Patricia Kingori and Samuel Chatio were able to join us online from Ghana while David Mills and I presented in-person to a packed Kirk-Greene seminar room. David and I were also pleased to have a further article from the wider research project published in *Africa*, “[Getting by in a bibliometric economy: Scholarly publishing and academic credibility in the Nigerian academy](#)”. While in *Who Counts* we had focused on Ghanaian academics’ experiences of publishing their own research, in the article we drew on interviews with Nigerian journal editors and publishers. The title speaks to the ways in which, despite the exclusion of the great majority of Nigerian scholarly journals from Scopus and Web of Science citation indexes, many of these journals are nonetheless ‘getting by’ due to the dedication and ingenuity of their editors.

While lecturing in the ASC, I was also completing my doctorate in Oxford’s Department of Education where my thesis was titled “Decoding ‘Balance’: Learning about the British Empire in English Secondary Schools.” I drew on classroom ethnography, focus groups and surveys to understand how high school students in England both resisted and reinforced curricula messages about the imperial past. Here I found the work of Stuart Hall on encoding and decoding particularly useful for thinking about how curricula messages are shaped by teachers’ professional practices and how different students decode the same curricula messages in different ways. This threw into relief how the public discussion of history education and imperialism flattens high school students into a passive undifferentiated group who simply absorb and repeat the narratives they are told in the classroom. By contrast, my research describes how students’ broader lifeworlds and agentive meaning making shaped their narratives of imperialism. Many of my research participants brought up the curricula message of ‘balancing’ so-called ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of the British Empire – which is still a prevalent framing of imperialism in history education materials in England – but they often drew on ideas developed beyond the classroom to make sense of (or reject) this framing. That place and identity mattered in history education was not lost on students themselves. Chido was a participant in one of my school ethnographies who described her school as exceptional in the way that it taught a critical history of imperialism. Every student in Chido’s GCSE history class was from a former colony and her own multicultural family had immigrated to England from Ghana and Zimbabwe. When I asked about her experience of learning the history of the British Empire in her school, she thought for a

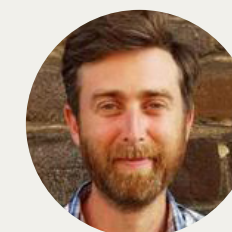
moment before replying: “in places where history is taught when it glorifies the British Empire – I guess more privileged areas – they are able to ignore certain things because it doesn’t affect them as much as it may affect us.”

The best part of being back in the ASC has been the dynamic seminar class discussions. Arresting remarks from MSc students would often stick in my mind long after class had ended. Sometimes they were witty aphorisms, or striking insights which turned a topic in new directions, or the collective rethinking of the utility of different paradigms.

Similarly, it was great to be able to share so many highlights of the year with the MSc cohort. Many of the MSc students attended our book launch and afterwards a few made sure to say “we are proud of you.” Even better, in my last week of teaching I was able to share that I had passed my doctoral viva with no corrections. While I had introduced myself at the beginning of the year as still completing the doctorate, the MSc cohort would often address emails to me as though I had already finished. In fact, I’d gotten everything in their emails: from “Dear Abi”, to “Dear Dr Branford”, even “Dear Prof”, and my personal favourite compromise position “Dear Dr Abi”. So, it was particularly special in our last class of the academic year to share my good news that now I really am Dr Abi.

Researching Radio Broadcasting in Zambia

Peter Brooke



In August and September of 2022 I conducted a fortnight’s research trip to Zambia consisting of archival work and oral interviews on the history of radio broadcasting and listening in the country, c. 1940-1990. The trip was very successful and I gathered a wealth of material. I am deeply grateful to the Beit Fund for supporting my trip and for granting me several extensions in light of the Covid pandemic.

Oral history interviews dominated my work in Zambia. Over the fortnight I conducted 18 individual interviews and two group interviews comprising 15 participants in Lusaka, Kafue and Chongwe. The majority of participants were members of the public from a wide range of social backgrounds who shared their memories of listening to the radio, including several very elderly individuals who remembered the colonial period. I also interviewed a smaller number of key political figures who had been involved with broadcasting policy, including a Minister for Information, a Director of Press Communications and a Director of the Secret Service, and several retired broadcasters from the Zambian National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC). Many of the participants were elderly and I was pleased to have recorded their testimonies before they were lost.

I also conducted research in the National Archives of Zambia, which holds a wealth of under-researched documentation on broadcasting policy and listening research produced by central government and ZNBC, and in the Special Collections section of the Library of the University of Zambia, where I used their collection of historic newspapers and archives relating to student activism. Some of these archives contained documents in indigenous languages so I engaged a PhD student in History at the University of Zambia as a translator and research assistant. Unfortunately I did not have enough time to use the other major archive in Zambia relating to broadcasting, namely the Zambian Broadcasting Corporation Sound Archive, before I left so I employed the same research assistant to transcribe a selection of recordings after my return to the UK.

The research will have two outputs: first, an article on the gendered nature of radio audiences in Zambia in the *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, which has been provisionally accepted for 2023; and second, several chapters in my forthcoming monograph on *Radio Revolution: Politics, Society and Culture in Southern Africa, 1940-1990*, which has been provisionally accepted by Cambridge University Press and I hope to complete in 2024.

Ghana's gold mining industry and communities – cooperation with Ghana Gold Expo

Miles Larmer



The Oxford Delegation visiting a local mine affected community

The African Studies Centre is always exploring innovative ways to partner with African actors to help address the increasingly complex challenges – political, economic, social and environmental – facing the continent. In doing so, we seek to ensure that African-based solutions to these challenges are at the forefront of what we do. In December 2022, we cooperated with the Ghanaian government agency Ghana Gold Expo Foundation (<https://ghanagoldexpo.org/about-ghana-gold-expo/>) in organizing a landmark Strategic Mining Workshop, focusing on the challenges of ensuring effective Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Ghana's industrial gold mining sector. As a historian of mining in central and southern Africa, my work has focused on the exploitative nature of colonially connected capitalist mining, its historical failure to share the benefits of mineral wealth with mine workforces, communities and nation-states, and its negative social and environmental effects.

While Ghana's gold mining sector has been subject to criticisms in these respects, the industry and the country's government are seeking to improve its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices. This workshop accordingly brought together representatives of many leading mine companies and the Chamber of Mines, national and local government representatives, and – to a limited extent – civic leaders from mine-affected communities. I headed a delegation from the University of Oxford which – myself excepted – was composed of

Oxford-based African scholars whose research explores the relationship between mine companies, communities and the state in west and central Africa. Oxford's participation in this event was generously funded by an ESRC Impact Acceleration grant designed to enable Knowledge Exchange Dialogues. Dr David Damtar (Junior Research Fellow in Black History), Cynthia Kwakyewah (DPhil Sociology), Lisa Kwaleyela (DPhil Area Studies Africa) and Olivia Tienin (MSc African Studies, 2021/22) each presented to the workshop on their research. In doing so, they raised concerns about the industry's CSR policies and human rights record, its specific impact on and historical marginalization of women, and the challenges of effectively defining the 'community' that is affected by mine activities – and which should therefore participate in and be consulted about CSR initiatives.



The University of Oxford Delegation



Western Regional Minister Hon. Kwabena Okyere Sarko-Mensah and ASC Director Miles Larmer

The recommendations of the Oxford participants, while critical of mine companies in many respects, were nonetheless well received. The workshop was strikingly open, participatory and transparent, and was broadcast live on Ghanaian TV and social media. Disagreements between the government and the mine companies about the level of mine revenue accruing to the state were aired in a combative but open manner. Underlying such tensions is, however, a continuing and widespread perception that the industrial mining of gold by multinational corporations – as with other minerals across Africa – does not result in sufficient benefits flowing to the communities that live and work in gold producing areas.

To witness this impact first-hand, workshop participants spent the second day of the event visiting mine-affected communities in the towns of Tarkwa and Nkroful, and seeing how CSR activities were being implemented there in the areas of schooling and leisure. While it was impossible in such a short visit to meaningfully assess community receptivity and participation in these initiatives, these visits provided a glimpse into the difficulties faced by companies to meet the expectations of local communities about CSR and the wider (re)distribution of mining wealth. In documenting these complex relationships, Oxford scholars in and around the African Studies Centre aim to facilitate improved understanding of the contested nature of mine relations, both historically and today.

Miles Tendi



I was on sabbatical leave in the 2022-23 academic year. I pursued two research goals in my time away from the African Studies Centre. First was the completion of a book about gender and coups, which will be published by Oxford University Press in 2024. The second objective was a research trip to Nigeria in January and February 2023, to explore the history of Nigeria's contributions to Southern Africa's 1970s and 1980s liberation struggles. It was a fascinating and edifying time in Nigeria, accessing relevant archival material and conducting research interviews, in the context of ongoing competitive national election campaigns, eventually won by Bola Ahmed Adekunle Tinubu and the All Progressives Congress party. I am looking forward to the 2023-24 academic year, when I return to the African Studies Centre as Director for two years.

Human Security and Democracy in Ghana and West Africa

Miles Larmer



Hon. Kan-Dapaah with students and colleagues

My visit to Ghana in December 2022 also enabled a meeting with Edward Kwaku Asomani, an alumnus of the MSc in African Studies who now occupies the key position of National Security Coordinator. Ghana, although one of Africa's most democratic and open societies, faces numerous interrelated challenges that threaten its society, environment and economy. Along with much of the African continent, the Ukraine crisis has fuelled inflation and necessitated a requested bailout of the country's economy by the International Monetary Fund. Meanwhile, the growth in authoritarian military regimes in Sahelian West Africa – in Guinea, Mali and Burkina Faso – has stalled the deepening of democracy and political accountability in West Africa. The failure of France's military attempts to combat radical jihadism, and the unpopularity of French armed forces, have created opportunities both for a reassertion of military rule and for the growing influence of non-Western militaries, particularly the Russian Wagner Group.

As a result of this connection between Ghana and Oxford, the African Studies Centre hosted Ghana's Minister for National Security, Hon. Albert Kan-Dapaah, on 22 February 2023. Speaking on the subject 'Challenges To Democracy In West Africa: Ghana's Role In Regional and International Cooperation', the Minister spoke eloquently about the historical and more recent origins of West Africa's current situation. He emphasised the considerable achievements of West Africans in overcoming the legacies of colonialism and deepening democracy in the region in the 1990s and 2000s. More recently, however, the adverse effect of the Ukraine crisis, the continuing threat of jihadist insurrection, and the recent resurgence of authoritarianism have created major new challenges to the region's democratic countries. Put simply, can democratic governments demonstrate to their populations that democracy can deliver human security and material improvements to their lives and livelihoods? In this respect, the Minister explained that for Ghana to flourish, it requires specific support from its foreign allies, both in terms of military aid (as opposed

to the unwelcome presence of foreign troops) and development aid.

In a lively question-and-answer session, Minister Kan-Dapaah demonstrated the considerable value to Oxford in general, and the African Studies Centre in particular, of direct engagement with senior officials at the cutting edge of real-world decision-making on the continent. His presentation demonstrated that imminent military threats and economic crises cannot be delinked to the broader context of enduring poverty, inequality and human development.

During his visit, the Minister also met with Ghanaian students and colleagues. He was evidently impressed by the range and quality of research being conducted by Ghanaians at Oxford, and emphasised the importance of closer cooperation between Ghanaian academia and state officials on the one hand, and current and former Ghanaian students of the University of Oxford in particular. The African Studies Centre will seek to build on the achievements both of the December 2022 workshop, and the Minister's visit and talk, to strengthen ties with Ghanaian universities, institutions and alumni in the coming years.



Hon. Albert Kan-Dapaah speaking in Oxford



Edward Kwaku Asomani, MSc in African Studies alumnus, now National Security Coordinator of Ghana

African Studies Centre and Beyond

Rachel Taylor



TORCH Network in African Literatures, Languages and Cultures

One of the joys of African Studies at Oxford is connecting with other scholars with interest in Africa, both in the African Studies Centre and beyond. This year I founded the TORCH network in African Languages, Literatures and Cultures, together with Dorothee Boulanger and Tinashe Mushakavanhu, to provide an interdisciplinary meeting place specifically for humanities projects engaging with African cultures. We have complemented the existing African Studies Seminar by running or co-hosting events on African film, on queer Africa, on memory and archives in Congolese art, on Yoruban oral literature and ecological epistemologies, and on Angolan, Namibian and Tigrayan literatures. Students from the African Studies MSc have been keen participants, and have given plenty of inspiration for events for the future. This year's programme of events will conclude with a two-day early career conference on New Directions in African Humanities, with presentations on topics ranging from the epistemological value of Ayan drum poetics, to Kiswahilisation campaigns in 1970s Kenya. Working with a larger committee of interested people in Oxford, drawn together by this year's events, we're in the process of planning more events for next year, looking at Swahili poetry, museum cultures, and much more besides.

Cosmopolitanism, Mobility, and Borders

This has been the year that in-person conferences have largely resumed after the Covid hiatus, and like many in the department I attended the European Conference of African Studies (ECAS) in Cologne, with, in my case, a stop-over at an archive on the outskirts of Paris.

At ECAS, I presented on the cosmopolitan identity crafted by men from Unyamwezi (Tanzania) in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and how this cosmopolitanism has been forgotten because it was based on intra-Africa, not intercontinental connections. I argue that, over this period, men from the region made the display of cosmopolitan connections and knowledge central to being honourable, prestigious men, and they developed networks and skills that made their mobility possible. While Africa in general has never been 'local' in the way Europeans often assumed, with instead many African societies welcoming and integrating 'outsiders' and valuing links with far-flung places and knowledge sources, the cosmopolitan focus of nineteenth-century Nyamwezi men was extreme. Many worked as caravan porters and traders, walking hundreds of miles between the Indian Ocean coast, Unyamwezi and on to Uganda, to southern Tanzania and Zambia, or to Congo. They gained linguistic skills and cultural knowledge that made travelling through or living in other areas of East Africa possible and rewarding, and maintained networks spreading information on conditions and opportunities.

With the formation of German East Africa, their mobility – despite government attempts at prevention – gave them options beyond the borders of the one colonial state, such as

leaving European plantations to work for higher wages on clove plantations on Zanzibar, or travelling to Kenya to avoid attempts to reduce pay in German-owned plantations on the coast. As I demonstrated, the concept of cosmopolitanism can be useful for understanding intra-continental mobilities, not just transcontinental connections.

All of this leads to a question: where did the cosmopolitans go? Or more specifically, where did these cosmopolitans go. Today the Swahili – coastal and island Muslims – are widely recognised as a cosmopolitan society who maintain connections with a broader Indian Ocean world. But Nyamwezi people today place less emphasis on cosmopolitan connections. In fact, in Zanzibar, they are simply the prototypical 'mainlanders' – those distant from the island's culture and history, and associated instead with the Tanzanian national state. As I show, in the context of Nyamwezi men's uncontested Africanness, three different groups increasingly came to define Nyamwezi men as 'local' as opposed to cosmopolitan. Firstly, colonial officials saw the Nyamwezi as an inherently local 'tribe', at risk from runaway modernization. Secondly, Swahili coastal and island inhabitants saw themselves as cosmopolitan, connected to Muslim civilization, and distinct from the 'barbaric' Nyamwezi whom they often lived or worked alongside. Finally, in the context of nationalism and pan-Africanism, Nyamwezi men and women worked with others in the colony to craft themselves as Africans – to claim rights and connections with others on the basis of their origins. Claiming their belonging through a shared sense of Africanness inherently downplayed many of the cultural differences that previous generations of Nyamwezi men had successfully navigated, while also distancing themselves from many Zanzibaris who claimed a separate, islander, identity.

It would be nice to leave the story here, with a focus on the intellectual and creative work of Nyamwezi men and women in the lead up to independence, but the practicalities of travel to ECAS are a reminder of the global structures restricting many Africans' mobility today. There is a painful irony in travelling across borders to present and research on connections and networks built by people from present-day Tanzania, knowing that my own mobility would be significantly more difficult, if not impossible, for a scholar travelling from the UK on a Tanzanian passport. This is not news to many in the department, of course; every year some students are delayed in arriving in Oxford by delays in obtaining visas, while UK-based scholars with African passports know only too well the precision, planning, and costs needed to obtain permission to attend conferences or to visit archives elsewhere in Europe or in North America. Similarly, as noted in the recent book, *Who Counts?* (see page 4) Ghanaian Academic Publishing and Global Science by a team of researchers based in Ghana and Oxford, including African Studies Centre's own Abigail Branford, academic publishing and prestige valorise the 'international', while journals across Africa are often classed in these hierarchies as inherently 'local'. As a historian by training, I often shy instinctively away from both present-day connections and from structural determinants. Working in an African Studies department is a necessary reminder of what this misses, and the need to face up to, and fight against, the continued inequities of academia and beyond.

Redesigning Democracy: Conversations on Radical Social Change and Alternative Politics in Africa

Dr Doris Okenwa



In October 2022, I convened a two-day conference on Redesigning Democracy: Alternative Politics, Popular Culture and the Next Generation Politics in Nigeria with the overwhelming support of the African Studies Centre, Africa Oxford initiative (AfOx) and, Yiaga Africa. It was a first-of-its-kind event that successfully brought together a wide range of voices from activists, to academics, creatives and politicians to debate with each other. This signals a critical methodological intervention in African Studies where scholarship incorporates a diverse range of voices equally participating in and shaping the conversation.

The event also coincided with the two-year anniversary of the EndSARS protests that saw young Nigerians march against police brutality and demand radical change in the nation's overall and governance architecture. While they eventually left the barricades, a heightened sense of political consciousness remained and expanded into direct engagement with electoral politics via emergent forms of political mobilisation. Some quarters describe this as a novel awakening while others, myself included; argue that Nigerian youths have never been apolitical not if we take an expansive view of politics, political actors and political spaces.

Over the years, we have seen spaces of influence grow steadily through everyday imaginations and processes. From the creative industry to innovation and technology, these democratized forms of cultural productions have pushed the boundaries of the political. While electoral politics is crucial to the democracy project, Redesigning Democracy invites an expansive conceptualisation of politics beyond the parochial preoccupation with big politics. It calls for an exploration of alternatives forms

and spaces of real politics in ways that do not romanticise, essentialise and exceptionalise the Nigerian or African case, but raises critical questions about democratic participation, popular culture, new politics, and youth in ways that speak across and beyond the continent. Indeed, our role as scholars is to interrogate and explore diverse social phenomenon happening around us historically and contemporarily. To explore ideas that speak to events of our current times, particularly the demand for alternative responses and approaches to politics.

The first day was convened virtually and chaired by Professor Wale Adebani, the Presidential Penn Compact Professor of Africana Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. It featured a novel panel that comprised Nnenna Elendu-Ukeje, a former member of parliament and three-term Chair of the Committee of Foreign Affairs; Simi Olusola a self-described T-shaped professional, development consultant, and the 2023 candidate for a seat in 2023 Ekiti state assembly; Debo Adebayo (popularly known as Mr. Macaroni), content creator, thespian and producer; Seun Okibaloye, journalist and host of the critical acclaimed weekly political program, Politics Today on Channels Television and Professor Okechukwu Ibeanu, Professor of political science and former National Electoral Commission (INEC) Nigeria's election management body.

Speaking on the backdrop of their varied experience in and around politics, they shared ideas ranging from how to navigate big politics, mobilise popular support, build social capital, and political influence outside normative means.

An overarching theme that emerged from all the speakers was that 'youth politics' can no longer be confined to the

margins or dismissed as mere expressions of the weak that have little or no impact on political change. Rather, it is coming into its own and wielding a growing direct influence whether through creative arts or protests. And this is not peculiar to Nigeria as we have seen similar trends across Africa where so called marginal voices are redefining politics away from the orthodoxy. However, panellists did not shy away from the complexities of these ideas. They drew our attention to the difference between alternative politics and alternative politicians, in the sense that changing the face of politics requires a steady fundamental seismic collective shift in ideas and values beyond the quest for individual model personalities to transform African politics overnight.

These nuanced insights were carried on to the second session held in-person at the Investcorp Lecture Theatre and chaired by our very own Director of the African Studies Centre, Professor Miles Larmer, also featuring another stellar cast comprised of the musician and rising politician Olubankole Wellington, Ayisha Osori, author of Love Does not Win Elections, Portia Roelofs, author of Good Governance in Nigeria, Chukwuemeka Nwangele, President of Oxford Africa Society, Samson Itodo, Executive Director of Yiaga Africa, HE. Sanusi Lamido Sanusi and the keynote speaker, Dr Kayode Fayemi, Former Governor of Ekiti State, Nigeria.

In critical conversation, they explored alternative politics as a site of encounter but also as a long durée process of reconstructing politics through multiple forms of interactions. Our illustrious students also brought their



astute analytical insights to the debates and I encourage readers to join the conversation by exploring the full sessions available online.

DAY 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= lEoeouTT5M>

DAY 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCo2xCFUrVA>

Beyond the conference, Redesigning Democracy and Alternative Politics in Africa is an idea I hope to continue developing towards a richer understanding of how African Politics is changing today.





China in Angola: Neither a win-win nor a loss-loss situation

Rui Verde



The research that I am pursuing at the University of Oxford's African Studies Centre is becoming more fascinating every day. It deals with the economic presence and effects of China in Angola, which is considered by many observers as a paradigm for Africa.

One particularly interesting aspect is that the present context tends to enunciate a very polarized approach to the matter. The official Chinese discourse is crystallized around the idea that it is a win-win situation. On the other hand, western sources tend towards descriptions of an overwhelming debt trap. To complicate matters further, Chinese academic analyses of the subject are usually carried out in Mandarin, preventing easy access to those who do not know the language.

Common opinion on research methods tends to advise an indirect approach using previous studies on China in Africa and in Angola in particular. However, such a strategy is not satisfactory as most of the texts are themselves indirect, meaning that we are building on the insights of others which are in turn based on the insights of others, rather than on direct sources.

Consequently, my research obsession has been to obtain direct sources, both Chinese and Angolan, and to strip myself of my pre-understandings as much as possible. In many ways, my persistence has paid off, and I have been able to talk directly with and obtain material from Beijing-based researchers specializing in Angola and from very senior Angolan officials who participated in the initial processes of Angola-China relations. Consequently, I have been able to obtain an interesting picture, of which I make a mere summary here since it is a work in progress. It has become evident that we cannot speak of a debt trap in Angola any more than we would in similar situations in Latin America or elsewhere in Africa related to the United Kingdom and USA at the end of the 19th and 20th centuries. China filled the vacuum left in Africa by the disinterest of other powers after the end of the Cold War and is currently on a learning curve as to how to react to typical incidents when making loans and investments, for example payment difficulties, debt relief claims, the execution or non-execution of guarantees, restructuring, and phenomena related to political instability caused by financial demands. In a way, there is nothing new regarding the financial woes of foreign powers in Africa. However, this is not to be complacent or to argue that there are not serious problems with Chinese involvement in Angola.

A fundamental fact is that China became involved in Angola largely because of private personal relationships. Initial contact was promoted by several businesspeople who acted as intermediaries for Angola, specifically for armament, and although the relations were presented to the world as state-to state, in practice there was a privatization of Chinese involvement. Several private companies were formed to channel a large proportion of the resources obtained from China, meaning that there was a privatization of sovereignty in Angola's relationship with China. It has been shown in recent high profile criminal charges in Luanda courts that a significant part of the Angolan debt contracted to China was privately diverted by acts of corruption, and my research is estimating that this is at least around 50%.

This raises an obvious problem in that it would not have been possible without Chinese connivance, even involuntary. Therefore, even if we should not talk about a debt trap, an "opacity trap" should be noted. The fact that business with China is executed with little transparency and a mantle of secrecy has allowed those involved to create mechanisms for the private appropriation of public funds. China apparently realized this from 2015 and took measures, while Angola's realization only began in 2017 and the procedures are still inadequate.

China's money has allowed Angola to make great advances, but it has also been the target of intense criminal activity that is only now beginning to emerge. Naturally, this characteristic contaminates Angola's debt to China and must be addressed by both parties.

The epistemology of stone

Tinashe Mushakavanhu



It was inevitable that at some point in my life I would attempt to read stone, or quarry deep in the stone archive. Zimbabwe, means house of stone. We're the stone people. As a literary scholar who has been grappling with the narrative manifestations of history and the imagination, politics and power in Zimbabwe, I decided to embark on a mission to squeeze the soul out of stone.

I started from a basic premise. Beyond the architectural metaphor of Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's novel, *House of Stone*, who were the stone workers behind the legend of Great Zimbabwe? The country itself gets its name thanks to the Shona people's long artisanal tradition of stone working. Stone is not just a metaphor, but people's blood, sweat and tears. Stone is a medium of being.

Frustrated with the anthropologic and reductive colonial narratives on stone sculpture in Zimbabwe, I have been working on a book project called, *The Stone Philosophers*. I argue that stone sculpture was not a peculiarity that was ignited by the colonial encounter as is commonly told. The arrival of Frank McEwen, a British curator appointed as the inaugural director of the National Gallery of Rhodesia in 1956, is often seen as the beginning of serious art in Zimbabwe. And yet, art was always there, through generations and traditions. It was just not yet classified in anthropological terms, or exhibited in the colonial museum, or the white cubes.

My project is an appraisal of a distinctly Zimbabwean art form born of ingenuity and resilience. It's a project driven by the quotidian and anecdotal material that has been lost through the anthropological delight of the art's self-appointed 'white' patrons. The stone sculpture movement in Zimbabwe is an organic phenomenon, a group of people—friends, cousins, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives—who significantly contributed to African modernism in the 20th Century.

The stone sculptural objects that they produced displayed a unique combination of systematic simplicity with epistemic complexity, that is to say the amount, variety and kind of knowledge embodied in the art has never been fully appreciated beyond the tropes Binyavanga Wainaina articulated in his essay, 'How to write about Africa.' Zimbabwean stone sculpture was trapped in a language that fed into ideas of black culture during the colonial period.

Even though these black artists 'emerged' during the decolonisation period of the 1950s and 1960s, they

remain marginal figures. Once Rhodesia declared unilateral independence in 1965, it became a retrogressive island of white supremacy when it broke away from its mother country Britain. The history of stone sculpture is inseparable from the history of the racist afflictions endured by its artists and by other black Zimbabweans. The art persisted, despite being confronted on all sides by deepening inequalities of power and material resources and marked by persistent racism.

The *Stone Philosophers* through storytelling contests how the 'archive' on African art history has been curated. Most of the artists have since died, and are consistently cited as footnotes to a history that without their authorship would not exist. I pay homage to them because they deserve their flowers. I ask: How do we honour our dead? How do we remember them, and their stories? How do we celebrate black African artists?

The network of black artists who made Zimbabwean stone sculpture famous grew organically, from village to village, through informal collaborations, which were eventually co-opted into the white art world of Rhodesia, and subsequently exported to Europe and North America. My book is an ensemble of the artists' stories and creativity and presents them in full focus.

Tinashe Mushakavanhu is a Junior Research Fellow in African & Comparative Literature at St Anne's College, University of Oxford.



Reconciliation by Amos Supuni

Regenerating the African Studies Association-UK

Carli Coetzee



This year I enjoyed again teaching the African Popular Culture elective, and was impressed with the quality of the conversations and engagements in the class, and with the range of topics being researched. This year the class was taught entirely live, and we were fortunate that, unlike last year, we did not need to revert to an online class because of a suspected Covid case. Very different was my experience teaching a graduate seminar (remotely via VooV) to a group of African studies students from PKU and Tsinghua University in China, in which the entire class was Covid positive during the last two weeks of the academic semester.

A significant part of my time this year has again been spent working with early and mid-career Africa-based scholars, who are preparing articles for publication in a range of journals. This work has an institutional home in the African Studies Association of the UK (ASAUK) of which I am the President. The ASAUK collaborates with the major Africa-based academic associations to organise these workshops, in which scholars work their way through a structured and tailored syllabus. This initiative supports cohort-building, and supplements the ongoing mentoring done by Africa-based institutes and academic associations. African scholars have for some time complained about the limited options open to publishing in so-called "international" journals. The Journal Work Academy, in collaboration with journal editors and senior scholars, is designed to address this issue. The Lagos Studies Association, the African Studies Association Africa and the Mashariki conference series will all meet during the northern summer of 2023, and at each of these conferences the Journal Work Academy will run mentoring and professional literacy workshops.

In my role as the President of the African Studies Association of the UK (ASAUK) I have worked with the ASAUK council on planning an in person conference in 2024. The association turns 60 this year, and the conference theme "Generation and Regeneration" acknowledges this, while also emphasising the need for younger generations, and in particular Africa-based younger scholars, to set the research agendas and to take the lead in centring Africa-centred knowledge production. The conference will take place in late August 2024 at Oxford Brookes University.

During this year my own research has remained engaged with knowledge economies and the inequities of north-south knowledge encounters, and I have delivered invited talks and written articles that deal with questions of generations and inter-generational suspicion and conflict. I

have also written an article on the same topic, developing some of the ideas from my earlier work on campus novels – part of which appeared in *African Studies Review*. I have been completing the work on a long-standing group research project on Nigerian universities. This collaboration is one of the results of the impressive Lagos Studies Association, where we have run panels on the topic for a number of years now. The articles will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, of which I am the editor.



Youth Migration and the Global Countryside

Maryam Aslany



The academic year 2022-2023 was filled with many adventures, including extensive field research in West Africa. I spent the first three months finalising a survey design for a major EU project at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) on youth migration aspirations in three West African countries. I travelled to Ghana, Cape Verde, and The Gambia to conduct the survey pilot. Travelling for the first time to these countries gave me a great sense of the distinctive historical experience, varied cultures, and extraordinary possibilities of encounter in this region.

I spent most of the rest of the year writing and researching for my ongoing book which is on the political economy of the global countryside. *Peasants* (Bloomsbury (UK), Alfred A Knopf (USA), 2026) will tell the story of the contemporary world through five crops: rice, cocoa, sugarcane, coca and oil palm. Based on extensive research, the book will give readers an intimate understanding of the experiences and concerns of the two billion peasants who are so critical to our global future, but who appear so rarely in the pages of the international press. The project includes conducting empirical research in farming communities in Ivory Coast, Ghana, Colombia, Bolivia, India, Cambodia, and Indonesia. My aim is to come up with an empirically based account of the political economy of the global countryside in the neoliberal era.

In addition to *Peasants*, I am in the process of producing a two-season podcast series entitled *Harvest* in collaboration with two Oscar-winning producers at Hollywood-based Plan B Entertainment. Written and narrated by myself, *Harvest* is a series of contemporary stories built around events in agricultural communities. Featuring the voices of the real people involved, it captures the lived experience of the global countryside: tragedy and triumph, struggles and exploitation, despair and resistance. By investigating and unpacking these events, the series enables us to come to a rich understanding of a landscape, a society, a crop, an existence other than our own. One season of this series will take place in West Africa, for which I will be travelling back to Ghana later in the year. *Harvest* will debut with Amazon Audible in 2024.

I am grateful to African Studies Centre for giving an intellectual home for my two ongoing projects, and looking forward to many more encounters with the members of the centre.



Northeast Africa Forum 2022-23

Jason Mosley



The Northeast Africa Forum brings together students and scholars interested in examining the region from a multidisciplinary and comparative perspective. Our remit runs from the Great Lakes, through East Africa to the Horn of Africa. By hosting lectures by experienced researchers alongside post-graduates, and by mixing academic and policy research, we hope to come to a shared, factually informed and politically relevant understanding of trends in the region.

This year, the Northeast Africa Forum resumed its seminar series in a hybrid format, with most events taking place in person for the first time since the pandemic. It was a pleasure to see members of the Forum's network, and to discuss a range of interesting themes across the year. We started the year off with a screening of 'A Very British Way of Torture', followed by a discussion with producer Ed McGown (Rogan Productions) and historical consultant David Anderson (Warwick University). Filmed in Kenya and the UK, the documentary tells the story of how the British state has sought to cover up and conceal its actions in Kenya in the 1950s, where torture became a matter of policy for the colonial government, and where even the Chief of Police was driven to resignation when his protests about colonial violence went unheeded.

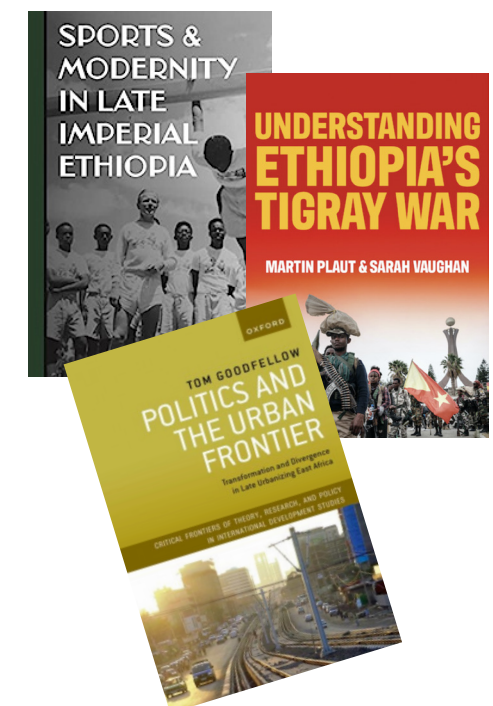
During Michaelmas, we also had a presentation from Richard Vokes (University of Western Australia) on the 'Unseen Archive of Idi Amin'. Vokes narrated the social biography of the archive – a recently uncovered collection of over 85,000 photographic negatives, some 200 of which form the basis of a major exhibition at the Ugandan National Museum – and explored what it reveals about Idi Amin the man, about the nature of his regime, and about everyday life in Amin's Uganda.

Research presented at the seminar included work from two of the Forum's members. During Hilary term, Gayatri Sahgal's presentation, 'Monopolists or Mavericks: Tax Relations of the Telecom Sector in Somalia', examined the Somali state's collection of nominal levels of tax revenue despite challenges to its coercive ability and legitimacy. She explored three alternative explanations: an outcome of elite bargains based on preferential access to political privilege; a result of mediated exchanges for resolving collective action problems; or motivated by informal norms and institutions. During Trinity term, Mads Yding's presentation, 'Between two fires: Turkana chiefs in the colonial 'contact zone' c. 1910 to 1960', explored the complex and fluid relationship between the colonial administration, the chiefs and headmen and the local communities of Turkana, in

Northwestern Kenya, and showed how the chiefs navigated the colonial contact zone; the dilemmas and challenges they faced, and how they over time appropriated the structure of chieftaincy and learned the language and practices of the colonial system, and used them to meet their own ends.

The forum had several book launch discussions, including for *Sports & Modernity in Late Imperial Ethiopia* by Katrin Bromber (ZMO, Berlin). *Understanding Ethiopia's Tigray War* by Sarah Vaughan (Policy Practice) & Martin Plaut (ICwS), and *Politics & the Urban Frontier: Transformation & Divergence in Late Urbanizing East Africa* by Tom Goodfellow (Sheffield).

The year finished off with research presentations by Berihun Gebeye (UCL), 'Towards a constitution of peace in Ethiopia: issues of process and substance', by Flora McCrone (LSE), 'I have opened the land for you': pastoralist politics and election-related violence in Kenya's arid north', and James McCann (Boston University), 'Nature and the supernatural: meaning(s) of water and humanities in Ethiopia's Upper Nile', which drew on his research with Izabela Orłowska (ZMO, Berlin).



Inspiring the Next Generation in Southern African Studies

Rebekah Lee



A symposium honouring Emeritus Professor William Beinart, taking place in Oxford on July 3 and 4, offers an opportune moment to celebrate William's seminal contributions to southern African studies and the history of modern South Africa, as well as a chance to reflect on the wider intellectual legacies of his work. One of these defining legacies can be seen through William's tireless commitment to mentoring and nurturing the next generation of scholars. From his arrival at the University of Oxford in 1997 to his retirement in 2015, scores of masters and doctoral students have benefited from William's deep wellspring of

expertise across a wide range of interdisciplinary subject areas, yet always with history as a core dynamic and framing, and delivered with his own characteristic blend of intellectual rigour, gentle inquisitiveness and good humour. Many former supervisees have now become important leaders, thinkers and researchers in their respective fields and professions, and have helped to shape the intellectual agendas at higher education institutions in South Africa, the wider southern African region and beyond.

To some extent the symposium participants, made up of his former doctoral supervisees, reflect William's own broad and deep engagement with some of most exciting scholarly debates, intellectual currents and emergent fields of the last three decades in southern African studies. The papers cut across disciplines and geographies, and are grouped into six thematic areas: Environmental and Animal Histories, Histories of Violence and Radical Politics, Understanding Past and Present in the Eastern Cape, Transforming Education and Transformative Education, Placemaking in a 'New' South Africa, and Internationalism and Humanitarian Activism. The panel themes nod to William's longstanding research interests and pre-occupations, yet also bear subtler hallmarks of his oeuvre and mode of working and supervision – the encouragement of a sort of intrepidity in thinking across geographic, temporal and disciplinary boundaries, whilst staying attentive to complex social and historical dynamics and the intricate workings of moral and political economies.

The symposium is co-convened by myself and Anne Heffernan, Assistant Professor in southern African history at Durham University and herself an MSc African Studies alumnus. We are indebted to the *Journal of Southern African Studies* for core funding for the symposium, and in particular its generous support in enabling the in-person participation of nine scholars from southern African-based institutions. We also gratefully acknowledge supplementary funding from the School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA) and the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Durham University. We are also grateful to the South African Discussion Group and the African Studies Centre for their support in hosting a public Roundtable Event honouring William, held alongside the symposium and featuring reflections from Khumisho Moguerane, Liz Gunner, Colin Bundy, Luvuyo Wotshela and Saul Dubow.



Water, Development and Biodiversity in Kenya

Mads Yding



crises. The central case of the project is the Turkwel River, which I study in the period from 1965 to 2000. The river has had immense effects on local modes of production, and resource conflicts, and from the 1960s it was increasingly seen as a driver for technological development such as irrigation schemes, hydropower, water catchment, and fish farming. From 1986 to 1991 the Turkwel Hydroelectric Power Station was constructed, and the river was dammed, naturally a huge change to the ecosystem and its users. Another big part of the project is the historical linkages between water and conflict, here I am particularly interested in the links between rainfall, drought periods, and violent cattle raiding.' The project is fundamentally rooted in the argument that to understand the evolving 'water crisis' in northern Kenya, we need to investigate the intricate historical entanglements between natural resources, the changing landscape, and its human users. Besides the immediate focus of the project, I am also interested in contributing to ongoing debates about the innovation of development cooperation, natural resource infrastructure, and energy politics in Africa.

I am grateful and excited for the opportunity to be a part of the vibrant community around the ASC. A year into my affiliation I can only say that it has been everything that I had hoped for. Everyone around the centre has been tremendously welcoming, and with a program packed with interesting seminars, I have had a wonderful start to my time in Oxford. Besides making myself familiar with Oxford, Linacre College, my new colleagues, and the wealth of interesting people here, the past year has primarily been spent in archives naturally in Oxford, but also in Nairobi and Oslo. Now, at the start of April, I am gearing up for two upcoming conferences in May and June, after the past years of remote everything, it is always nice to get out and engage with colleagues from all over the world. I look particularly forward to the next academic year in which I will hopefully get a chance to contribute to the MSc program and interact more with the students.

My affiliation as Academic Visitor with the African Studies Centre began in March 2022. I am funded by the Carlsberg Foundation and affiliated to Linacre College at the University of Oxford as a Junior Research Fellow. I completed my doctorate in International and Global History from Aarhus University, and have previously been a Visiting Fellow at Emory University and the University of Oslo and held a teaching position at Aarhus University.

My research interests include development aid, late colonial development efforts, local appropriation of development resources, pastoral populations, the connections between natural resources and biodiversity management, and development efforts in post-colonial Africa. I work primarily in Northern Kenya. My Ph.D. dissertation focused on the large development projects in Turkana, Kenya, in the first decades after independence. It focused on lived experiences and everyday life for the local inhabitants and surrounding communities and was based on oral history testimonies and extensive fieldwork. My current project shifts my focus within Turkana. It is a historical investigation of the transformative agency of water in this rural resource-scarce setting, experiencing recurrent water

Oxford Africa Society

Emeka Nwangele



As the President of [Afrisoc](#), I am delighted to be involved in driving the Africanist perspective. The Oxford University Africa Society, Afrisoc, focuses on African students' affairs at the University of Oxford. Our platform enables students interested in Africa to critically engage with core issues impacting our collective lives. Student well-being is a major concern for us. We provide student welfare support and foster social activities to improve the lived experiences of African students in Oxford and beyond.

In line with our drive for problem-solving, we are convening the [2023 Oxford Africa Conference](#). The conference, with the theme "Africa's Prosperity: A New Approach?" took place on May 12th-13th, 2023, and is widely regarded as an influential platform and one of the largest Africa-focused conferences in Europe for the last ten years. It seeks to unravel the prosperity paradox and build a new framework for deriving prosperity from Africa's multi-sectoral challenges. Through a combination of keynote speakers and integrated panels and workshops, our attendees explored the push (monetary inducement) vs. pull (innovation-driven) developmental approaches and Africa's monetary sovereignty.

Beyond this, there were great networking opportunities, including the prospect of attending an African formal dinner, lunch, and cocktails. The conference will have two tangible outcomes: a white paper and the Innovation Seed Fund (ISF). The white paper will be an insightful report/policy brief that can inform the government and organized private sector and innovators on how to innovate to solve our societal challenges and drive prosperity. The innovation seed fund will award five students a grant of £1-2,000 to support their ideas/research.

In line with the wave of elections on the continent through 2024, we decided to wade into global leadership conversations. In a panel discussion at the Oxford Union on October 7th, 2022, we hosted one of Nigeria's top presidential aspirants, Peter Obi, for the February 2023 elections to deliberate on the implications of Nigeria's economic pathway on wider Africa. The recorded insights made news headlines and have since been widely shared and viewed by millions globally. Similarly, we were part of the redesigning democracy summit with the African Studies Centre. At this forum, we shared insights with leaders in Nigeria's polity, including Banky W, Ayisha Osori, and Dr. Kayode Fayemi. We also hosted the Olu of Warri, the monarch of the oil-rich state in Nigeria, to discuss the future of oil wealth in Nigeria and how Africa can be sustainably developed beyond oil resources.

A critical metric for us is improving access to African students applying to Oxford. Through our mentorship program, we waived the application fees of the most promising applicants. We also provide the applicants with information on scholarship opportunities to fund their studies at the University of Oxford. We aim to increase the funding available to Africans at Oxford by partnering with the Africa Oxford Initiative (AFOx) to help facilitate new funding partnerships and attract new funding sources.

We also contribute towards enhancing members' well-being and bolster community spirit through a mix of innovative programs and social activities like the much-talked-about BOPs and social exchanges with Cambridge University. We have also worked closely with our partner, AFOx, for the Thrive fund geared towards students needing financial assistance.

The progress of the society has been in partnership with the African Studies Centre led by Miles Larmer. The Centre has supported Afrisoc by funding and providing a platform for engagements. The partnership has been longstanding, preceding this executive committee. Together with ASC, Afrisoc portrays the Africanist perspective.



Histories of Kenyan Female Parliamentary Pioneers

Anaïs Angelo

After working on Kenyan political history for the last ten years, and more particularly on the history of presidential powers, I started a new research project: "A History of Kenya's Female Parliamentary Pioneers" in March 2023. This project is funded by the Austrian Sciences Fund and based at the Department of African Studies, University of Vienna. While my past research focused almost exclusively on male actors, this three-year-long project hopes to explore the way Kenyan women have fought for parliamentary rights and carved their own space in elite politics. In doing so, it hopes to demonstrate how this space has evolved in the decades following Kenya's independence in 1963.

The major challenge is locating women in the sources. Archival research in the United Kingdom became a necessary step in the search for documents covering the transition from colonialism to postcolonial state-building. This is why I came to the African Studies Center as an Academic Visitor. This affiliation provided me access to the resources of the Bodleian Library, particularly the special archival collections and the online, digital sources. The Bodleian Library houses important collections related to British and African colonial and postcolonial history, and as some documents continue to be released, possibilities of archival research keep evolving. Archival research often proves more rewarding than one expects, no matter how slow it can be; I found much more than I expected and have collected enough material to nourish my current as well as future research projects.

Being an Academic Visitor also gave me the opportunity to be a part of, even if for a short time only, the intellectual life of the African Studies Centre. The discussions I had with fellow colleagues gave me the means to further refine my ideas. I am grateful to Miles Larmer, who mediated my application and welcomed me at the ASC, for the discussions we had about new perspectives in the transformation of women's political spaces in the decolonization and early postcolonial period. I had the chance to discuss the connections between gender and presidential rule with Miles Tendi, and talked about how to trace debates over masculinity in colonial sources with Kudakwashe Chitofiri. I have benefited immensely from David Anderson's insights about the latest development regarding the politics of archives and Kenyan history. I met Ph.D. students Chishimba Kasanga and Ainre Evans and learned more about their fascinating projects on Zambian and Ghanaian women's political history. Last but not least, I have had a wonderful discussion with Carli Coetzee, spanning from the challenge of combining family and academic work to how to bring academic research closer to students and to a non-academic audience.

When I arrived in Oxford, I had freshly returned from parental leave. I was eager to get back to work but was also extremely anxious about balancing my work and caring responsibilities, with two children and no institutional childcare facilities. I was accompanied by my husband, but this transition was not easy as I was still breastfeeding. I believe this is a situation many young parents may experience, yet it is rarely spoken in public. Combining research activities and parental duties was not always easy, at times even frustrating, but every discussion I had with fellow ASC researchers inspired me so much that I came home full of energy. As I'm writing this article, my 5-year-old daughter is drawing the Radcliffe Camera and the Weston library with me sitting in it. I guess I can say we both had a very inspiring time. Thank you to all the ASC researchers for their warm welcome!

Anaïs Angelo is a Senior Researcher, Elise Richter Fellow, at the Department of African Studies, University of Vienna. Her work focuses on African postcolonial political history with a focus on biography writing, the history of African presidential powers and African women's political history.



Socio-legal approaches to corruption in South Africa

Thomas Labik Amanquandor

It is approximately two years since I completed my MSc in African Studies from the ASC (2020-2021). When submitting my MSc dissertation, I muttered, "This cannot be it," primarily because my Oxford experience felt quite unfulfilling. Even though the ASC offered my cohort the best engagement with research via a series of seminars, their virtual nature made active participation challenging. The Covid-19 pandemic did take a lot from my cohort, no doubt. Personally, this was a massive blow since my goal for coming to the ASC was to uncover strategies to conduct sociology of law research on Africa from within Africa and in ways that allow Africa to speak for itself.

Before coming to ASC, I completed a 2-year MSc in Sociology of Law from Lund University in Sweden. I was excited about pursuing a PhD in the field. However, my awareness of the "Eurocentric nature" of the Sociology of Law as a discipline made my need for critical, methodological, and ethical training in researching Africa dire, especially since my career goal is to become an Africanist Sociologist of Law.

Indeed, the courses at the ASC tremendously improved my knowledge of current themes, debates, critical research methodology, strategies and ethics fine-tuned for studying Africa across multiple disciplines. After completing my MSc in June 2021, I earned a position as a research assistant on anti-corruption policy-oriented research projects relating to SDG 16.2 at Lund University (The Role of Social Norms in Fighting Corruption in Local Governments, financed by the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy) and subsequently, at Halmstad University (The Multilevel Orders of Corruption: Insights from a Post-Soviet Context, funded by the Swedish Research Council). This experience and my academic training at the ASC enabled me to design a highly competitive doctoral research proposal, which eventually earned me my current PhD position at the Institute of Criminology and Sociology of Law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Oslo. My PhD research project, through ethnographic methods, investigates how informal norms, practices and micro-power relations within local governance in South Africa resonate with or challenge the international anti-corruption norms embedded in the country's anti-corruption rules and regulations.

I am back knocking at the ASC's door once again as an Academic Visitor. I have greatly benefited from the Centre's research environment and activities. Specifically, I am happy with my engagement with the South Africa Discussion Group. I have received sound advice and built networks which

has helped me to improve my practical and methodological toolbox. This will undoubtedly prove to be immensely helpful when I conduct my fieldwork in South Africa later this year. My engagement with Professor Miles Larmer, who supervised my MSc dissertation at the ASC, has been tremendously fruitful in shaping my current work. I believe every student he has supervised will attest to how he manages to bring the best out of us. I am confident that my project will improve significantly through his feedback. I am also thrilled by the possibility of engaging more with South Africanist scholars such as Professor Rebekah Lee and Professor Maxine Bolt, who are both astute experts in exploring the complexity of the South African lived experience through interdisciplinary approaches.

I am enjoying Oxford and ASC to the fullest!



Photo credit: Maud Hol

Jonathan Jackson



Over the past year, the African Studies Centre has remained a conduit for social activity, intellectual inspiration, and academic events. During my status as an Academic Visitor to the Centre and the University, my own research has taken me to Zambia, Namibia, South Africa, and the US. This was mostly for archival work in national archives in Lusaka, Windhoek, and Pretoria, but also to the archives of the United Nations in New York.

I was also awarded a 'Bringing Research Home' dissemination grant by the British Institute in Eastern Africa, which enabled me to return to Tanzania in October 2022 to various sites of my doctoral research. I hosted a series of presentation events to report my findings, share resources, and further discuss the implications of my historical research with communities in several villages throughout the Kilombero Valley, and also with academics at Mzumbe University in Morogoro.

I also travelled to Accra, Ghana in November 2022 to attend the workshop, 'Archival Pasts Towards Archival Futures: Epistemologies, Decolonization, (Dis-)Placement', which was funded by Point Sud and hosted by the University of Ghana. There I presented a paper entirely tangential to my primary research, titled: 'Dispatched and Displaced: Reconstructing a Material and Social Archive through Early Photographic Postcards of Zanzibar.'

A further highlight of the past year was time spent during Hilary Term as a lecturer, tutor, and class convenor on the second-year history undergraduate course, 'Transformations and Transitions in African History since c. 1800', together with other members of the Oxford Faculty of History and African Studies Centre.

Finally, as I write this in April 2023, the 9th European Conference on African Studies is set to begin in a little over a month's time at the University of Cologne. This is due to be the largest ECAS to date, not least due to its postponement from 2021 and, therefore a further two years' worth of research to be shared and discovered! I will be convening a two-session panel there together with a fellow Academic Visitor at the Centre, Mads Yding, titled: '*Past futures: new approaches to the history of development as "future-making" in Africa.*'

There has been much travel, and with more to come; but each time I return to Oxford, I make sure one of first things I do is to tune in to the frequency of the Centre.

Senior Academic Visitor, 2022-2023

Sonny Iroche



My career started in 1979, as an Academic instructor at Nigeria's premiere Military training academy, the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, after serving in the one-year compulsory, National Youth Service Corps, in Lagos, Nigeria. In 1982, I changed career and joined the International Merchant Bank, a leading Merchant bank in Lagos, which was an affiliate of the First National Bank of Chicago. My banking career spanned about 30 years between the private and public sectors. Having served in executive management positions and as a policy adviser in both the public and private sectors. I then decided to apply to the African Studies Centre of the University of Oxford for the 2022/2023, Senior Academic Visitor programme to access its rich libraries and research materials for initial research into my chosen topic, which I intend to build up into a book.

My research addresses the process which led to the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994. My participation as a member of the delegation of the defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU), in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA 2) in Johannesburg in May 1992, was one of the major and last events in the enthronement of a black-led majority government, headed by Dr Nelson Mandela.

The Bodleian and the other libraries of the University of Oxford provide veritable sources of information for my research. Apart from the scholarship opportunities provided by the university, University provided me with ample opportunities to engage with seminars, conferences, lectures, and other academic endeavours. During my one-year tenure, I participated in a number of ICT training provided by the Oxford IT Services Department. The Said Business School offered an introductory seminar on Artificial Intelligence. The following academic conferences, seminars, and training amongst my other many engagements at the university are worth mentioning because of the impact and the improvement that they have had on my personal development and knowledge.

- Speaking engagement at the Oxford Energy Society on The Challenges of Power Supply in Africa: Nigeria-South Africa
- Africa Leadership Institute, Tutu Fellowship Award, in conjunction with the Said Business School. As a panellist to review the presentation of the Fellows
- Russian-Ukrainian War at the Blavatnik School of Government
- Oxford Martin School, Seminar on Decolonizing Africa-Europe Relations. Prof Carlos Lopes, June 16, 2022.
- Membership of the Oxford Union provided me with the opportunity to witness several debates, including an evening with Matt Hancock, who addressed the members of the Oxford Union on his Covid-19 scandal and his appearance on the "I'm a Celebrity Show", and the subsequent public condemnation of his participation on the TV show.

On the social and personal side, I was also actively involved in conferences, seminars, and debates at the Oxford Union, of which I remain a member. I was invited by a few student organisations, on speaking engagements, such as the Oxford Energy Society (OES), where I was the Keynote speaker on the Challenges of Power Supply in Africa- Using Nigeria and South Africa.

Another remarkable event which I attended was the Black Excellence Garden party, organized by Baroness Valerie Amos, the Master of the University College, Oxford. The event brought together professors, academics, students, and other members of the Oxford University community. It was quite a fulfilling experience, where bonds and friendships were developed.

The Senior Academic Visit programme, to me, was a most rewarding and challenging experience, which has set me forth on the path of writing a book that I have long desired to write and has impacted my attitude in traversing academia, business and politics.

As an alumnus of the Senior Academic Visitor programme at the African Studies Centre, I wish to make a few suggestions, based on my experience: though the SAV is targeted at very experienced and highly placed board-level and executive management cadre, it is still important to have a very brief (one week) Orientation Programme for the participants. This should be given serious thought, considering that the majority of the SAV, come from different environments and cultures in Africa. Which are totally different from the British environment. A dos and don'ts mannerisms and statements should be reiterated to the Visitors. The status of the Visitor, as regards the use of the Oxford logo in any form, though stated in an onboarding Agreement, should be emphasized. There is also the need to address gender inclusion and National diversity.

In conclusion, I would like to commend and appreciate the team of academic and non-academic staff of the African Studies Centre, of the University of Oxford, led by Professor Miles Larmer. You all made my one-year visit with you memorable.



Brenda McCollum Reflections on My Doctoral Journey and After

I finished the MSc in African Studies in 2019. Following my time in the African Studies Centre, I began a DPhil in History, also at Oxford. The MSc in African Studies prepared me for the research and writing demands of the DPhil. Over the course of my doctoral degree, I have undertaken fieldwork in southern Uganda multiple times. The fieldwork opportunities and training that the MSc provided prepared me for the longer and more intensive fieldwork trips which I took during my doctoral degree. Particularly, the MSc introduced me to the importance of oral sources and oral histories in the study of African history. Oral history interviews then became a central part of my doctoral research methodology. Additionally, the networks which I developed in Uganda during the MSc continued to aid and support me throughout the course of my doctoral research.

Although I was not a student in the African Studies Centre during my DPhil, the Centre has continued to be an academic home for me since 2018. The weekly seminars and communities of the Centre gave me valuable support throughout the four years of my doctoral degree. These were especially important following the onset of the COVID pandemic and the intensive lockdowns which were imposed upon us all. I am grateful to the Centre for providing support and community throughout the course of my graduate degrees.

I am now in the final term of my DPhil at Oxford. As I prepare for the viva, I am also looking for new opportunities and starting to say goodbye to the university and the Centre. I am grateful to the people of the Centre as I move into this next stage of my career, as they continue to be a resource for academic and personal support. From my first stumblings into researching the African continent in the MSc, to supporting me as I submitted my doctoral dissertation, I would not be the researcher I am today without the African Studies Centre and its community of academics.

Ian Caistor-Parker

I was part of the 2020 African Studies cohort. During the MSc, I focused on mid-twentieth-century penal policy in British-ruled Africa. Despite the year being COVID disrupted, I found my time at Oxford invaluable. I learnt much about African history and methods, as well as how, as a white researcher, to use reflexivity to write functional histories of Africa.

I am now in the Second year of a PhD programme at the University of Warwick, working on a history of the Kenyan Prisons Service from about 1950 to 1982. My thesis hopes to produce an institutional history that seeks to consider the trajectories of reform and violence and to shed light on the shifting fates of vulnerable populations.

I have just finished my first period of fieldwork in Kenya, a trip that was focused on archival research. It was an amazing but exhausting experience. Learning to navigate the Kenyan National Archive had its challenges, but was also really rewarding when things came together. Something I found to be undeniable in this experience was the ongoing implications of the migrated archive in the UK and its associated document destruction. This was thrown into sharp relief by the absences observable in the archival collections in Nairobi. On my next trip, I hope to conduct oral histories with former prison officials and relevant third parties, and also to engage with the wealth of alternative archives that exist in Nairobi.

Being in Kenya provided a fantastic opportunity to foster relationships with local academics and institutions, relationships crucial to ensuring that my research is not simply extractive. It has been very interesting to learn more about the research and perspectives of local scholars. The warm welcome I have received has been touching. My aim is to produce an anti-colonial history and to this end I am keen to go through my research methods with local scholars when I return and to disseminate my findings as widely as possible.

One frustration, that will perhaps resonate with other researchers, has been the difficulty of accessing work produced by local students even in their institutional libraries. A lack of staffing and resources means thesis are often misplaced or missing all together. Finding the right balance of being persistent yet polite when trying to track these down is crucial but challenging.

Having studied Kenya for several years but having never visited has added an additional interesting element to this trip. On the one hand I feel I know a lot about the country and it's history, on the other I know nothing! Simply being able to spend time here has been invaluable and I am very

much looking forward to returning.

I am deeply appreciative of all the support I received from the department and ORISHA, it was truly life changing.



Madeleine Jane Foote

After completing my MSt in African Studies in 2021, I went on to a History DPhil at Oxford. My academic interests are the ongoing mobilisation of colonial epistemologies in the academy, Indigenous and Black Studies, and the extractive research practices which perpetuate inequalities in knowledge production. In the context of my degree, I have made my PhD part of a larger project which I co-lead with the Angolan journalist and National Geographic Explorer, Mauro Sérgio. Together, with a local team of Angolans, we are working with communities in the remote Angolan province of Moxico to write a history of the region which more adequately reflects the perspectives and lived experiences of rural communities.

Moxico was never effectively occupied by the Portuguese, and after independence in 1975, the Angolan Civil War isolated the region until the conflict ended in 2002. Moxico is scantily documented by colonial sources, and a history of war and the ongoing issues with mines in the region have meant little research has ever been carried out there. Its rich history of resistance and the preservation of many social and cultural institutions which were largely destroyed by the Portuguese in other parts of Angola make it a unique place for basing a new history of Angola and offer new perspectives on African history. The unique opportunity also poses unique challenges, as a complete lack of infrastructure (including no cell reception, roads, electricity or running water) means that the research team has to camp wherever we go and travel fully equipped with our own solar power set-up, water filtration system, medical supplies, and any and all food and equipment we might need. One of the most challenging aspect of this work has been finding funding for such rigorous research, especially since historians usually get grants to travel to archives and are not given funds to live in a tent and cook over a fire for weeks or months at a time.

Although I am affiliated to the History Faculty, the ASC has remained a centre of gravity during my time at Oxford. The community there has been an essential part of my academic work but also my activism. For the last two years, I have been supporting sexual violence survivors at Oxford and working towards more equitable and just policies for the students who face harassment, misogyny and sexual misconduct while pursuing their studies. Women and gender minorities routinely face violence and discrimination in institutions of higher education. Students of colour and Black, queer, economically disadvantaged and international students face disproportionate amounts of violence, and Oxford is no exception. In the past two years, the feminist collective I helped organise has successfully fought for policies prohibiting staff-student relationships, lobbied to end the use of non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements for victims in cases of gender and racial discrimination, and campaigned



against allowing professors with document histories of sexual misconduct to have contact with students.

Beyond the ASC, I've had the pleasure of co-convening the Transnational & Global History Seminar. Our theme for the last year has been "diaspora", and it's been a privilege to invite dozens of speakers to share their research on topics ranging from the history of diasporic music, food histories, nationalism among diasporic communities, and more. Next year, I look forward to continuing that work alongside my research and activism, as well as working as an organizer for The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities flagship program, Race & Resistance. Please, no one tell my supervisor, Professor Miles Larmer, that I am doing so much work outside of writing my dissertation.

You can follow my team's work in Angola at expeditionmoxico.com, where you can also subscribe to get regular updates from us while we are in the field.

Charden Pouo Moutsouka

Attending the African Studies Centre at Oxford University has been an exhilarating experience. It has been a truly enriching experience to be immersed in an academic environment with renowned scholars and a diverse group of students. The nine-month programme is challenging but extremely rewarding. I have been intellectually challenged, in particular by the multidisciplinary nature of the course, but I've equally enjoyed studying interdisciplinary approaches. The study of Africa from a historical, anthropological, political, and literary standpoint has been extremely illuminating. The courses are designed to foster independent thought and critical analysis, and the lectures were thought-provoking and intellectually stimulating. I thought the professors were knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their respective subjects, and their passion has been contagious.

One of the highlights of my experience has been the opportunity to participate in seminars and workshops organised by the centre. The seminars provided a rich intellectual and social space to explore African issues and connect with people from all over the world who shared an interest in Africa. The workshop brought together academics and experts from various disciplines and provided a forum for stimulating discussions. I adored the fact that, following the workshop, we would head to a pub where we could converse with scholars and exchange ideas with them. For instance, I met one professor, whom I now consider my mentor, at one of those events. I have also been able to explore the African community in Oxford and attend events that celebrate African culture and heritage.

Now, one of the challenges of being a black African student in an academic environment like Oxford is the lack of representation. So, as a black African student, I was pleased to see the diversity within the student body. It has been a great opportunity to learn from my peers, and I have enjoyed being part of a community that celebrates and values diversity, although I must also admit that things have not always gone smoothly.

Overall, my experience at the Oxford African Studies Centre has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my academic journey. The academic rigour, the support from my supervisor, the cultural exposure, and the diversity of the student body have made for a well-rounded and enriching experience. I will be leaving Oxford with a broader perspective and a deeper understanding of what African studies entail. I am grateful for the opportunity to have been part of such an incredible academic community.



Kunle Ogedengbe

Personal Experience of Studying Africa at Oxford



Studying Africa at the University of Oxford comes with a lot of experiences and for unfunded students without financial aid, it is a separate challenge altogether. But put together, the experience is a once-in-a-lifetime one. It not only brings you into conversation with the best globally, it also helps you connect your own personal experience with wider themes and learn from it.

Learning was more specific with strong importance given to critical analysis. Class discussions brought out the salient issues which pushed us to connect our conversations with themes across disciplines. The programme had a very fair tour of Africa's 54 countries. By the time one comes to the end of the programme, one would have had an academic visit to not only all the regions of the continent but also to (almost) all 54 countries. Expectedly, not all topics are strange but the fact that the course took a historical perspective gave depth to each topic and showed the light in different directions which became handy for further studies. The three terms of the course started with two courses in the first term, Michaelmas Term. In this term, our study was based on two core courses. These are Core Course 1 (Methodology, Ethics and Research Strategies) and Core Course 2 (Themes in African History and the Social Sciences). These courses were examined through summative essays after many formative essays

during the term. While CC2 extended to Hilary Term, CC1 ended with Michaelmas Term.

Personally, all topics covered in CC1 were great, but I found ethnography more engrossing. This is because as a Nigerian with over 250 different ethnic groups, the strategy for understanding each group becomes obvious. The knowledge of ethnography will definitely be very insightful back home.

Core Course Two extended to Hilary Term but the topic on military incursion into African politics was a watershed while the topic on media in Africa was very interesting especially for me with my background in mass communication and media studies. Other topics in CC2 in Hilary Term included Mandela, Gandhi and Fanon; China in Africa; African Literature; AIDS in Africa; Africa's Extractive Industry; Africa and Offshore Economy; and Education in Africa. For my cohort, the optional course was numerous, but I settled for African Decolonisation, 1956 to 1994. While I found the role of the media in the decolonisation period in Africa interesting, I could not but pay critical attention to factors that aided the decolonisation and independence process of African countries from within African colonies, within the countries of the colonial masters and factors from elsewhere.

A visit to the Pitt Rivers Museum led by Dr Abigail Branford was a great way to encapsulate the history of global development. My interest in the visit was rekindled by the Programme Director, Dr Peter Brooke who said a workout of Nairobi Museum shows the history of Kenya in one of the African Decolonisation, 1956 to 1994 classes. At Pitt Rivers Museum, I found my Nigeria in the museum. During a debate at the museum, I submitted that error of presentism, judging the past by the terms of the present, which historians usually caution against, should not be committed as most past people who are seen negatively today were subjects of their times.

My dissertation supervision started from Michaelmas Term through Hilary Term and Trinity Term. It ended with a submission of a thesis after passing two certificated online research training along with ethical approval from the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) prior to the commencement of the research. The supervision was comprehensive and friendly with a refresher on how to write a dissertation where we were advised to run away from the error of introduction and conclusion of the dissertation not agreeing. It was a great worthy experience of postgraduate study.

Emma Davis

The element of the MSc African Studies that I value most is the community with the other students on the course. It has been a privilege to be brought into the same room with them and hear their views on the histories of Africa and its contemporary situations. It was in the seminars and in casual situations with other students that I had the most challenging and thought-provoking conversations over the year, and I'm very grateful for this.

The professors and lecturers at the African Studies Centre have been supportive over the course; I felt like I could go and chat with them at any time. I took an optional African Popular Culture module with Carlie Coetzee, and the seminars with her were especially excellent. I thoroughly enjoyed exploring themes of audience, fashion, social media, and comedy in various contexts in this module.

The resources at the ASC have been invaluable in supporting me in my research. The ethics and research training sessions were important in setting me on the right path in how to conduct my research. The research grant I received from the ASC allowed me to fund my travel to and from London to use certain archives which was fundamental to my dissertation.

There are still things that the African Studies Centre could improve on, but this could be said for the University of Oxford in general. The staff at the ASC are open to feedback and comments, which is positive. I've made friends and conducted research to the best of my ability, and I'm excited to move forward on my academic path with my experience at the African Studies Centre.



Photo Gallery



African Studies

Class of 2022–23



Adekunle Ogedengbe
Nigeria

Newspapers' Framing of Resource Control Debate and National Identity in Nigeria



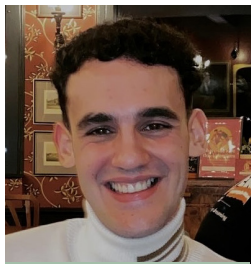
Alice Such
UK

Queer Kinship, Community Building and Agency in Contemporary Kenya: Life Narratives



Charden Pouo Moutsouka
Republic of Congo

Rethinking the Democratization by Election Theory by Lindberg: The Case of Congo Brazzaville



Dylan Cresswell
UK

Reading Zimbabwe in a Transnational Space



Ebenezer Agetiba
Ghana

Popular politics and the experiences of persons with disability in Ghana



Omar Ibrahim
Nigeria

The New 'Resource Craze': An Analysis of the Emerging Lithium Mining Industry in Nigeria



Raga Makawi
Sudan

New Civic Formations in Post Revolution Sudan



Reem Abdalla
USA/Sudan

The Khartoum Process: The Implicit Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in the Externalization of Europe's Borders



Sam Foglesong
UK

Opposition Politics and the Politics of Opposition in Senegal: A Case Study of Ousmane Sonko and PASTEF



Sam Brakarsh
Zimbabwe/USA

Theatres of Change: The Art of Subversion, Mobilization, and Communication in Zimbabwean Social Theatre



Emma Davies
UK

Loyalty and Discipline: Gender in Nigeria during the Nigeria-Biafra War, 1966-1970



Fabian Lefievre
France

Negotiating a West African homotopia: freedom and (in)visibility in Abidjan's queer lifeworlds



Jeremiah Enoch
Nigeria

Popular protests, digital activism & political participation in Nigeria: a case study of EndSARS and the 'Obidient Movement'



Julius Kaliisa
Rwanda

The Geopolitics of Africa's Nuclear Power Generation for Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Ghana



Leah Berger
Zimbabwe

ZANU-PFs Regime of Silence: Matabeleland's Response to the 2017 Coup and the Unresolved Gukuruhundi



Samantha Bell
Canada

Digital Fabric: Women Photographers, Fashion and Identity in East Africa



Samira Mohammed Ibn Moro
Ghana

Cameras on the Camps: Media Coverage Of Witchcraft Violence In Northern Ghana



Scarlett Whelan
UK

De/deeply-political women: the role of Auxillia Mngangwa



Sousan Ibrahim
UK

De facto refugees or labour migrants? A migrant-centred historical study of the Eritrean diaspora in Jeddah



Suzanne Kapelus
UK

Nursing Normalities: Experiences of South African Nurses



Lynnie Ngugi
UK

Trustee or Beneficiary? A critical examination of the relationship between constitutional judicialization and electoral justice in Kenya post 2007



Mia Harris
USA

And They Lived Happily Ever After? Reading African Romance Novels as Sites of Feminist Resilience in West Africa



Mpiti Mosothoane
Lesotho

The social impact of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project: An overview of how dams affect people's lives



Noah Gabigogo
Uganda

Christian Mission, Colonial conquest, and gender diversity in Uganda c.1890-c.1920



Olivia Shelton
UK

Searching for the shuka: Mapping the historic trajectory of the Maasai body cloth



Xaira Adebayo
Nigeria

Composing Heritage: Convivial Spatialities of Senegal



Zaphesheya Dlamini
South Africa

The gig economy and care work: on-demand platforms in the everyday lives of migrant domestic workers in South Africa



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