

# 2022 ASAUK Biennial Conference

*Diaspora: Restitution, Culture and Capital*

31st August - 4th September 2022

ONLINE: IBADAN AND NAIROBI

IN-PERSON: LIVERPOOL

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## ASAUK 22 Biennial Conference

This year's ASAUK Biennial Conference in 2022 has been unique. The world is slowly emerging from the Covid pandemic, and this conference is the first the ASAUK has run in four years, following the cancellation of ASAUK 2020 in Cardiff during the pandemic. This catastrophic global event has however given us time to reflect on our traditional approach to conferences, and to question the systems of global academic travel, which often privilege Western scholars over those from the global South; my predecessor, Ambreena Manji, Toby Green and I commented that “*The world Cannot Afford Any More Global Academic Jamborees*”<sup>1</sup>. . As an African studies association we are proud to have been able to radically change the traditional conference structure in 2022. With generous funding from the British Academy and collaboration from IFRA, and the BIEA we are delighted to be able to run two full-day sessions of our Biennial conference entirely online from Ibadan and Nairobi, with a final hybrid keynote speech delivered by the University of Ghana's Professor Akosua Adamoko Ampofo. We have also been able to enable academics and ECRs in Kenya and Nigeria to have data access to view and engage with the online conference sessions and debates on their mobile devices. The much smaller in-person conference has benefited from funding from Flutterwave, and conference support from the University of Liverpool.

Our overall conference theme: *Diaspora Remittance Flows: Restitution, Culture and Capital*, has also been explored directly by our online conference contributors from Ibadan and Nairobi, where heritage in all its forms is explored, through the contributions of eminent scholars and practitioners in the field. Nairobi's contribution to the conference has focused on land restitution and justice, an equally critical topic in Africa. Our final Liverpool hybrid session brings the debates to the fore as we consider the significant diaspora involvement in Africa's socio economic development at all levels. We are again fortunate to have our funders, Flutterwave, join this debate. As

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<sup>1</sup> See Green, Manji and Uduku (2020), Times Higher Education Supplement 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2020

is traditional with our ASAUK in person conferences, the Liverpool conference covers a range of themes and topics, we are pleased to have strong panels viewing current research areas related to gender, migration and slavery, architecture and planning, and also Nollywood, with a free Nollywood film night as part of the programme.

In keeping with our review and reflection on engagement, we have introduced a ‘free Friday’ programme that ensures all conference programme events including the keynote speech and the film night are free to attend by the Liverpool community. Our academic awards will be given out at our conference dinner and also a new award the *Lasting Legacy Award*, will also be given to two past ASAUK members at our AGM which is free for all to attend.

Whilst we may not have fomented a full scale revolution, we hope that our attempts to engage with Africa and our African colleagues through our embrace of new technologies, will ultimately help to shift and challenge structures which have stubbornly remained centralised within traditional western focused power bases to better incorporate vibrant African margins will make for an ultimately transformed post-covid conference experience. We will be working to publish key papers and themes that emerge from the conference, as a fitting output of this unique four-day event. We hope that you enjoy the conference.

**Professor Ola Uduku**

ASAUK President, 2022



# Conference Schedule

# IBADAN

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August

10:30am - 12:30pm (BST)

## **Diaspora Flows of Cultural Artefacts to and from Africa**

Zachary Kingdon | Shadreck Chirikure | Peju Layiwola | Ore Disu (EMOWA)

Location: Register for online access

1:30pm – 3:30pm (BST)

## **Diaspora Flows of Peoples and Cultures to and from Africa**

Saheed Aderinto | Taibat Lawanson | Michael Sudarkasa

Location: Register for online access

# Nairobi

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September

Opening Remarks: Hetan Shah – British Academy

10:30am - 12:30pm (EAT) (8:30am - 10:30am BST)

**Restitutionary Futures: Land Justice**

Keynote Speaker: Parselelo Kantai | Respondent: Gautam Bhatia

Location: Register for online access

2:00pm – 4:00pm (EAT) (12:00pm - 2:00pm BST)

**Restitutionary Futures: A Just Home**

Keynote Speaker: Prabha Kotiswaran | Respondent: Lily Mburu

Location: Register for online access

Closing Performance: Mshai Mwangola – Kenyan Poet



# Liverpool

## Friday 2nd September 2022 - Day One

9:00 – Location: Front of building entrance

### Registration Open

10:00-12:00 – Location: HUB 502 Room LT1

### Online: African Diasporas, Remittances and capital in a post-Covid era and Viewing the European Black Diaspora in the 2020s

Tunde Zack-Williams | Onyekachi Wambu | Opeoluwa Abitoye

(Flutterwave) | Co-Chaired by Ola Uduku | Closing Remarks Nick Westcott

12:00-14:00 – Location: (Book launch HUB 502 TR5) & (BIEA - School of the Arts Library)

### BIEA Lunch Reception & Lunchtime Book launch - The Black Atlantic Abolitionist Movement, XVII-XVIII Centuries

Jose Lingna Nafafe | British Academy

14:00-15:00 – Location: HUB 502 Room LT1

### Keynote Speaker - Afrobeats at home and away: *(re)building together.*

Akosua Adomako-Ampofo – Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana

**Break** - 15:00-15:30 – Location: HUB 502 Flex 2

15:30-17:30 - **Stream 1** (Four Panels)

### **Panel 1 - Restitution and Repair**

Ferdinand De Jong | Sarah Van Beurden | Njabulo Chipangura | Stanley Onyemechalu | Paul Basu

Location: HUB 502- Room TR4

### **Panel 2 - Ethnographies of Extraction and Extraversion in Africa**

Rosalie Allain | David Pratten | Jessica Omukuti | Thomas Cousins | Ramon Sarro | Doris Okenwa

Location: HUB 502- Room TR7

### **Panel 3 - Governance, Conflict and Militarisation**

Michael Aeby | Chris Huggins | Abel Kinyondo | Portia Roelofs

Location: HUB 502- Room TR6

### **Panel 4 - First Stop Liverpool: The West African Presence in Post-War Britain**

Louisa Uchum Egbunike | Kadija Goerge | Hassan Aliyu | Panya Banjoko

Location: HUB 502- Room TR5

**Break** - 17:30-18:00 – Location: HUB 502 Flex 2

18:00-20:30 – Location: HUB 502 Room LT1

### **Nollywood Movie night - Onye Ozi (The Messenger) & Q+A**

Toyin Moore | Alexander Bud | Yvonne Chioma Mbanefo

## **Saturday 3rd September 2022 - Day Two**

09:30-11:00 - **Panel Stream 2** (Five Panels)

### **Panel 1 - Exploring African Filmmaking Practices through Research Filmmaking: Experiences from the Screen Worlds Project**

Lindiwe Dovey | Añulika Agina | Michael W Thomas

Location: HUB 502- Room TR5

## **Panel 2 - Power Elites in Africa**

Edalina Rodrigues Sanches | Andre Marinha | Joao Conduto | Ana Lucia Sa | Olivio Kilumbo

Location: HUB 502- Room TR3

## **Panel 3 - Religion and Social Thought in West African Literature**

Abraham Waiga Ng'ang'a | Adriaan van Klinken

Location: HUB 502- Room TR7

## **Panel 4 - The Search for Biographies in Colonial Archives: The Experiences of Diasporic African Women and Children during the Era of Modern Slave Trade**

Erika Melek Delgado | Maeve Ryan | Paola Vargas Arana | Leidy Alpizar | Telma Gonçalves Santos

Location: HUB 502- Room TR4

## **Panel 5 Hybrid - Futuring in Africa**

Morategi Kale | Emma Taylor | Francisca Anita Adom-Opare

Location: HUB 502- Room TR6

**Break** - 11:00-11:15 – Location: HUB 502 Flex 2

11:15-12:45 - **Panel Stream 3** (Four Panels)

## **Panel 1 - Modernist Heritage in Africa**

Edward Denison | Iain Jackson | Ola Uduku

Location: HUB 502- Room TR7

## **Panel 2 - From Risk to Opportunity: Cannabis and Africa's socio-economic development**

Clemence Rusenga | Gernot Klantschnig | Prudence Afrika | Jephias Matunhu | Simon Howell | Neil Carrier | Kelly Fortune | Andrew Bowman

Location: HUB 502- Room TR5

## **Panel 3 - Slave Trading, Slavery and Abolitionist Intervention in Sierra Leone in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries**

Henry B Lovejoy | Sean Kelley | Suzanne Schwarz | Megane Coulon | Leidy Alpizar

Location: HUB 502- Room TR4

## **Panel 4 Hybrid - Intimacy and technological mediation – ethnographic case studies from central and southern Africa**

Lys Alcayna-Stevens | Josiah Taru | Katrien Pype

Location: HUB 502- Room TR6

12:45-14:15: Lunch & Lunchtime Events Location: HUB 502-Room Flex 2

## **Exhibition - Hidden Histories: Historia Ilyofichwa ya Ardhi na Bahari & Flutterwave Networking Event**

Thembi Mutch | Flutterwave

Locations: Exhibit: HUB 502- Room Flex 2 – Flutterwave Event: School of the Arts Library)

14:15-15:45 - **Panel Stream 4** (Four Panels)

## **Panel 1 - New Initiatives in African Diaspora Digital Humanities: Connecting Biography, Migration and 3D Educational Environments -**

Erika Melek Delgado | Paul E Lovejoy | Henry B Lovejoy | Katrina Keefer | Kartikay Chadha

Location: HUB 502- Room TR4

## **Panel 2 - Trace: Resource Transformations in African Anthropocenes**

Rosalie Allain | Kate Dawson | Joseph Mujere | Stephanie Postar

Location: HUB 502- Room TR6

## **Panel 3 - Nollywood in the UK: Roundtable Discussion**

Alexander Bud | Toyin Moore

Location: HUB 502- Room TR7

## **Panel 4 Hybrid - Contesting the criminalisation of mobility and livelihoods in West Africa and in the diaspora**

Gernot Klantschnig | Lala Ireland | Philippe Frowd | Elodie Apard | Corentin Cohen | Precious Diagboya | Catherine Lena Kelly

Location: HUB 502- Room TR5

**Break** - 15:45-16:00 - Location: HUB 502 Flex 2

16:00-17:30 - **Panel Stream 5** (Five Panels)

### **Panel 1 - Migrations: Culture, Stories, and Activism**

Onyinyechi Nwaolikpe | Nolwazi Nadia Ncube | Awa Farah

Location: HUB 502- Room TR4

### **Panel 2 - Comparative perspectives on Netflix in Sub-Saharan Africa: Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya**

Añulika Agina | Collen Chambwera | Benson Ngobia

Location: HUB 502- Room TR5

### **Panel 3 - African Architecture and the Diaspora**

Ola Uduku | Juliet Sakyi-Ansah | Tolu Onabolu

Location: HUB 502- Room TR7

### **Panel 4 - Perspectives on literary activism and cultural capital: praxis and method as restitution**

Madha Krishnan | Dima Barakat Chami | Doseline Kiguru

Location: HUB 502- Room TR3

### **Panel 5 - Hybrid - Futuring in Africa: a prolegomenon for the present**

One Pusamane | David Kerr | Steven van Wolputte

Location: HUB 502- Room TR6

18:00-21:00 – Location: Victoria Gallery & Museum

**Reception and Dinner** - Sponsored by Flutterwave

## **Sunday 4th September 2022 - Day Three**

09:30-11:00 – Location: HUB 502 Room LT1

### **AGM & Posthumous Award Ceremony**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/395237916247>

**Break** - 11:00-11:15 – Location: HUB 502 Flex 2

11:15 - 12:45 - Location: HUB 502- Room TR4

**Roundtable: What is the role of an African Studies Association in, and of, the UK? A Roundtable of Previous Presidents**

Carli Coetzee

**Lunch** - 13:00-14:00 - Location: HUB 502 Flex 2

14:00-15:00

**Excursions to the World Museum and International Slavery Museum**

# Abstracts

## Day One

### **Keynote: Afrobeats at home and away: *(re)building together*.**

Akosua Adomako Ampofo - Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana

Ghana's Sarkodie, and Ghanaian-British Fuse ODG both lay claim to Azonto, however, I would concede that Naija took the dance moves to new levels. When it comes to Afrobeats, I am much more hesitant to venture on who gets the most points for their contributions to the genre. Both electronically and in its new embodied forms, the music and its associated dance forms have travelled to-and-fro, within the continent and across global Africa for decades. Sites of departure and sites of return get blurred as we move from dance halls in Lagos to studios in Johannesburg and concert stages in London; as Nigerian Afrobeats meet Angola's Kizomba (Kazumba) or South Africa's Amapiano. Along the journey Beyonce enters and curates "Black is King" and the cultural appropriation wars are reignited. As we examine the movement of artefacts, and discuss questions of ownership, loss, and who can speak to our issues; and as we demand reparations, repatriations, recentering knowledge, and restitutions, we must remember our familial connections and the need for solidarity to ensure our survival as African-descended people.

Using music as my interlocutor, I inspect some of the ways in which we locate ourselves and our distinct experiences—as Africans, Afropolitans, Black British, Afrodeutsch, Afropean, African American, other African-hyphenated American etc. I argue that we must acknowledge where our separate shoes pinch as well as how we can move towards greater solidarity within and across our worlds.

Stream 1 – Panel 1

### **Restitution and Repair**

Convenor: Ferdinand de Jong - University of East Anglia

In the last few years, the demand for the restitution of objects collected under colonial rule has received considerable support. Due to such intensified

pressure, several universities and museums have pledged to return such objects to the countries of origin. The Benin Bronzes are a case in point. This renewed interest in the restitution of objects has reinvigorated academic questions regarding the social life of objects. Felwine Sarr and Bénédicte Savoy, authors of the Restitution Report (2018), have suggested that the restitution of objects should be part of a wider reconfiguration of relations between Africa and Europe. Moreover, restitution should afford the repair of the damage done by colonialism. In this panel, we will examine how the history of object collecting has been entangled with the history of colonialism and how decolonization of collections requires rethinking how objects can help shape new ethical relations. We ask, how can extant regimes of collecting, classification, and ownership be made undone? How can collections be made to serve epistemic decolonization?

[Silent Objects and the Object of Silence: the contemporary lives of colonialism](#)  
- Sarah Van Beurden - The Ohio State University

As debates around the restitution of African objects rise all around us, so do projects, guidelines, and political initiatives that attempt to offer answers about the past of colonial collections. In this context, provenance research is often cast as the panacea for restitution questions. Although provenance research is both useful and relevant, its elevation as the one-fits-all solution to contemporary questions about the past of collections is also symptomatic of a more general public belief in the ‘power’ of historical research to ‘unearth’ the ‘truth’ about ‘the’ past, thereby delivering neat and circumscribed answers to difficult questions.

In reality the silences -both of archive and memory- around many objects will remain. It can be argued that in a sense, these silent objects are the true heart of colonial collections and the embodiment -par excellence- of the colonial past. They reflect the silences in colonial archives, and in many cases also the violence of erasure. In past approaches to provenance which were focused on the lives of these objects in the Global North, these silences have been productive, creating space for new narratives, classifications, and

appropriations in which the politics and knowledge and value were deeply intertwined.

This paper proposes to explore the implications of these silences, argues for the importance of paying attention to them, and considers what role they can play in processes of repair and in decolonial museums practices.

### Co-curatorship and object biographical approaches to the return of cultural objects - Njabulo Chipangura - University of Manchester Museum

In this paper I will look at how the living cultures collection at the University of Manchester Museum can be decolonised to address historic injustices, colonial histories and legacies. I posit that due to colonial violence associated with the expansion of the British empire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, ethnographic objects were collected from source communities in Africa and placed in some European museums devoid of social context and meaning. Central to this discussion, I will look at objects at Manchester Museum that were recently identified as having been looted by British soldiers during the attack on Benin City and its people in 1897. These objects include bronze plaques, a carved tabletop and a carved elephant tusk. I argue that from an African perspective, objects of this nature are often interwoven with words, proverbs, song and dance and cannot be separated from their original uses derived from points of origin within the community. Such objects have potency and are treated by indigenous communities as living beings which they can touch, smell and taste.

The paper will address questions relating to how objects that were looted from Benin and are found within the living cultures collection at University of Manchester Museum can be returned through engaging with diaspora and source communities. This can be achieved by adopting co-curatorship as both a concept and a decolonised methodology which underscores those social biographies of the objects can understood by tracing meanings and stories attached to them before they were dislocated from their original context. Co-curatorship thus entails taking an interest not only in objects as things but also in the people, changing practices and belief systems that lend them meaning. In view of returning the Benin collection at the Manchester Museum – the paper

will also argue that comprehensive provenance researches should be taken into account given the fact that social biographies cannot be understood in terms of a single unchanging identity, but rather, by tracing the succession of meanings attached to it as it moved through space and time.

[Decolonizing Museums in a multicultural Society: Reflections from the MAA 'Devolving Restitutions' Project - Stanley J. Onyemechalu - University of Cambridge, UK.](#)

It is not worth repeating that the museum should be decolonised. The essential question is, how should the museum be decolonised? In recent times, the issue of decolonisation within the heritage-museum space has taken on different forms, including activism, changes in curricula, fallism, seminars, trainings and restitution. This paper stems from a study conducted for a workshop organised by the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA) in Cambridge designed to reflect on its collections, exhibitions and donors – via the ‘Devolving Restitution: Objects of Sovereignty’ project. This paper explored the Ikenga and  $\text{Of}_\text{q}$  cultural belongings from Igboland, Nigeria as some of the many ‘objects of sovereignty’ found in the MAA. It analysed the meaning of these belongings in the context of the Igbo people and how such meanings were lost/transformed when they were ‘taken’ to the United Kingdom and to the MAA in Cambridge during the colonial era. The study attributes this loss of context and meaning in the museum to a kind of ‘Kolo-collecting’ (a by-product of Nkali) which characterised the extractive-capitalist anthropology of the colonial era in Africa and other places. It looks at the anthropologists that ‘collected’ these belongings before they came to the MAA and explores the power dynamics that informed those collections. The study then makes useful suggestions on how the MAA and other museums can participate within the wider calls for decolonisation by embracing ‘new arrangements’ in the pursuit of restitution and repair.

[Acknowledging the Damage, Attempting to Repair: Colonial Collections in Decolonial Times - Paul Basu - Universität Bonn](#)

Issues of damage and repair have been central to the Museum Affordances / [Re:]Entanglements project. The project has sought to mobilise the archival traces of a series of early 20th century colonial anthropological surveys of Nigeria and Sierra Leone to consider their present-day ‘decolonial affordances’ . This has involved exploring a wide range of interventions, including returning photographic and sound archives to originating communities as a reparatory act. We have also been working with and thinking through both historical ethnographic collections and contemporary artistic responses as material metaphors of damage and repair. In this presentation I discuss some of the approaches we have been taking to make visible our acknowledgement of damage and our attempts to repair in the [Re:]Entanglements exhibition soon to open at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge. Among the case examples, I highlight our collaborations with conservators and artists around a ritual pot collected in Benin City in 1909.

Stream 1 – Panel 2

### **Ethnographies of Extraction and Extraversion in Africa**

Convenor: Dr Rosalie Allain, School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford

This panel showcases contemporary ethnographic research on extraction and extraversion in Africa. The anthropology of extractive industries offers a critical perspective on key processes that constitute Africa’s external connections with the world, in turn shaping its internal political economic dynamics. Indeed, the production and circulation of natural resources and ensuing flows of capital within and beyond the continent are integral to trade and global investment; frontier-making; labour and migration; ethnicity, authority and state formation; protest and popular culture; climate change, conservation and development. By examining these processes through the prism of extraction, this panel situates ‘resource-making’ (Ferry & Limbert, 2008) as a key medium and ‘social arena’ of ‘extraversion’ . Following Bayart (1989; 2000), we understand strategies of extraversion as modes of

action through which resources are mobilised through often ‘unequal’ , ‘external relationships’ with the world, that place Africans not at the margins but as connected, active agents in the relations of dependence that they facilitate and oppose.

Our panel aims to examine the relationship between processes of extraversion and resource extraction in order to consider how the former may help us reconceptualise the analytic categories of ‘resources’ and ‘extraction’ . Drawing on extractive ethnographies across the continent, we will illuminate, broaden and challenge the analytic contours of Bayart’s concept of ‘extraversion’ , placing it in conversation with key anthropological themes and theories, and tracking its manifestation across a variety of domains (cultural, political economic and technological), scales, relationships and temporalities.

We broadly explore the circulations of, and conversions between, ‘natural’ resources, relationships and socioeconomic resources that constitute ‘extraversion’ and its lived experience, in different extractive projects and ethnographic contexts: popular culture and oil in the Niger Delta; local, state and corporate relations in the Kenyan oil economy; ‘green resources’ and conservation in coastal Tanzania; coal mining and timber plantations in South Africa; bauxite/aluminium and mangroves in Guinea; artisanal gold mining in Cameroon. Through these case studies we will consider, for instance, how the ‘matrix of action’ constituting extraversion – patterned by agency, subjection and dependency (Bayart, 2000) – is re-constituted through understandings of life/non-life (Povinelli, 2015), generativity and instances of aesthetic or technical creativity; how conservation strategies of extraversion may transform carbon from a ‘social’ to ‘natural’ resource; and how connections between the inside/outside take the political and spatial form of the ‘frontier’ (Kopytoff, 1987).

[The Arts of Oil: Intimacy and Insecurity in the Niger Delta](#) - David Pratten - University of Oxford

Is there a popular culture of oil in Africa? Can we understand how everyday lives are shaped by the oil industry through the popular arts that represent and resist it? This paper is based on a collaborative research initiative with the Institute of Niger Delta Studies at the University of Port Harcourt and seeks to examine the ways in which the relationship between oil, youth and violence is expressed in the arts and cultural heritage of the Niger Delta. The research seeks to map the emergence of aesthetic responses to ecological and political crisis by producing a cultural history of Port Harcourt, Nigeria's main 'oil city'. The paper asks how the artists and authors of Port Harcourt account for the legacy of oil on the lives of the 'youth'. Imagined as vanguards of militant insurgency and the victims of multi-nationals and the Nigerian petro-state, the paper examines how the arts reinforce and complicate everyday, gendered experience in their ability to portray vulnerability, intimacy and dignity.

[Invisible resource extraction: Mangroves conservation and climate change action in Tanzania](#) - Jessica Omukuti - University of Oxford

Addressing climate change in the Global South, particularly in Africa, has for the past six decades been tied to forest conservation. The nature of links between these two issues has evolved. While earlier debates placed forest conservation as a means of 'attracting rainfall' and good weather/climate, current debates have evolved into more complex narratives that present forests as carbon sinks. Underlying these evolving narratives of forest conservation for climate action is an emphasis on community-based and participatory forest conservation. In this paper, I use experiences from my research on mangrove conservation in coastal Tanzania to show how forest conservation for climate action has progressively resulted in the creation of visible and invisible resources, while opening and closing opportunities for visible and invisible extraction of these resources. The paper further discusses how international processes on climate action have turned carbon and social credit emerging from action on climate change through forest conservation into invisible resources that are extracted from coastal communities in Tanzania.

## Extracting Timber in South Africa: Notes on the topologies of life and non-life - Thomas Cousins - University of Oxford

In this article, I examine the ways in which timber, coal mining, plantation labour, and population health have been entangled since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in one region of South Africa. I draw together a set of debates on the post-apartheid politics of identity, labour, and authority, in order to consider the ethnographic context of northern KwaZulu-Natal. By framing the enquiry around the assemblage of a coal mine situated in the midst of a Demographic Surveillance Area, adjacent to timber plantations and a game park (very close, in fact, to Gluckman's famous bridge and his "social situation in modern Zululand" ), I set out four intersecting and entangled topologies in which life and non-life are key vectors. The mining company recently relocated the graves, very controversially, of ancestors from houses destroyed by the encroaching mine. Intersecting histories of commodification and extraction, forms of authority, and entangled " concepts of life" require us to rethink what Elizabeth Povinelli calls "the rhetorics of recognition in geontopower" - i.e. who and what makes the difference between Life and Nonlife?

## The End of the African Frontier: Time, mangroves and aluminium on the coast of Guinea - Ramon Sarró - University of Oxford

This article will present an ethno-historical case study as well as offer some personal reflections on the temporalities of ethnography. I will focus on the ethnography of the mangroves around Kamsar, which since 1970 have become a very significant site of global bauxite extraction, an extraction that started gradually but that has accelerated exponentially over the last decade. In the article i will compare two ethnographic moments: The first one I lived it through in 1992-2005, before the explosion of the current bauxite boom (there was only one mining company, in sharp contrast with the more than 15 you have today in the same region), when I was largely looking at how local Baga Sitem-speaking populations had, over the last centuries, exploited the agricultural "frontier" (in Kopytoff's [1987] terms), domesticated the

mangroves and learned how to cultivate, in the depths of the mangroves, the so-called arts of not being governed (to borrow some concepts from James Scott).

The second one, a very different moment (sadly thwarted by Covid-19 in February 2020), was my ethnographic engagement in 2018-20 when I revisited the populations almost 3 decades later, focusing on how the once resourceful frontier that had secured food for the Baga (and shelter from external pressures) has very rapidly become a frontier of bauxite extraction for other national and international agents, dispossessing the local populations of their land, their wealth, their hopes, their frontier and their once ‘ungoverned’ arts. I will thus reflect on the usefulness of the frontier model, both in the “classic” sense (Kopytoff 1987, Chauveau and Richards 2008, Nyerges 1992; Trajano Filho 2009; Sarró 2010) and in the emerging understandings of extractive frontier (e.g., Degani et al 2020; Chalfin 2020, Korf et al. 2013; Vaugh 2017, Kelly and Peluso 2015; Ramussen and Lund 2018) to think and rethink the reproduction, transformation, and predicament of African agrarian societies. I will reflect on the importance of history to understand dynamics of the present such as the politics of ethnicity, the making of place, the management of time, the relations between genders and age groups. Finally, I will reflect on the epistemological advantages of comparing one single ethnographic site in two very different historical moments: one marked by the hope that I sensed among young people toward the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and one marked by the despair one could feel in the air in 2018-20.

[Oil Politics and Ethical Capitalism in Kenya](#) - Doris Okenwa - University of Oxford

What can the new oil industry in Kenya tell us about old problems of natural resource extraction in Africa? The ‘ethical turn’ in the extractives industry emerged in response to regimes of corporate impunity and bad governance of natural resources. Yet, the trope of elusive development and chronic poverty continue to characterise contemporary analysis of resource politics in Africa. In 2012, the discovery of crude oil in Turkana County, northern Kenya was a

moment of hope and uncertainty. Concerns about the infamous “resource curse” syndrome dominated popular discourse with the key question: will oil be a blessing or a curse in Kenya?

This paper focuses on the entanglements of corporate capital, state authority and local livelihoods that characterise the contemporary oil economy. It critically examines the intersection between corporate (ethical) investments and the expectations of host communities, in ways that echo and depart from previous programmes of state and development institutions. In anticipating both potential wealth and disaster, Kenya’s oil industry has so far unfolded as a struggle between competing notions of responsibility and ethical frameworks. At the heart of these contestations are calls for material evidence that bear witness to the tangible benefits of the oil industry.

The oil-for-development spin has gained a strong foothold in the harnessing of local aspirations in the light of dwindling pastoral livelihoods, ecological pressures, and demographic changes not just in Kenya but across East Africa, where a new wave of a hydrocarbon boom is underway and erstwhile ‘risky frontiers’ are being reimagined as new sites of global capital.

[The Aftermath of Gold in Cameroon: On the scarcity and generativity of resources](#) - Rosalie Allain, University of Oxford

Stream 1 – Panel 3

### **Governance, Conflict and Militarisation**

[Civil Society Participation in Conflict Early Warning and Response Systems of the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC](#) - Michael Aeby - University of Edinburgh & University of Cape Town

Civil society participation in the conflict early warning and response systems (CEWRS) of the intergovernmental organisations that jointly form the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is not only hoped to improve the organisations’ ability to timely detect and respond to the escalation of violent conflict but augment the legitimacy, responsiveness and relevance of preventive action for the local population. These high hopes contrast with the

tedious development of the organisations' CEWRS over the past 20 years, low capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) in conflict-affected and authoritarian states, and challenges that come with the integration of civil society actors in governmental institutions on the regional and national level. The paper comparatively analyses how African CSOs participate in the collection of early warning information, analytical processes and early responses in the CEWERS of the African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Southern African Development Community (SADC). The objective is to generate comparative and transferable insights on the benefits and limitations of the different organisational models through which CSOs may contribute to the prevention of conflict in terms of the systems' preventive capacity and CSOs' ability to meaningfully inform conflict responses by the intergovernmental organisations.

The study is based on 30 key-informant interviews that were conducted in 2021 with representatives of the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC and CSOs that participate in the organisations' CEWERS. Furthermore, it entails a comprehensive content analysis of policy documents and early warning reports. The paper makes a policy-relevant empirical contribution to the Area Studies literatures on conflict prevention in the APSA and civil society participation in the AU and Regional Economic Communities.

[Management Consultants and New Frontiers of Governance in Nigeria](#) - Portia Roelofs - St Anne' s College, Oxford

This paper responds to the quiet but steady growth of management consultants in the heart of government (Ylönen and Kuusela 2019). In 2017 \$7.5bn of the Big Four' s - Ernst and Young, Price Waterhouse Cooper, KPMG and Deloitte - global revenues came from public contracts (Kalaitzake 2019). Echoing longstanding concerns with corruption and good governance, the phenomenon of management consultants in government raise new questions about the relationship between privately employed actors and the public nature of state bureaucracies. They are typically brought to fill gaps in expertise and capacity, yet, a reliance on consultants further infantilises the

state, reducing internal capacity (Ylönen and Kuusela 2019; Gilbert et al., n.d.). In the context of concerns about pervasive corruption (Joseph 1987), the idea of importing fresh, professionally minded consultants, trained in international ‘best-practice’ , into state agencies is attractive.

Yet, against a backdrop of blurred public-private boundaries, management consultants present a puzzle: where they act as state agents they in effect occupy public office but are still compelled to advance the private interests of their employer (Sikka 2009) and contribute to a ‘revolving door’ between the state and business (Peretti 2016). Similarly, management consultants promise to eliminate leakages, yet governments have struggled to quantify the added value of management consultants (Public Accounts Committee 2010). Thus management consultancies simultaneously promise improvements in good governance, whilst ushering in governance arrangements which echo pre-existing forms of corruption. Whilst scholars have interrogated these new relationships in the West and China (Saint-Martin 1998; Chong 2018), we know little about the role of management consultants in Africa and the Global South. This paper presents the initial findings of new project mapping the role of management consultants in government in Nigeria and invites feedback on conceptualisation and methods.

[Militarization of the Mining sector? The role of the armed forces in resource nationalist policies and state interventions in Tanzania](#) - Chris Huggins (University of Ottawa) and Abel Kinyondo (University of Dar es Salaam)

Over the past decade, several Southern African countries have increased state control over resources such as minerals, oil and gas. Tanzania has put in place resource nationalist policies in the mining sector, both in terms of large-scale and small-scale mining. The military has been increasingly involved in the mining sector, and government discourse related to mining is also characterized by metaphors of ‘sabotage’ by multinational mining companies and rhetoric related to armed struggle. This article examines the implications of the apparent ‘militarization’ of the mining sector for overall governance of the sector, especially from perspectives of resource nationalism

and developmentalism. Evidence from Tanzania, including the historical relationship between the armed forces and the government, is contextualized through reference to several other African countries. We conclude that state security agencies played a role in both the policy and the rhetorical/political strategies of President Magufuli within the mining sector and were clearly connected to resource nationalist narratives. However, recent military involvement in the sector has been restricted to one particular mining zone and we argue that the sector more broadly has not been militarized.

Stream 1 – Panel 4

### **First Stop Liverpool: The West African Presence in Post-War Britain**

Panel Chair: Louisa Uchum Egbunike (Durham University)

[‘Streets of Gold: memory, oral history and poetry, depicting a journey of West Africans in Britain’](#) - Kadija George - IES ( Inst. of English Studies)

The poetry collection, *Irki* by Kadija Sesay 10 years ago depicts the arrival to the UK of migrant parents from Sierra Leone in the late 50s who travelled on the SS Accra, into Liverpool. They travelled with others whose purpose was to further educate themselves and to work as they had been invited to do so, in the NHS.

Other poems in the collection describe the life of West Africans during this period and reflects and analyses on postcolonial life in Britain.

Using poetry and oral history, this presentation provides a social history of the lives of West Africans in Britain alongside West Indians in Britain. The presentation recalls, readdresses and reconsiders the presence of people of African descent in post war Britain, once West Africans are included in this aspect of Black British history.

[‘Don’t Treat Us as Oddities: Nottingham Black Archive recovering the voices of Black political activists in Nottingham’](#) - Panya Banjoko - University of Nottingham Trent

This paper will contribute to a deeper understanding of Black political activism outside of the customary focus on other cities, notably London, Birmingham, and Bristol. It pays attention to the role Black communities in Nottingham played in, for example, alleviating ‘colour bar’ discrimination during the Windrush phase (1948 to 1972) of immigration to the UK, building organisations that would serve a community subjected to a substandard education system, racial profiling, and inadequate social provisions. For example, when a group of West African men housed in a hostel attached to the Nottingham Technical College were interviewed as part of a *Nottingham Evening Post* feature in 1954, they exposed racist practices. What the men shared, in their own words, constituted a damning indictment; migrants from the Gold Coast and Nigeria agreed that, in their experience, 'of all cities and towns of Britain the people of Nottingham are most hostile towards them'. One man, S. A. Babs, one of the West Africans housed in the hostel attached to Nottingham Technical College, was so aggrieved at pervasive discrimination that he wrote letters to the editor of the *Evening Post* in 1954. 'Babs' was the penname of Steve Sobarasua who was born in Nigeria, Port Harcourt, in 1925. He was part of the vocal and politicised Black presence in Nottingham from 1946 having also served in the Forces. Through the ongoing work of Nottingham Black Archive voices such as Steve Sobarasua are slowly being recovered.

[‘From the periphery to the centre: An art exhibition project recognising the West African Contribution in the post-war reconstruction of Britain’](#) - Hassan Aliyu - Nigeria Art Society UK

The metonym ‘Windrush’ analogises the sea vessel that brought immigrants from the West Indies, and has become synonymous with post-war (particularly Black) migrant narratives of ‘arrival’. The concurrent movement of West Africans to Britain remains absent from the British public imaginary, eclipsed by the Windrush narrative, resulting in a partial understanding of the presence and contributions of West Africans to British society.

The project discussed in my paper centres on an art exhibition that will centre West African narratives of the generation that came to the service of the ‘mother country’ at her time of need. It reads the lack of representations of the West African experience vis-à-vis representations of Caribbean experiences in important exhibitions and collections, such as Tate Britain’s ‘Life Between Islands’ exhibition, Museum of London’s ‘Windrush Stories’ and other programming that centres Caribbean narratives. This paper references Basil Watson’s National Windrush monument in Waterloo Station and the recently launched National Windrush Museum in order to demonstrate the peripheral nature of the West African migrant’s experience, but also to consider the possibilities in representing the West African narrative. This paper presents my methods and approach to portraying the West African migrant experience in my proposed art project, providing a cultural intervention in received narratives of post-war arrival in Britain, whilst also engaging with the contemporary migrant experience in relation to the maligned Hostile Environment Policy.

## Day Two

Stream 2 – Panel 1

### **Exploring African Filmmaking Practices through Research Filmmaking: Experiences from the Screen Worlds Project**

This panel will draw on the experiences of core Screen Worlds project team members Lindiwe Dovey, Añulika Agina, and Michael W. Thomas in making research films about different aspects of film industries and filmmaking practices in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa. Through our individual presentations, and in the Q&A discussion after the presentations, we will reflect together on what constitutes ‘research through filmmaking’, as well as on contemporary African filmmaking practices. Where possible, we will show trailers/clips from our films during the panel to help to visualise our points.

Making research films about African women filmmakers - Lindiwe Dovey – SOAS, University of London

In this presentation I will first reflect on recent changes in the accepted forms and modes of academic knowledge production, and particularly the growth of research filmmaking. I will explore why it was crucial for the Screen Worlds project to participate in this movement through making research films that try to visualise African filmmaking practices and cultures. I will then move on to describe the motivations for, and process of, making two of my own Screen Worlds research films, which seek to address the relative dearth of research on gender in African film industries and filmmaking practices by focusing on the work of two significant contemporary African women filmmakers: the South African film producer Bongiwe Selane, and the Kenyan filmmaker and Executive Founder and Creative Director of Docubox, Judy Kibinge. I will discuss why it has been important to me as an academic researcher to undertake this exploration through the film medium, and what I feel has been gained through it, as well as some of the challenges. I will show preview clips of the films and address some of the broader contexts in which Selane and Kibinge work.

Making *Behind my Nollywood Screen (2022)* - Añulika Agina – SOAS, University of London

Audience and exhibition research in Nigerian cinema and cultural studies are scanty if available, thus creating an incomplete account of cinema history in Africa's largest film industry. Nollywood's history has been traced from the Colonial Film Unit (Ekwuazi, Haynes, Okome, Obiaya) through to the travelling theatre (Ekwuazi), television (Haynes) and first-generation filmmaking (Okome), while focusing on films, filmmakers, and formats (Okome & Haynes, Jedlowski), policy, actors/stars (Tsika) and distribution channels (Obiaya, Adejunmobi). A sprinkling of audience studies is emerging, but practically none has devoted its full attention to the work of foreign or local film exhibitors from the 1930s to this date.

Some of these missing elements in the written scholarship of Nigerian film history, the principles that animate the work of film exhibitors, and the

challenges they overcome to make movie screens come alive are the focus of the documentary, *Behind my Nollywood Screen* (2022), a complementary research output to the director's written work. Existing documentaries on the Nigerian film industry by Western directors have been brutally disrespectful representations of important filmmakers and other culture workers. In reference to Nick Moran's work, for example, Nigerian director, Charles Novia, asked, “what gives him the right to condescendingly castigate our movie industry after spending [only] three weeks in Nigeria?” (<https://www.naijarules.com/threads/nollywood-can-never-die-the-nick-moran-saga-continues.799/>).

Abba Makama's documentary, *Nollywood* (2015), which was commissioned by Al-Jazeera, was both a pleasant corrective to previous ones and an invitation to accurate representation of the industry. The research praxis adopted in the production of *Behind my Nollywood Screen*, therefore, was informed by the work of decolonial thinker, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, which advocates “situating research in a much larger historical, political and cultural context and then examining its critical nature within those dynamics” rather than assuming that the short periods spent doing ethnographic work justify a totalising and demeaning sense of the Other. The production process was collaborative, consultative, and respectful of the lived experiences of research subjects. It represented them in the way they wanted to be represented, without glossing over difficult topics such as the tensions between exhibitors and filmmakers. The documentary aims to open up further dialogue about the history and politics of film exhibition and consumption, in Nigeria and elsewhere.

[Making Cinema Addis Ababa \(2022\): Creativity, Collaboration and Continuations](#) – Michael W. Thomas – SOAS, University of London

Reflecting on the personal research journey that led to the making of the film, *Cinema Addis Ababa*, I explore the advantages and disadvantages of doing African film studies research through the practical processes of filmmaking. Previously I have produced academic articles, book chapters, co-edited volumes, a PhD thesis, video-essays and a monograph on the subject of

cinema in Ethiopia; thus, Cinema Addis Ababa could be seen as another research output. However, for me, the experience of making this research film has been quite different from any previous work. The filmmaking process has involved many people – crew and cast – and has been a collaboration that has continuously changed shape and developed during pre-production, production and post-production with different people involved at different stages lending their own personal creativity and perspective to the project. In previous research activities I predominantly observed, investigated, analysed and asked questions to produce evidence-based knowledge which did not involve harnessing creativity and collaboration in the way that the filmmaking process demanded. Instead, this film project has positioned me on the other side of the screen, as the encoder of a film and not the decoder. So, what does this mean, then, for my research on cinema in Ethiopia? Should a film such as Cinema Addis Ababa be considered a research output? I position my own experiences of filmmaking as central to how I perceive and attempt to answer these questions.

Stream 2 – Panel 2

### **Power Elites in Africa**

Convenor: Edalina Rodrigues Sanches - Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon

This panel focuses on African elites, more precisely their recruitment/selection process, career pathways, forms of distinction, representational roles and dynamics of reproduction across political eras. It draws on original biographical datasets of members of parliament, diverse qualitative material, and new methodological approaches to tackle the following questions: Who are the political elites? How far back do elite power networks go in Africa trace? What are the contemporary configurations of elite power? Who is selected/appointed and why? Which factors explain re(election) and (re)nomination decisions? and What is the role of elites? In answering these questions, this panel contributes to the topical issues of elite formation, circulation and behavior in society and brings insights from the African

continent, which has been grossly neglected when compared to other regions. However, African case studies can offer insightful lessons to the field. On the one hand, the spectre of Big Man rule, one-party dominance and clientelism suggests that the same political class has been around since independence, and thus that we should expect continuity in patterns of recruitment and selection over time. On the other hand, there are signs of the high circulation of political elites, whether driven by the weak institutionalization of parties and party systems, or the need of dominant parties to off-set alternative power centres. This panel investigates these and related puzzles, building on unique evidence on cases studies that are starkly diverse in terms of regime type, institutionalization of party systems, and set of political institutions.

[What determines incumbent MPs' chances of being re-nominated and re-elected? The case of Ghana, 1992-2020](#) - Edalina Rodrigues Sanches - Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon

Who gets elected in African elections? And what explains the likelihood of re-nomination and re-election? This study offers answers to these questions drawing on an original dataset of biographies of Ghanaian members of parliament (MPs) elected between 1992 and 2020. It argues that individual, party and district-level factors concur to explain variance at both the re-nomination and re-election stage. Ghana is an institutionalized two-party system where the relatively low levels of electoral volatility suggest that much of the elite circulation / rotation results from intra-party contests in the pre-electoral stage. Adding to this, Ghana's presidential form of government and plurality electoral formula encourage candidate-centered contests, where individual resources and forms of capital are crucial assets for re-nomination and re-election. Given this background, the paper's first empirical analysis depicts the socio-demographic profiles of Ghanaian MPs, while the second explores the extent to which individual-level factors (e.g. gender, age, seniority, education, prior electoral performance), party-level factors (e.g. incumbent/opposition) and district-level factors (size and demographics) increase incumbent MPs' chances of being re-nominated and re-elected. This study's findings contribute to the empirical assessment of the social composition of African parliaments, clarifying whether different institutional

arrangements ultimately lead to different patterns of recruitment. It also broadens our understanding on how democratic and institutionalized party systems promote elite circulation and maintain political control.

[Shifting tides amidst broken promises? Elite structure, power networks and democracy in post-colonial Namibia \(1989-2019\)](#) - André Marinha - Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon; IPRI, NOVA University of Lisbon

To what extent are elite structures and power networks in post-colonial African countries different from previous colonial elite structures built around the juxtaposition of manifold cleavages? What story does the longitudinal analysis of elite structures and power networks tell about the fate of post-colonial promises made by liberation movements? And about the different democratization trajectories in Southern Africa after the 1990s? The role played by elites in African independence processes and political transitions is commonly accepted, and the theoretical and methodological apparatus of chiefly Western-focused elite sociology has been mobilised to study patterns of elite recruitment and interaction networks between legislators in African democracies; nevertheless, how these independence processes/political transitions occurred and also how elites reconfigured the political field and consolidated small and enduring power networks in the post-colonial period has remained undertheorized and scarcely empirically assessed.

This study addresses some of the shortcomings characterising the study of elites in African politics and argues that the study of elite configurations and networks may contribute to a proper understanding of democratization processes in post-colonial Southern African countries. The latter seems relevant in countries characterized by dominant-party systems (e.g., Namibia and South Africa). Drawing on original biographic datasets of Namibian officials and members of parliament between 1989 and 2019, this work builds on the longitudinal analysis of the composition of the Namibian political elite to assess whether SWAPO's post-1990 'national reconciliation' dictum paved the way for a new minoritarian politico-bureaucratic class and for reconfigurations in the relationship between elites and citizens.

## The President and Her Party: Joyce Banda and the dynamics of Elite Formation in Malawi - João Conduto - Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon

When she became only the second female President in Africa in 2012, Joyce Banda had just created a new political party, the People's Party (PP). In the executive office, Banda reshuffled her cabinet twice and, even with the "incumbent's advantage", neither she nor her party ever managed to win any elections. Given her status as an influential politician and Woman Rights' activist and that PP was created following her a split with the ruling DPP, this case study provides us with the opportunity to understand party-building and elite formation through the lenses of internal party competition, gender politics, and personalized leadership. Our aim is not only to understand why PP failed to achieve greater electoral success over time, but also to take an in-depth look at the people behind the party: both Banda, and the elite that rallied behind her to build this political project.

A case-study such as this proposes a variety of questions: who are the people behind the party's foundation? What is their background? How do they relate to Banda? During her presidency, what type of politician was rewarded by the party and how? How did the party fare in terms of gender representation? Where was the party more competitive and why? Facing an overall lack of electoral success, what happened to the party and its cohesion? Our analysis will rely on biographical data on Malawi's political elites as well as additional complementary sources, with the goal of further understanding the processes of elite formation in contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa.

["The Angolan first!" How opposition MPs represent constituencies in the multiparty Angolan parliament \(2008-2022\) - Ana Lúcia Sá and Olívio Kilumbo - Iscte – University Institute of Lisbon and Fundação Uanhenga Xitu](#)

Multiparty parliaments in authoritarian regimes are believed to have limited policy influence and to be privileged floors for co-optation strategies of the autocrat or the dominant party. The Angolan National Assembly fits this model. Angola is a presidential system with a closed-list proportional representation electoral system and a weakly institutionalized parliament

where the legislative performance is limited to the dominant party (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA).

However, the National Assembly is the only institution in which opposition parties can publicly perform their top-rank political tasks due to their absence in executive power. Who composes the opposition political elite in Angola? How does the opposition political elite behave in the parliament and mobilize their constituencies' interests at the parliamentary level? To answer these questions, we combine novel biographical data on the opposition parties' candidates with parliamentary activity data (e.g. questions, speeches etc.) focusing on the post-civil war legislatures (2008, 2012 and 2017). During this period, newcomers (such as the Broad Convergence for the Salvation of Angola – Electoral Coalition, CASA-CE) burst onto the political scene and joined historical opposition parties (such as the National Unit for the Total Independence of Angola, UNITA) in parliament. The data allow us to explore MPs' biographic background, and how connected they are with their constituencies, over time and across electoral cycles. This paper contributes to the literature on MPs' behaviour and opposition elite formation in resilient authoritarian regimes with a dominant party system.

Stream 2 – Panel 3

### **Religion and Social Thought in West African Literature**

This panel explores the intersections of religion and contemporary African literature, examining how literary texts represent and engage with religious beliefs, practices and symbols as resources for social critique and imagination. The focus of the three papers is on texts and traditions of twentieth and twenty-first century African, specifically Nigerian writers, reading these in dialogue with African theological and sociological thinkers in order to probe critical questions about the state of religion, particularly Christianity, in postcolonial African social, cultural and political life.

The telling of one story: Tripartite thematic of pioneer modern African theologians and creative African Writers - Abraham Waiga Ng'ang' a, Akrofi-Christaller Institute, Akropong, Ghana & Liverpool Hope University, UK

Drawing their raw materials from a common source, African theologians and literary artists have articulated core concerns that can be said to constitute one story: countering the tragedy of disruption and dispossession with an authentic self-apprehended African identity and spirituality. This can be summarised in three major concerns: Advocacy of indigenous heritage, vision of a greater humanity, and vision of transcendence. This tri-partite thematic constitutes a vital key to understanding and appreciating the mission of the story. Herein lie significant lessons for universal application, a vital corrective of the often too narrow approach in the quest for a truly transcendent vision of a greater humanity. Today, as embers of tribal, ideological and religious conflicts continue to be fanned through resurgent in-group loyalties, the vision of a greater humanity blurs into a mirage. Building on Chinua Achebe's reference to an "apostolic succession [of] old griots and storytellers and poets", and while focusing on the writings of Wole Soyinka, this paper argues that a meeting point between theologians and artists in Africa is necessary in order to heal a world deeply wounded along racial, ideological and religious lines.

Of innovators and impostors in Africa's contemporary religious landscape: What has changed since Soyinka's *The Jero Plays*? - Abel Ugba - School of Sociology, University of Leeds, UK

Focussing on the space-making and self-defining/affirming strategies of Pentecostal groups in Africa, this presentation aims to demonstrate that religious realities in the continent have continued to reflect some key themes in Wole Soyinka's independent-era fiction, *The Jero Plays*. It focuses on religion's intersection with materialism/material objects, dramatic worship techniques and innovative self-positioning as a survival strategy in a competitive religious marketplace. The presentation will argue that some of these practices are being transformed in postmodernity and will postulate on the reasons for these transformations and their impact on African

Pentecostalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Data will be sourced through a critical analysis of the *Jero Plays* and contemporary media and new media reports about religion in Africa. Relevant media images, including those produced by Pentecostal groups, will also be analysed.

[Okey Ndibe’ s Afropolitan Critique of Nigerian Pentecostalism in \*Foreign Gods, Inc.\*](#) - Adriaan van Klinken - University of Leeds

Building on the notion of African literary writers as social thinkers and critics, and expanding on the tradition of African literary texts offering critical representations of Christianity, this paper examines the representation of Pentecostalism in contemporary African literature. Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity is often seen as a key driver of socio-cultural change, not at least in contemporary Africa. However, what often is overlooked is how Pentecostalism itself is also subject of critique by a range of socio-cultural actors who are concerned about the impact that Pentecostal religiosity has on society. As a case in point, the presentation discusses Okey Ndibe’ s novel, *Foreign Gods, Inc* (2014), which uses various literary methods to offer a narrative critique of central themes in contemporary Pentecostalism, such as charismatic leadership, the prosperity gospel, and spiritual warfare. Where Achille Mbembe (2021) has proposed the notion of Pentecostal movements as a form of ‘practical cosmopolitanism’ , I argue that Ndibe offers an Afropolitan critique of Pentecostalism.

Stream 2 – Panel 4

[The Search for Biographies in Colonial Archives: The Experiences of Diasporic African Women and Children during the Era of Modern Slave Trade](#)

Convenor: Leidy Alpizar - York University

The panel will approach and compare the experiences that enslaved and liberated African diasporic women and children endured during the era of modern slave trade, both in Africa and America. Focus will be placed on

individual life histories of these two sectors of the population, and how they inform about the broader sociological contexts that led to their enslavement and/or to their liberation. Girls, boys, and women accounted for a major part of the population trafficked amidst the modern slave trade, yet they are still under-represented demographics of historiographical production, since it has pre-dominantly focused on adult male enslaved histories. To balance this gap, this panel will assess the particularities of the forcibly displaced African girls, boys, and women trafficked to the mines of Antioquia, in the New Granada Spanish colony. These experiences will be compared to the histories of the same population that was liberated amidst the abolitionist process being introduced to Sierra Leona and Brazil that offered specific and limited forms of freedom. The discussion will emphasize the need for historiography to retrieve the specific conditions, injustices, and kinds of oppression lived by African children and women in the diaspora, to better understand the entangled dynamics of liberation of the slave trade era.

[African diaspora children in Antioquia gold mines, New Granada colony \(17th and 18th century\)](#) - Dr Paola Vargas Arana - King's College London

The gold mines of Antioquia, an inner province of the New Granada colony, were exploited from the mid sixteenth century onwards, providing valuable revenues in gold for the Spanish crown. Paradoxically, the individuals exploiting them were completely disposed enslaved populations, many of them being children. If, at the beginning of colonization, indigenous American populations were compelled to perform this task, since the seventeenth century the situation changed, due to the “Leyes Nuevas” that prohibited enslavement of natives in Spanish colonies. From then on, a massive number of Africans were introduced to the mines, where working conditions were appalling. The enslaved needed to dig humid lands from sun to sun, sleeping in precarious huts with any food provided by the slaveholder, whilst being subjected to physical punishment.

Documentation available in Colombian archives provides details on who was the African diaspora introduced to Antioquia, including their ages, names and surnames, physical attributes, slaveholder, vessel and route of the middle

passage, and the asiento contract that allows their selling. Surprisingly, as years passed by, the number of children trafficked to these mines grew, including girls and boys, up to thirteen years of age, coming both from west and central Africa. The presentation will inquire possible reasons for the increasing number of African children trafficked to these mines, taking into consideration historical contexts occurring as well in New Granada and Africa.

### [Diasporic experiences and definitions of Liberated African Children in Sierra Leone and in Brazil \(1808 to 1864\) - Dr Érika Melek Delgado - King' s College London](#)

Analyses on the Registers of Liberated Africans, sources from the Department of Liberated Africans and other colonial documentation from 1808 to 1864 demonstrated that more than one-third of these recaptives were classified as children in Sierra Leone. A comparative analysis of the Liberated African children in Sierra Leone and children arriving in Brazil under the equivalent classification of 'Africanos Livres', confirms that the number of children arriving in a society of continued slavery in Brazil was also high. British suppression in the nineteenth century exposed children to different trajectories that are revealed in data presented before international courts. Children who were classified as Liberated Africans were taken off captured slave ships and resettled under a variety of conditions that affected their transition to adulthood. This paper aims to bring initial comparisons of the experiences of this large number of diasporic children in each country. Inevitably, such an analysis must understand definitions of children among those identified as Liberated Africans. This is an element which has been overlooked with respect to Brazil and Sierra Leone. For example, studies of Liberated Africans in Brazil refer to children born to Liberated African mothers but ignore the reality that many enslaved Africans arrived in Brazil as children. I contend that such a focus misses major distinctions that re-define questions of childhood in Brazil and Cuba. The paper aims to analyse the diverse experiences of childhood in the two main ports of disembarkation of Liberated Africans, i.e., Rio de Janeiro and Freetown.

**‘It Was Necessary to Do Something With Those Women’ : The ‘Disposal’ of Women and Girls and the Colonial Governance in Sierra Leone - Dr Maeve Ryan - King’ s College London**

This paper aims to discuss factors that shaped the experience of Liberated African women and girls in Sierra Leone. The colonial archive offers glimpses of the individual lives of enslaved Africans disembarked in Sierra Leone in the nineteenth century and ‘liberated’ under the terms of the British Abolition Act of 1807. Colonial sources reveal the issues that women and girls experienced and responded to in becoming ‘Liberated Africans’ , and the ‘disposal’ practices of the Liberated African Department – including schooling, indenture and arranged marriages. This paper will also consider what factors might have shaped those experiences and seeks to contribute to the literature on marriage in early colonial Africa. For this purpose, we will consider whether, and to what extent, British colonial policy towards liberated African women in Sierra Leone meets a modern definition of government-led coerced or forced marriage. Finally, it will evaluate the usefulness and limits of official archives, missionary records, court records and the accounts of self-styled British Sierra Leone experts for the purpose of studying the experiences of women and girls.

Stream 2 – Panel 5

**Futuring in Africa**

Convenor: Morategi Kale (University of Oxford)

There is a growing body of work, particularly in anthropology, sociology and geography, on the future. Because of their international status as ‘developing’ , African countries continue to be catergorised as belonging to the realm of the “not-yet” . As the continent with the youngest population, Africa is constructed as a place full of potential and in the process of becoming. Governments, corporations and international organisations share their hopes and their fears about the future of Africa through their various documents and interventions related to the economies, climate change,

economic and social development, conflict and urbanization. The African Union, for example, has articulated its hopes for the future of Africa in ‘Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want’ . Bodies like the World Bank and the IMF have promoted narratives of ‘Africa Rising’ – since the pandemic, however, these Afro-optimistic perspectives have been replaced with concern and fear about the future as newspapers claim “Africa Rising may fast become Africa Uprising” . However, ordinary citizens are also future-makers. And it is important to consider the ways in which they engage the future in their everyday lives and in their imaginaries. This panel aims to consider the following themes and questions: innovative methods for researching futures, imaginations of the future and practices of futuring; counter-futures and prefigurative politics in Africa; the future and relationality (to other human beings and the more-than-human); how a focus on people’s everyday engagements with the future has the potential to challenge dominant (Western) narratives (about development, for example)?

[Looking to the future to understand young people’s experiences of unemployment](#) - Morategi Kale - University of Oxford

The high rates of unemployment across African countries have made it increasingly difficult for young people to attain traditional social markers of adulthood: earning a “decent” living, starting a family and buying a house. Even though young people acknowledge this reality, these traditional markers of adulthood continue to shape ideas about what a successful and desirable transition to adulthood would resemble. Despite feeling stuck and being in a position of waithood, they are actively engaged in efforts to propel themselves forwards (Honwana, 2014). By presenting dominant narratives of the anticipated and imagined futures of young, unemployed South Africans, this paper argues that the future is an important site through which to understand the personal, intimate, lived and felt realities of unemployment and the kinds of strategies that young people use to cope in their everyday lives. The kinds of futures that they anticipate appear in their everyday practices, behaviours and attitudes. Therefore, by focusing on their narratives of the future, this paper hopes to articulate the kinds of futures that unemployed young South Africans are anticipating and imagining. And in doing

so, connecting the future with the present and challenging linear temporalities by highlighting the ways in which their narratives of the future are multiple and non-teleological.

[From competence to confidence: informal benefits of higher education for student teachers in Dar es Salaam](#) - Emma Taylor - University of Edinburgh

While higher education has been ubiquitously linked with social and economic mobility through formal employment, questions have been raised over its ability to deliver promised benefits (Langevang and Gough, 2009; Dyson 2019). For developing nations, increasing numbers of university graduates is seen as a key driver of economic growth and human capital development (Makulilo, 2012). For young people embarking on educational journeys a degree is seen as a way out of informal employment and ‘hustling’, with families and teachers promoting it as key to a ‘luxury life’. However, the imagined connection between university and formal employment is not always assured. In countries such as Tanzania, where large youth populations and an exploding higher education sector are outpacing both the number of qualified teachers at universities and the available jobs in the developing economy, formal sector employment is not guaranteed (Makulilo, 2012; Mgaiwa, 2018; Morley, 2010; Ndyali, 2016).

Students are not unaware of this reality. In interviews conducted with female student teachers in Dar es Salaam, future prospects were often discussed in terms of ‘keeping options open’. For many, the perceived benefits of a university degree went beyond traditional ideas of formal employment to include network building, interacting with new ideas, as gaining social and technological skills as tools for future self-employment. In this paper I draw upon interviews with these female student teachers to consider the hidden and informal opportunities of higher education, questioning its legitimacy as a key to formal employment and positing university as another form of hustling

[Disability as an afterthought in development: lessons from Ghana](#) - Francisca Anita Adom-Opare (University of Edinburgh)

Persons with disabilities account for the largest minority in the world today (15%). According to Disabled World, it is estimated that between 10% to 20% of the African population identifies as persons with disabilities. In Ghana, it stands at 8%. This paper explores what disability means and offers lessons for the imagination and practices for an Africa rising where disability is contextualized, gendered, and centred instead of merely a reactive or afterthought development process. The paper highlights two key results emanating from fieldwork in Ghana. First, is the importance of definitions, as there are diverse meanings of disability from a gendered perspective. Second, it exposes how words such as “inclusion” and “non-discrimination” are used to blanket and camouflage issues on disability.

Disability figures are expected to increase with time, and if disability is understood as a group that anyone can embrace at any time due to genetics, improved disability measurement mechanisms, environmental and social factors, and eventually ageing, then disability affects all of us and must therefore be treated as one of the core tenets of any development in Ghana and elsewhere.

Stream 3 – Panel 1

**Roundtable Modernist Heritage in Africa** - Edward Denison UCL,  
Iain Jackson University of Liverpool, Ola Uduku University of Liverpool

This panel comprising three presenters and a moderator discusses the recent creation of the interdisciplinary Modernist Heritage in Africa research and practice Network. Comprising academics from universities across the global north and south, most specifically the University of Cape Town, the University of Lagos, University College London, (UCL) and the University of Liverpool.

The project’s aim is firstly to publicise more widely, within and outside Africa the rich cultural heritage of the continent, considering this from a modernist lens. Secondly it seeks through its interdisciplinary collaborations and networks which also extend to institutions such as ICOMOS and museums teams across Africa to share this knowledge through educational and practical activities

which highlight the importance of the conservation of this heritage within the known issues of climate change and other effects of the Anthropocene. We intend this to be a lively panel discussion about Heritage in Africa in its wider form but focusing on more recent ‘modern’ heritage, what this is perceived to mean, and importantly how this links to both the continent and its rapidly growing diaspora; in keeping with the themes of the ASAUk2022 conference.

Stream 3 – Panel 2

### **From Risk to Opportunity: Cannabis and Africa’ s socio-economic development**

Convenors: Dr Clemence Rusenga - University of Bristol & Dr Gernot Klantschnig - University of Bristol

This panel explores the past and present role of cannabis in Africa in order to analyse the current and ongoing liberalisation of cannabis policies on the continent, and their implications for socio-economic development. Cannabis has and continues to play an important role in a number of African societies, not only as an intoxicant but medicine, as a cultural marker, political topic and economic tool. As a topic of study, cannabis has a multiplicity of understandings and its role in shaping African societies’ development is highly contested.

From the condemnatory to the celebratory, there are many narratives about cannabis in African societies. This panel will provide a space for the presentation of research and for discussion of cannabis-related topics in Africa. The focus is on understanding the history of cannabis on the continent, and its relationship with authorities and ordinary citizens. Of importance is highlighting the tensions in the roles and perceptions on cannabis, given, on one hand, its contributions to ordinary people’ s social, economic and cultural lives, and its confrontational relationship with state policies and laws, on the other. The aim is to present a platform to discuss the historical and contemporary place of cannabis in African societies – including the current and ongoing liberalisation of cannabis policy in a number of African countries.

Themes covered will include the use of cannabis as a justification for legislative oppression or as a symbolic marker of political rebellion, cannabis livelihoods, development and the role cannabis may begin to play in the socio-economic development of communities and regions now and in the future. As such, in exploring the history and meaning of cannabis in Africa, so too do we explore broader themes in contemporary African societies.

[Cannabis and livelihoods in Zimbabwe: Policy reform with limited impact on smallholder producers and traders?](#) - Clemence Rusenga – University of Bristol

Cannabis-linked livelihoods have been undermined by official laws and policies for generations in Africa. While cannabis remain criminalized in most African countries in some, including Zimbabwe, there have been growing change in official perceptions on the substance following the emergence of a lucrative global legal cannabis market led by countries such as Canada. A number of African countries have now begun changing their policies to allow production of cannabis for medical and scientific purposes. However, the new policies are narrowly framed in a way that perpetuates continued illegality and criminalization of the activities of many smallholders and traders. Consequently, in terms of regulation the experiences of smallholder producers/traders in Zimbabwe have not changed much. This is so because where policy changes have taken place, there is limited participation of smallholders in the emerging legal cannabis industry – a development that create the risk of corporate capture of the industry.

What has been the impact of Cannabis criminalisation legislations on livelihoods in Zimbabwe? What are the implications of the policy changes for the livelihoods of ordinary citizens who engage in cannabis? In what ways can the reforms ensure broad-based agrarian transformation? The paper argue that the agribusiness-focused approach to cannabis reform, implemented by Zimbabwean authorities, will have limited impact on the lives of many smallholder producers/traders.

## Contested Expertise and Authority in the Making of the 1952 Commission Report - Prudence Afrika

On the 4th of November 1949 an Interdepartmental Commission of inquiry was appointed by the department of Social Welfare to conduct a critical and analytic investigation on the “abuse of dagga” in the Union of South Africa, as had been recommended in 1937 by the Cape Coloured Commission. Over two years, the research aimed to gather data and expert perspectives on dagga, to seek solutions of control over cultivation, trade and use, of the cannabis plant and its products. In 1952, a report deployed the commission’s findings and recommendations. It was a key moment of change in approaches to prohibition, shifting towards a focus on policing supply as well as demand. Active measures were proposed in the report by committee to deal with the dagga evil, and further recommend steps to control cultivation, consumption, trade, and sale of this plant. This paper focuses on the making and formulation of this commission, its research processes and design, and its report from 1949-1959. Furthermore, how the findings of the commission helped shape knowledge of dagga. There exists contestations of perspectives and this diversity reflects the heterogeneity of ideologies from different individual, black and white. Comparing the content of the actual final report and the process of research revealed in the primary sources, I seek to find out what made it into the report and what was excluded, what methods were used and how these influenced the broader perspective about cannabis. This study helps indicate official thinking around prohibition, and the importance of the commission for channeling local official thinking about cannabis into the late 1960s and early 1970s. Using archival primary sources from NASA I examine these developments also to show how aspects of race, class, and gender figured in the methods, findings, and published research of the commission.

## Cannabis Economy: Liberalisation of the Cannabis Agriculture Sector in Zimbabwe - Jephias Matunhu

Although agriculture is the backbone of the Zimbabwe economy, unlicensed cannabis cultivation is criminalised. Section 155 of the Criminal Law

(Codification and Reform) Act (Chapter 9:23) classifies cannabis plant as a dangerous drug. Cultivating cannabis is legalised by section 17 of the Zimbabwe Investment Development Agency (ZIDA) Act of 2019 and Statutory Instrument (SI) 2018-062, Dangerous Drugs (Production of Cannabis for Medicinal and Scientific Use) Regulations of 2018. The latter set the requirements for cannabis cultivation *viz* U\$50,000 (5-year renewable) license fee plus U\$15,000 annual return fee and U\$20,000 license renewal. It is therefore not surprising that only capital-rich western companies are dominating the formal cannabis sector in Zimbabwe.

The desktop study argues that these statutory requirements preclude small holder farmers in Zimbabwe from participation in the formal cannabis agriculture and its value chain. It further argues that informal cannabis cultivation for medicinal, cultural, spiritual and leisure purposes has been practised by smallholder farmers since time immemorial and that the same continue to take place illegally. The paper advocates for liberalisation of the cannabis agriculture in a country that is experiencing high unemployment and poverty levels amid favourable climatic conditions for cannabis cultivation, a high demand for the cultivar and an abundance of agricultural land. Innovative ways of promoting cultivation, value addition and consumption of cannabis by small holder farmers in the country is recommended.

### [Cannabis price fluctuations in the South African drug economy, from 2019 to 2022 - Simon Howell](#)

This paper examines the fluctuations and changes in the retail prices of various forms of cannabis in the South African drug economy from 2019 to 2022. It draws on data from a broader national research project which collects pricing indices on a monthly basis for a number of illegal and quasi-legal substances available in the country, which is currently in its third and final year of operation. With this in mind the paper first provides a detailed account of the pricing data for cannabis at the local, provincial and national levels, delineating these by the various forms that have been recorded by the study. With this in place, it then seeks to provide an account of some of the larger differences, similarities and fluctuations present in the pricing data, again at the local, provincial and national levels. It is argued that the pricing data is best

understood if contextually embedded in the context in which it is the transactions occur, which in South Africa can vary quite widely considering the differences between places, people and indeed cannabis itself. Such social differences are also reflected in the economic disparities between different people and groups, as a function of South Africa being one of the most unequal in the world. In turn, the pricing data reveals that cannabis – and illegal drugs more generally in the country – are not apart from but rather a part of broader society. In terms of cannabis specifically with the changing legislative environment concerns around the worth of the substance and the industry have become more prominent in recent years, and will find reflection in the pricing data in years to come.

[The rise of cannabis production in Nigeria: the new cocoa?](#) - Gernot Klantschnig  
– University of Bristol

The production and use of illegal drugs, such as cannabis, are usually portrayed as anti-development, as they are said to produce idleness, crime and the diversion of resources from respectable crops, such as cocoa or maize, into illicit markets. This view has come under criticism of late, especially as new legal markets for cannabis have promised pathways towards socio-economic advancement. These legal markets exist in several African countries today although not in Nigeria, where policymakers have been more reluctant to break with the prohibitionist norm. Nonetheless, preliminary research in southwestern Nigeria has indicated an uptake in illegal cannabis farming and use over the last 40 years, at the time when dominant agricultural crops, such as cocoa, were in decline. This paper explores how the rise of cannabis has been rationalised in some rural communities affected by these changes and also how they are linked to recent debates on cannabis policy liberalisation and ideas of ‘development’ . It speculates about an emerging alternative moral landscape of cannabis that is helping to legitimise the cultivation of the drug, in stark contrast to continued government and popular disdain for cannabis.

[High Hopes: Cannabis, Kenya and Developmental Dreams](#) - Neil Carrier

Kenyan presidential aspirant George Wajackoyah grabbed the headlines in the 2022 election year through his unconventional manifesto centred upon the legalisation of *bhang*, as cannabis is often known in Kenya. Such a policy, he claimed, could help service Kenya's debt through exporting high quality product, as well as pay for infrastructural development in much of the country. His voice joined other recent Kenyan politicians and thinkers – mostly those from Western Kenya where there is a long history of cannabis cultivation and consumption – in promoting legalisation of cannabis both as something that could redress the harms caused by a prohibitory policy that they see as a colonial legacy, and as something that could spark industry and economic growth. This paper explores how cannabis policy has emerged as a lively point of debate in Kenyan society over the last decade, assessing how local and global narratives have combined to give this debate traction. It places this debate within the context of cannabis histories, economies and cultures of consumption within the country, and also assesses the potential for a liberalised future for Kenyan cannabis, something not unthinkable given the many changes in cannabis law through the continent and beyond.

[A pot of gold at the end of the rainbow: Subsistence cannabis cultivation in the changing legislative context in South Africa](#) - Kelly Fortune

Cannabis cultivation is documented as a long-standing practice in Africa and Southern Africa specifically (Paterson 2009, Crampton 2015, Duvall 2019, Khan 2015, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2019). The growing of cannabis is concentrated in three African regions;

Pondoland in South Africa, the Mokhotlong district in Lesotho and the Hhohho district in Swaziland, with the majority of farmers growing the crop for subsistence (Crampton 2015:57).

Cannabis thus holds significant value in supplementing incomes and sustaining livelihoods, especially of cultivators. Considering their geographic and economic positions, the contribution of cannabis to the livelihoods of those who live in the poorest parts of the country is great, yet has been largely ignored (Kepe 2003:605) despite the changing legislative context of cannabis law in South Africa. Moreover, as changes to the legislative framework emerge and the cannabis legalisation debate deepens, one is challenged in locating the

voices of the rural subsistence farmers who have cultivated cannabis for generations. As an important source of information, they appear to be left out. What are their views? Are they for or against legalisation and why? What are the perceived impacts of legalisation on their continued production of cannabis?

In an attempt to garner and understand their views, needs and concerns, this thesis aims to showcase these, and further open up a small window of opportunity to relay the voices of the seemingly voiceless. It emphasises that, without their voices, a nuanced legalisation debate and support for a holistic, progressive, informed, sustainable legislative framework will be tainted.

### Formalisation, value capture and constitutive exclusion in the emerging cannabis GPN: the case of South Africa - Andrew Bowman

Multiple governments worldwide have recently initiated reforms to roll-back cannabis prohibition. This has created significant economic opportunities in rapidly-growing, newly-formalised medical and recreational cannabis markets, inducing a rush of speculative investment. A notable trend within this process has been large firms in the major cannabis markets of Europe and North America seeking to develop international linkages. Manufacturers and distributors have sought new sources of cannabis supply from Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa, where agro-ecological and labour conditions enable production cost reductions. This also creates new international linkages for biotechnology companies supplying genetic material – a key source of innovation rents. A number of countries in these frontier supply regions are attempting to establish early-mover positions in formal cannabis export markets, with the crop viewed as a high-value horticulture product with significant job creation potential. A complicating factor is, typically, the presence of a large and highly-differentiated informal sector that has supplied international and domestic illicit cannabis markets, and which is also a key source of livelihoods in some marginalised rural areas. Though still far larger than formal markets, illicit markets are increasingly threatened by the emergence of this formal cannabis global value chain (GVC). This raises important questions for inclusive development about whether and how to

incorporate ‘legacy growers’ (Bewley-Taylor et al, 2020). South Africa is an important case study for exploring these issues. A technologically advanced formal industry exporting medical cannabis under strict licencing conditions is growing rapidly in juxtaposition to a large illicit legacy industry, which supports thousands of livelihoods in rural Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Drawing on interviews with firms, industry associations and campaigners, the paper analyses the dynamics of inclusion, exclusion and value capture in the formation of a cannabis GVC. Processes of institutional and regulatory reform that re-set boundaries between legal and illicit production have been crafted around the requirements of major import markets and international conventions, and have created major barriers to entry for legacy producers. Rather than a side-effect, the paper argues that the formation of the cannabis GVC represents a form of ‘constitutive exclusion’ (Werner and Bair, 2019): the ongoing process of dismantling and decoupling of the illicit value chain has been integral to the formation of international linkages and improved opportunities of accumulation in the formal chain.

Stream 3 – Panel 3

### **Slave Trading, Slavery and Abolitionist Intervention in Sierra Leone in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries**

Panel Convenor: Henry B. Lovejoy – University of Colorado Boulder

This proposal is for one of two linked panels on slave trading, diaspora and biography. The other panel is entitled ‘New Initiatives in African Diaspora Digital Humanities: Connecting Biography, Migration and 3D Educational Environments’ . Both panels include postgraduate students and early career scholars.

This panel analyses the scale and organisation of the slave trade on the Sierra Leone peninsula and assesses Temne responses to the presence of resident British and French traders in the eighteenth century. While it is possible to assess the numbers of people transported in ships of different nations, there is scant information on the identities of enslaved Africans. After 1808, however,

the introduction of slave trade suppression policies generated new categories of biographical evidence about the enslaved Africans released at Freetown. The records of the Church Missionary Society are used to assess the origins, reasons for enslavement and subsequent experiences of Liberated Africans released at Freetown. Despite the abolitionist identity of the British Crown colony, slave trafficking continued in Freetown and its hinterland in the nineteenth century. The panel includes consideration of testimonies in court records, which reveal the identities of individuals trafficked in the colony and the strategies they used to resist their enslavement.

### [The Bunce Island Attack of 1728: The Disruption and Transformation of the Slave Trade in the Sierra Leone Estuary](#) – Sean Kelley – University of Essex

In 1728, a coalition of Luso-African middlemen, African wage labourers, and enslaved laborers, with the support of local rulers, attacked the Royal African Company (RAC) fort on Bunce Island in the Sierra Leone River. The assault resulted in the permanent expulsion of the Company and severely disrupted the slave trade. Historians have seen the episode as an effort by Luso-African merchants to regain their position as brokers in the regional slave and commodity trades. However, this does not explain why the fort's free and enslaved laborers participated in the attack, nor why local polities allowed the attack to take place. This paper argues that the attack was a response to the tensions caused by a sudden increase in the regional slave trade, which forced changes in the organization of labour at the fort and put pressure on local food supplies. The attack destroyed the regional slave trade, but the removal of the RAC paved the way for a significant increase in slave trading by removing an inefficient, monopolistic company and creating a more competitive field of small dealers. The paper is based on a close reading of RAC records, contextualized within the literature on local political and economic institutions.

### [Gambia Island: Trade and Territory, c. 1780-1807](#) - Suzanne Schwarz - University of Worcester

This paper traces the trading and strategic significance attached to Gambia Island by the French and the British in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth

centuries. In the 1780s, French traders sought to establish a trading post on Gambia Island, located at the mouth of the Bunce River, to create a direct competition with English commercial interests at Bunce Island. Correspondence between traders and government officials in France reveals the strategies deployed by French traders to secure their presence in the Sierra Leone estuary. They developed networks with English and Portuguese traders, traded goods from overseas, and negotiated and signed treaties with the Temne. Several factors led to their withdrawal in the 1790s, at a time when abolitionist intervention on the Sierra Leone peninsula resulted in British efforts to acquire control of Gambia Island.

### [Freedom and Slavery in Nineteenth Century Freetown: Testimonies from Court Records](#) - Mégane Coulon - University of Worcester

In the nineteenth century, the population of Freetown was chiefly composed of Liberated Africans and their descendants, but it also included individuals enslaved close to the colony who fled there to take advantage of perceived opportunities for freedom. While these individuals came to secure their freedom, others had a diametrically opposed experience and were kidnapped or sold in Freetown. Despite efforts to abolish the slave trade, some residents continued to engage in slave trafficking activities. They kidnapped other residents in Freetown and sold them outside the colony or brought enslaved individuals from outside the colony to sell them in the port-city. Based on testimonies traced in court records, this paper offers insights into the paradoxical experiences of freedom and slavery connected to Freetown. First-hand accounts of fugitive enslaved Africans reveal strategies they deployed to resist their enslavement. Accounts of enslaved Africans, as well as of witnesses who accused residents of being slave dealers, reveal the multiplicity and complexity of slave trafficking networks between Freetown and the surrounding areas. By focusing on biographical information available for fugitives and slave dealers, including place of origin and family bonds, the paper sheds light on experiences of slavery within and beyond the boundaries of the British colony of Sierra Leone.

## Liberated African Missionaries of the Church Missionary Society in Sierra Leone (1808-1840) - Leidy Alpizar, York University

This paper explores biographies as a method of analysis for African history to reveal different experiences of Liberated Africans who once were enslaved but who became missionaries for the Church Missionary Society (CMS) after liberation. In almost all cases, individuals had been removed from slave ships off the coast of Africa by the British Navy between 1808 and the 1840s. They were first settled in Sierra Leone after being declared "Liberated Africans," the term used at the time, although in fact the rescued Africans were not liberated but had to serve periods of apprenticeship that resulted in many being assigned to the CMS and other missionaries. The Registers of Liberated Africans and the CMS records (newspapers, diaries, letters) make possible the reconstruction of life stories of many individuals who were repatriated to their homelands after their apprenticeship, many as catechists and missionaries. My intention in this paper is to explore the life trajectories, representations, and experiences of a sample of individuals who were part of the CMS, through identification of their origins, reasons for enslavement, education in Sierra Leone and subsequent activities that sometimes involved their migration and the spread of Christianity, often to their natal societies.

Stream 3 – Panel 4

### **Intimacy and technological mediation – ethnographic case studies from central and southern Africa**

Technologies have always mediated people's intimate lives. In recent times, innovative electronic technologies have created the impression that our private, emotional, and bodily experiences are increasingly shaped, controlled, and even 'colonized' by technology. This panel reflects on the place of technology in the intimate (emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual) lived experiences of central and southern Africans. We want to address a gap in the literature, which very often portrays African societies as the sources of raw materials for high tech devices, rather than as designers, users, and assessors of technologies. From the role of intimate objects in religion, to their role in

medicine, in matrimony and in sexuality, the papers presented here draw on empirical, ethnographic research in order to examine users' perceptions of intimate space, and the ways in which devices and objects enhance the sense of intimacy, or conversely, instill an experience of intrusion and discomfort. Furthermore, this panel interrogates technology's agency by explicitly looking into what people want technologies to *do* in their personal, private spaces. *Whose* technologies are considered to be more or less appropriate for *which* usages? And how do these technologies configure agency within intimate lifeworlds?

[Experimental vaccines and inequality in western DRC](#) - Lys Alcayna-Stevens - KU Leuven

This paper examines resistance to the experimental vaccine deployed for the first time in the 2018 Ebola outbreak in Equateur Province in western DRC. It explores the ways in which this vaccine was perceived by a marginalized ethnic group, the Batwa, and the ways in which these perspectives were indicative of relations with the state and with other ethnic groups, as well as being evocative of Batwa values around health and the body. Ultimately, the paper seeks to position experimental vaccines as intimate medical technologies mediating many divides: ethnic, class, rural-urban, and global north/south.

[Managing online Pentecostal intimacy during the pandemic: Experiences from Harare](#) - Josiah Taru - University of Pretoria

This paper explores processes involved in the transposability of the Holy Spirit through online platform and the resultant connections and sense of community among United Family International Church (UFIC) Pentecostals in Harare, Zimbabwe. UFIC is known for emotionally charged face to face church services that concretize connection with the Holy Spirit and God. However, the banning of gatherings as part of COVID-19 containment measures in March of 2020 has seen UFIC members conducting church services through online platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube and other religious themed mobile apps. Drawing from narratives provided by UFIC members, the paper argues that despite enlarging the UFIC spiritual network and community beyond

Zimbabwe, virtual engagements complicate the process of connecting to the Holy Spirit, embodying faith and the creation of visceral community that local UFIC members have become used to during face-to-face gatherings. While Pentecostalism has been noted for cultivating personal experience with God, spiritual intimacy with Holy Spirit is largely collective and depends on face-to-face gathering. As such Pentecostals had to find ways of blending online sermons with small gatherings, despite government ban, as way of connecting with the Holy Spirit and creating immediacy. The paper is based on data gathered between 2020 and 2021 through interviews with UFIC members, participant observations conducted on UFIC online platforms.

[Short-cutting sociality: tech innovation, solvability and distrust in Kinshasa](#) - Katrien Pype - KU Leuven

This presentation explores the tech innovations as proposed by technologists in Kinshasa, and what they inform us about their understandings of intimate lifeworlds and the role of technology therein. I argue that they assess urban sociality, especially the relationships between kin in the urban space, but also lovers and neighbours, as spaces fraught with distrust, and prone to strategies of entrapment. Their solutions consist of a strategy that I call “short-cutting” of social relations, a method that involves replacing a human intermediary with a machine. Parallels can be drawn with the solution strategies as proposed in by Pentecostals, who engage with an increased lack of trust in others not only by reimagining the tentacles of witchcraft, but also by proclaiming that one needs to avoid too many entanglements with non-Christian others. The “moral movement” a Christian should undertake requires learning about the spiritual qualities of one’s social environment, and then purifying this world by removing non-Christian others. The tech entrepreneur proposes a solution that replaces untrustworthy others by machines such as electronic devices (machines), software programs (logiciel) and mobile applications (applis). Once fully developed, i.e. launched online and into circulation with other devices, these would then be deployed by users to obtain information, circulate money, etc., without relying on human intermediaries.

Stream 4 – Panel 1

## **New Initiatives in African Diaspora Digital Humanities: Connecting Biography, Migration and 3D Educational Environments**

Panel Convenor: Erika Melek Delgado – King’s College, London

This proposal is for one of two linked panels on slave trading, diaspora and biography. The other panel is entitled ‘Slave Trading, Slavery and Abolitionist Intervention in Sierra Leone in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries’ . Both panels include postgraduate students and early career scholars. This panel on Digital Humanities discusses four public facing initiatives, which are all focused on disseminating recent research on the African diaspora. These projects reflect new directions in research and all place emphasis on the importance of tracing the names, identities and experiences of individuals uprooted and displaced through various types of slave trading. The panel also considers ways in which archival materials and research findings can be made more easily accessible to global audiences.

**Equiano’s World: Gustavus Vassa and the Abolition of the British Slave Trade** (<https://equianosworld.org/>) - Paul E. Lovejoy - York University

This digital humanities project on Gustavus Vassa (Olaudah Equiano) focuses on the movement to abolish the trans-Atlantic slave trade and ultimately to emancipate the Africans and their descendants who had been enslaved. The subject of the project is the life story of Olaudah Equiano, the enslaved Igbo boy who was later known by the name given to him as a slave, Gustavus Vassa. He identified himself as African, sometimes as Ethiopian and ethnically as "Egbo," that is Igbo. *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African, as Published by Himself*, first appeared in March 1789. The release of nine editions in Britain and one in New York were influential in the abolition of the British slave trade, which was implemented in 1807. Because of the book's literary merit and its political significance, it has remained in print in several popular editions which are currently widely read in English Literature and Black Studies courses at universities in North America, Britain and Africa.

[Liberated Africans of the Slave Trade: A New Survey in Global Perspective](#) - Henry B. Lovejoy - University of Colorado Boulder

Between 1807 and 1919, over 650,000 enslaved Africans were recaptured or repurchased, and then liberated before becoming indentured or re-enslaved in state-run schemes to address labour shortages following the abolition of the slave trade. This paper explains the relaunch of [www.liberatedafricans.org](http://www.liberatedafricans.org), which involves an expanded global case list on a court-by-court basis to quantify individuals caught up in a new involuntary labor force derived from enslaved Africans. Building upon Britain's efforts to suppress the trans-Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and Red Sea slave trades, other nations, such as Portugal, France, Spain, the Netherlands, as well as Ottoman and Arabian leaders, adopted and adapted this system of indenture. The digital resource maps where cases occurred and is developing other data for nearly 160,000 people who were registered or identified by a name during the judicial processes and resettlements of liberated people around the world. Under development by Kartikay Chadha with WWW ([www.walkwithweb.org](http://www.walkwithweb.org)), the relaunch includes new datasets, maps, a collection of over 500 pieces of anti-slave trade legislation, digital resources, including registers of liberated Africans, and historical imagery, including photographs. These resources tie into larger questions about when and where these enslaved people originated from within Africa and how these regenerated identities can be recreated and visualized on spatial statistical models tied into instances of inland African conflicts and anti-slavery naval blockades off the coast of Africa.

[Bunce Island: Through the Mirror](#) - Katrina Keefer - Trent University

As technologies are evolving, new approaches to research and study are being developed by interdisciplinary and intersectoral teams in African Studies. Drawing from anthropology, history, archaeology, environmental science and game studies, scholars are able as we have never been before to reconstruct complex historical environments, and to present immersive landscapes within which to study and teach. Using archival documents, we can begin to reconstruct individuals from the past who walked within those landscapes, and

because of this digital historical imagination, new research questions and considerations are possible.

This paper explores elements of these technologies and a case study of their application: *Bunce Island: Through the Mirror*, an innovative forthcoming virtual simulation of eighteenth-century Bunce Island in Sierra Leone, reconstructed in collaboration with African creatives from both Kenya and Sierra Leone. The final product will be usable in classrooms, communities, and for interested individuals to explore a precolonial African space through curiosity-driven learning. It will represent a fully three-dimensional reconstruction of the 18th century Sierra Leone estuary, with an engaging and immersive set of narratives drawn from archival research, challenging common assumptions concerning coastal trade and networks of personal relationships which governed the region. Using industry standard software such as Unreal Engine, Reality Capture, and Epic Games's exciting new Metahuman Creator, and building upon community co-authorship alongside formal academic partnerships, this project has the potential to reimagine how we do history from below.

[From Data to Knowledge: Technical Infrastructure of African Digital Humanities](#)  
- Kartikay Chadha, McGill University & Walk With Web Inc

Publication of digital databases forms a large proportion of scholarship in African Studies. The evolution of technology has presented many challenges that demand alterations of research strategies to ensure high usability of such digital databases. From the introduction of the world wide web in the mid-90s to the constant refinement of cutting-edge technologies of the 21st century like virtual reality environments and ubiquitous computing, the digital humanities literature focusing on African studies fails to report on a must-needed shift in paradigm to develop digital databases.

Forming a background in information sciences and human-computer interaction, this paper will reflect on potential methodologies that may be implemented in development of digital databases that focuses on information about Africans and African diaspora. By presenting a case study on the ongoing development of a digital infrastructure between the Sierra Leone Public

Archives in Freetown, the British Library in the United Kingdom and collaborating partners in Canada and the United States, this paper will discuss how user-centered design, designing thinking and critical design can be incorporated in development of digital tools in African studies. The goal is to examine how digital infrastructures can be used in a collaborative manner to mutually benefit research projects that have strong overlaps in terms of their datasets. This paper structures the concluding discussion of this panel by connecting various digital projects together from a technology standpoint and provides an insight into the action work that is involved in development of African digital humanities databases and related computational tools.

Stream 4 – Panel 2

### **Resource Transformations in African Anthropocenes**

Panel Convenor: Carli Coetzee

This panel unearths local geologies of gold, uranium, chromite, platinum and sand, tracing the processes through which these extracted materials circulate and transform in and through socio-ecological contexts.

Recognising [some] humans as geological actants, the Anthropocene thesis has drawn social science and humanities scholars into closer conversation with the geos. As an anticipatory category of geology in-the-making, the discourse has prompted writers to speculate through deep time and consider how human presence might be written into the rocks. In this panel, we turn to four Earthly materials that are variously implicated in the production of an unfolding geological epoch. *Gold, uranium, chromite, platinum and sand*. As global flows of capital and commodity, these materials underpin the historical and contemporary making of monetary systems, technical objects, energy production and urban infrastructure, that in different ways mark out or facilitate Earthly human impact at a geological scale. Yet, we ground these planetary materials in the local geologies in which they are unearthed, circulated and transformed within specific African contexts, in turn, thinking

through the shared becomings of the socio-political and geological, or what Clark and Yusoff (2017) denote as ‘geosocial formations.’

This panel examines these through processes of ‘resource-making’ (Ferry & Limbert, 2008), by tracing the socio-technical transformations, value formations and circulations these materials are subject to as they are made to become ‘natural resources’. We seek to trace these materials before; during and after extraction in order to simultaneously trace Anthropocenic processes back to these local, material scales, raising questions of access, ownership and restitution. In doing so, we seek to critically explore the Anthropocene, as a process and analytic concept, through the prism of these materials and from vernacular African perspectives (Hecht, 2018). Finally, we propose to use the emphasis on ‘tracing’ and ‘transformations’ to think through questions surrounding materiality and methods in the interdisciplinary study of resources in Africa and invite experimental engagements with different scales, narratives and methodologies.

[Tracing sand: urban ante-lives in Accra, Ghana](#) - Kate Dawson - Huddersfield University

Drawing from research in Accra, Ghana, I trace the urbanisation of sand – or the dynamics that underpin the extraction and circulation of sand across the shifting landscapes of the city. While sand, mixed with cement and water, is destined to become part of the city’s expanding urban form, the research looks instead to the processes that take shape prior to sand’s manifestation as the material building blocks of the city. In this way, I turn to the before lives – or ante-lives – of urban form. I think through the land from which the sand is extracted – or the sandpit – as geologically uneven, ecologically fluxing and implicated in a postcolonial politics of disputed ownership and contested access, arguing that while these underlying facets tend to govern the extraction process, the mobile nature of the sandpit demands that the sandpit be repeatedly renegotiated. I also turn to the ways in which value is extracted from the shifting sandpit by different people in different ways, and crucially, how the circulation of sand around the city emerges as a platform for

on-going value extraction by those who remain otherwise excluded from the lucrative transactions of sand mining. In turn, by tracing the ways in which sand becomes implicated in the city, prior to its materialisation of urban form, it becomes possible to bring to the fore both an expanded spatio-temporality of the city and the geologically attuned contestations that underpin city-making.

[‘Gold gives birth’: Tracking cosmo-technical relations on a Cameroonian Resource Frontier](#) - Rosalie Allain - University of Oxford

In the East Region of Cameroon, gold was first ‘discovered’ in the 1930s through French colonial extraction. It has since been mined by local Gbaya communities until the recent arrival of Chinese private mining companies who have radically depleted local gold stocks. As already marginalized communities grapple with the scarcity and aftermath of this resource, proclaiming that ‘the gold is gone’, they nevertheless continue to practice artisanal mining, attempting to carve out a livelihood by eliciting increasingly smaller amounts of gold and often none at all. Drawing on 20 months of ethnographic fieldwork, this paper explores this paradox and how the end of gold sits uneasily alongside Gbaya understandings of gold as an animate, vital entity and living material, which ‘gives birth’ and replenishes itself.

Drawing from the Francophone anthropology of techniques, I trace the technical, material transformations of gold within mining, echoing Gbaya practices of ‘tracking’ gold along its ‘paths’ before extraction. I draw out gold’s local circulation through different value forms and social relations, which prefigure and enable its global movement through commodity chains, in order to illuminate vernacular Gbaya understandings of resources. Focusing on the ritual component of mining, I show how gold is a ‘gift’ given by Gbaya ancestors in exchange for food offerings, and I examine practices of re-mining ‘leftovers’ in the wake of the Chinese through which miners encourage and activate gold’s capacity to reproduce.

I argue that gold emerges at the intersection of vital and technical processes constituted through (post)colonial extractive encounters with French and

Chinese. In this context, the transplanting of hunting rituals to mining are a mechanism through which gold is retrospectively restituted to the Gbaya ancestral realm. I use this ethnographic material to consider how Anthropocenic processes are locally constituted and contested within the technological and cosmological realm.

### Suspensions, Obscurity, and Delays in Tanzanian Uranium Mining - Stephanie Postar, London School of Economics

Recovering histories of African uranium mining outside the infamous cases of the weaponized, imagined, and illicit can contribute to reframing Africa as central to the nuclear world, rather than peripheral. In Tanzania, where the country's first commercial uranium mine lies dormant in a state of persistent delays, elements from the past and future shape knowledge about the mine and its resources. This paper examines three threads of Tanzania's emerging uranium mining industry, based on 15 months of ethnographic and archival fieldwork. Archival material from colonial and post-independence Tanzania traces the ways the Selous Sedimentary Basin became a target of mineral exploration from the early twentieth century. Oral histories of people previously evicted from the concession tie accounts of geological exploration with local histories and senses of uranium. Stringing together these local geologies with historical accounts of anti-colonial training camps in the area, this paper links surveillance, suspicion, and nationalism of the past with the obscurity of contemporary delays in commercial extraction of this ubiquitous and extraordinary mineral. In examining the political deployments of these pasts, this paper considers the transformations of the Selous Basin and its natural resources. As Tanzania awaits the development of this major industrial project, suspicions and speculations return about the role of the mine in the country's economy and ecology. Ultimately, tracing the outline of this nuclear space invites us to return to anti-colonial ways of knowing beyond critiquing legacies of (neo)colonial encounters with global commodities, to vernacular understandings of African nuclearity.

When chromite seams become terminally ill...: Uncertainty and resource materiality in artisanal and small-scale chromite mining in Zimbabwe - Joseph Mujere - University of York

This article examines the myriad ways in which the material qualities of chromite, geological features, mining tools, and machinery shape mining processes as well as influence socio-spatial relations in artisanal and small-scale chromite mining in Zimbabwe. In particular, it focuses on the salience of the entanglement between artisanal chromite extraction processes and the materialities of mineral resources, machinery, and geological features. It examines how artisanal miners' strategies are often influenced by uncertainty in the 'behavior' of chromite seams they will be mining and whether the seam is 'healthy' (has a good grade) or is 'terminally ill' (has faults or has low-grade ore). It further examines how mining processes are also shaped by whether the mineral occurs in podiform (pods) or stratiform (seams) deposits which also affect the mining method and equipment that the miners choose. The article argues that the vernacular terms and perspectives deployed by artisanal miners to describe specific geological features and mining processes demonstrate the centrality of resource materiality and the materialities of mining equipment in artisanal and small-scale mining. Overall, the article draws on ethnographic data collected among artisanal and small-scale chromite miners in Zimbabwe to argue that the material qualities of chromite, mining equipment, and geological features frame resource extraction processes and shape economic and socio-spatial relations.

Stream 4 – Panel 3

**Roundtable: Nollywood in the UK: from East Street to general release** – Alexander Bud, Obi Emelonye, Toyin Moore

Marking the occasion of the first general release of a Nollywood film in British cinemas, the roundtable explores the history and present of the industry in the UK. Nollywood's global circulations and local iterations have been studied in case studies around the globe but there has been a puzzling silence around its biggest and most complex diasporic community. The panel therefore

represents another first, as the maiden academic event dedicated to this topic.

As early as the mid-1990s, VCDs were being distributed in London's Peckham and East Street markets and stars were being flown from Lagos to London for the flagship Afro-Hollywood awards. Other flows soon started in the opposite direction: numerous productions for Nigerian audiences have been filmed in the UK and a generation of British Nigerian artists and entrepreneurs have returned to Nigeria to transform sets, found cinema chains and introduce online streaming.

The roundtable features an industry historian and two British Nollywood pioneers. Toyin Moore is the leading promoter of Nollywood nationally and has been hugely successful in making the films popular in Birmingham, Kent and many other places beyond London. Obi Emelonye is a director-producer responsible for many firsts, perhaps his greatest achievement coincides with this panel: the release of his new film *Black Mail* in over 100 UK film theatres.

Stream 4 – Panel 4

### **Contesting the criminalisation of mobility and livelihoods in West Africa and in the diaspora**

Panel Convenors: Chairs: Dr Gernot Klantschnig and Dr Lala Ireland

This panel will explore the criminalisation of mobility and related livelihoods in West Africa and in the diaspora. The contributions will contest dominant approaches that label these livelihoods and related activities as crime or organised crime. While much of our current understanding about these quasilegal livelihoods and activities in West Africa relies on depictions from the outside, especially western-derived concepts, such as human trafficking or organised crime, and poor empirical data, the panel will highlight local narratives to better understand what these activities mean in West Africa, what has caused their emergence and significance as a policy issue. Based in in-depth research, the panel asks three overarching questions: What

are the local narratives on criminalised livelihoods and mobility? How important are notions of legality and legitimacy in these depictions? And how useful are our conceptual tools for understanding these activities in the regional context? The panel seeks to uncover and contest processes of criminalization by looking at restrictions on people's mobility and migration in West Africa and the diaspora.

[Quasilegality and migrant smuggling in northern Niger](#) - Philippe Frowd, University of Ottawa, Dr Elodie Apard, French Institute for Research in Africa & Dr Ini Dele-Adedeji

This paper draws on the case of irregular migration in Niger to argue that, once we consider the voices of market insiders in the smuggling economy as well as those in the security and intervention sector, these narratives point to the fundamentally ambiguous status of the migration economy between the licit and illicit, the legal and the illegal. To capture this ambiguity, the paper draws on the concept of 'quasilegality', which captures the in-between status of the flows in question, and in particular the conceptual space between the licit/illicit and legal/illegal binaries. The term quasilegality helps to highlight the gap between social sanction and legal frameworks, point to ambiguities within the state's legal framework itself, and place greater emphasis on insiders' self-understandings.

[The feedback loop: producing Nigerian organized crime: European police, global medias and Nigerian stakeholders](#) - Corentin Cohen - University of Oxford

This article analyses the discourses regarding Nigerian confraternities' expansion to Europe to discuss how a network of individuals working together for solidarity and political objectives becomes categorised as an organised crime group or a mafia organisation. I use justice investigations, interviews with members, judges, police officers, and journalists to show how the work of French and Italian institutions led to the emergence and transformation of discourses regarding the "Nigerian mafia". I argue that this process needs to be accounted for the sociology of information production and practices,

which explain effects of circular reporting, diffusion of police frames and narratives.

[Researching human trafficking in Edo state, Nigeria: perspectives of local actors on “organized crime”](#) - Precious Diagboya - University of Ibadan

As an escape route from the dominant challenges/obstacles to the enjoyment of a good life in Benin city, a lot of young girls and women have become vulnerable to human trafficking. This article aims to further understanding on the ethical and conceptual challenges associated with researching mobility and human trafficking in Benin city. It presents the perceptions of human trafficking and organized crime among local actors. Based on a four years' research, this paper concludes that local perceptions of organized crime can hinder quality data collection and policy making.

[Rule of Law Approaches to Countering Transnational Organized Crime in Africa: Going Beyond Criminal Justice](#) - Catherine Lena Kelly, Africa Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University

African state responses to “transnational organized crime” (TOC) are criticized for being overly military, law enforcement, and criminal justice oriented with limited appreciation of the cultural aspect of activities labelled as organised crime. This paper explores the benefits and the significant limits, of such approaches. While using criminal law to deter TOC can shift policy focus away from military solutions that might otherwise prevail by default, TOC is actually enabled by development and governance factors that go beyond criminal justice alone: the availability of alternative livelihoods, the popular legitimacy of the state and its laws, and whether there is a balance of powers enabling oversight of certain state officials facilitating TOC. Synthesizing recent insights from empirical research on African TOC, including original material from executive-level exchanges, this paper argues that a more holistic and people-centered approach – one that conceives of rule of law as more than law enforcement, and instead as a dynamic social and political practice – is needed.

Stream 5 – Panel 1

## **Migrations: Culture, Stories, and Activism**

**Hashtag Feminism: Using Digital Activism to Combat Sexual Violence Against Girls in Nigeria - Onyinyechi Nancy Nwaolikpe**

Recently, hashtag feature on social media has been used by social media users to open up debates on issues that concern citizens. Sexual violence has been one of the issues that have been raised on social media using the hashtag feature. Sexual violence against girls has become a reoccurring issue in Nigeria, and news of girls being raped and molested sexually has been frequent in the media. This study exploring the agenda-setting theory discusses the use of Twitter and Facebook to protest against sexual violation of Vera Uwaila Omozuwa, Ochanya Elizabeth Ogbanje, Jennifer and Barakat Bello with the hashtag #JusticeForUwa, #JusticeForBaraka, #JusticeForJennifer, #JusticeForOchanya and #SayNoToRape. The paper through critical discuss analysis discusses the impact of using Twitter and Facebook for digital activism. It examines the use of social media platform to set agenda on sexual violence against girls in Nigeria, to sensitise the masses to create awareness of sexual violence against girls, to change perceptions and attitudes towards sexual violence against girls and seek for justice for the victims. The paper argues that social media can be a change agent used to mobilise the masses to fight against sexual violence against girls in Nigeria thereby sensitising the government to investigate and prosecute suspected perpetrators and come up with working policy on sexual violence against women and girls.

**The New age, hybrid bride price: one part culture, one part (re)invention - Nolwazi Nadia Ncube - University of Aberdeen**

Global and regional migration from Zimbabwe has brought with it the preservation, discontinuation and hybridisation of certain rites of passage, including the payment of bride price as part of customary marriage practice. In this paper, notions of static ‘traditions’ in the global South are challenged by spotlighting new age bride price practices in Zimbabwe and among

Zimbabweans in the diaspora. It reveals that tradition, and by extension culture, is invented and reinvented across time and space with social media emerging as an integral means of reconsolidating social relations through time-space compression. In light of the ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic has nuanced our understanding of hybrid events, this paper explores, through autoethnographic data, of a Zimbabwean *roora* (Shona bride price) negotiation how WhatsApp is being used to coordinate and facilitate the (hybrid) virtual bride price ceremony. The paper presents the multivalent forms of hybridisation taking place. On one hand the negotiations become a hybrid ceremony that is: one part physical and one part virtual. On the other hand, this particular *roora* also gives a glimpse into how the marriage practice can be hybridised when it is an intermarriage between ethnic groups (i.e., Ndebele and Shona) through cultural exchanges that infuse the cultural identities of the two kinship groups being brought together through the union. This particular *roora* also reveals how elements of the Western, “white” wedding were also incorporated into this cultural practice, further hybridising it.

#### Shifting Class status among the Somali diaspora – Awa Farah – University of Cambridge

Over the past three decades since the civil war in 1991, many Somali migrants have come to settle in several British cities around the world. Transnationalism and returning migration of younger British born Somalis is viewed as a common postdiasporic trait. This population of younger, more affluent and mobile returnees has allowed return migrants’ ability to live in two places at once. Their transnationalism is shaped by a multitude of relationships and orientations that forge within and across the two societies Unlike their parents, who have spent a significant part of their lives in their country of origin, second-generation Somalis are raised in an environment that comprises the rules, institutions, and practices of both the country of settlement as well as the country of origin. There is also an expectation for educated middle-class Somalis to rebuilding the country damaged by decades of unrest and crisis.

Stream 5 – Panel 2

## Comparative perspectives on Netflix in Sub-Saharan Africa: Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya

Among the many fallouts of the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the most enduring in media consumption patterns is the shift to online viewing of screen media, which the lockdowns forced in various parts of the world. Three years later, viewers are still watching African films on Netflix and other platforms and refusing to visit local cinemas. From 2016 when the US based global streamer, Netflix, began its internationalising process to Africa and other non western contexts, there has not only been a surge in online spectatorship but also huge investments in local content production and transnational video distribution. This situation, fast-tracked by recent technological advancements, including the digital transformations in film production sweeping through Africa, has enabled many local and diasporic audiences to continue entertaining themselves through subscription video-on-demand platforms notably Netflix, Amazon Prime and Showmax. But none of these hugely capitalised digital media organisations has left an indelible mark on the screen media industries in Nigeria as much as Netflix has. In South Africa, Netflix' s investment is larger than anywhere else on the continent, but there are questions on the degree of 'Africanness' of its original productions. Furthermore, its adoption by subscribers is challenged by the major local streamer, Showmax while in Kenya, the company is attracting subscribers through its partnership with state actors and increasing library of African content. However, subscription is not automatic across the regions given the prevailing socio-economic conditions of audiences in Africa. The business model adopted by Netflix in each country is different and controversial, informed by existing structures of production and distribution as well as the political economy in operation. Netflix' s entry is also polarising local content creators whilst fragmenting the film and television audiences in dynamic ways, all of which merit scholarly attention. This shift has economic, legal, and cultural implications for the film industries in Africa and only a comparative approach to this global streamers' footprints in the continent can enable a deeper understanding of the new production and distribution practices, the impact of such international collaborations on industry actors and audience reception patterns.

The proposed panel, therefore, will explore among the three countries, the screen media production and political environment before Netflix, its business models, its impact on the film industry, and how local and diasporic audiences (with arguably higher disposable income) are engaging with African and other content on Netflix. A unique feature of the panel, if accepted, is the invitation of an industry practitioner from Netflix or its partners to respond to the issues raised by the presenters. This is uncommon but will ensure that stakeholders are duly considered in analysing the impact of the streamer in its major markets in sub-Saharan Africa.

[Netflix the enabling-disruptor in Nigeria' s Nollywood](#) - Añulika Agina, SOAS University of London & Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos

In Nigeria, Netflix is different things to different people. For a filmmaker, it is fame, transnational audiences, and money. For a cinema exhibitor, it is a respected enemy who is taking the food out of their mouth. For the local audience, it is a streaming service to be taken advantage of “without giving them your money after all, what difference is my small money going to make to them?” For researchers, it is an enigma of sorts even if they do not acknowledge it themselves and someone else has to point it out to them. That was how Andrew Higson pointed it out at a research workshop in which he stated that presenters were ambivalent about the cultural value of Netflix in the respective countries they studied. In his keynote titled “Netflix the disruptor: Cultural enabler or cultural enemy” , Higson problematised the questions of Netflix’ s diversity, accessibility, and the construction of cultural taste to suggest that criticisms against Netflix in one context easily fade away in another for several reasons, not least because of their massive campaigns and investments in ‘local’ , non-American productions. This is amply evident in Nigeria with the growing number of locally produced films on the streaming platform. In thinking about Netflix, Amanda Lotz cautions against lumping the streaming service with other subscription video on demand (SVOD) platforms because of its distinctive technological, industrial, and multinational strategies (Lotz 2020), which make it a compelling site of study. The result of a 2-year research on Nigerian screen cultures, this paper examines Netflix's

disruptive operational strategies, its impact on Nigeria's film industry, Nollywood, and how local audiences are responding to such changes. It argues that Netflix is simultaneously courting a small cohort of elite producers, distributors and audiences while disrupting previous exhibition channels and polarising the industry.

[Film production practices in South Africa in the age of Netflix](#) - Collen Chambwera - University of Johannesburg/AFDA

This article examines the extent to which Netflix has and continues to transform the way films are produced in South Africa. As a subscription video on demand platform, Netflix changed the television industry, and the way films are distributed. This has attracted a lot of scholarly attention. While studies on changing production practices have been carried out, these tend to focus more on Hollywood studios. Acknowledging that Hollywood studios operate in a context different from many other jurisdictions, this study interrogates how the practice of filmmaking is changing in South Africa due to the Netflix influence. While small compared to Hollywood, the South African film industry is one of the most vibrant on the African continent. Before Netflix, the South African film industry had been boosted by deliberate efforts by the satellite-broadcasting platform DSTV to promote local film production. However, Netflix brought a global platform and audience that was different from DSTV, a more African focused platform. The study takes a critical media industries approach to examine how South African based filmmakers are responding to the emergence of this global focused platform. It interrogates how industry routines and economics are changing in response to the affordances provided by Netflix. These routines include scriptwriting, casting, budgets, choice of production personnel, and marketing. Interviews are held with officials from selected production houses to understand the change, or not, that Netflix has brought to their approach to filmmaking. It finds that South African production houses regard Netflix as a platform for global visibility and as such tend to make production decisions in a way that satisfies Netflix requirements.

[Interrogating Netflix and the VOD disruption in Kenyan cinema](#) - Benson Ngobia - KCU Nairobi

In the digital age, film has found its way to digital platforms in a phenomenon referred to as Video on Demand (VoD). In Kenya, Netflix towers above the tens of VoD platforms available for film consumption, with only Showmax presenting any significant competition. While studying the impact of Netflix in the United States of America, Barker and Wiatrowski (2017) opined that the ‘popularization of streaming video has fundamentally altered the ways in which we watch, discuss, and generally consume media.’ The digital shift has created a technological disruption that has facilitated the development of enhanced devices and software that have revolutionized the entertainment industry. Kenya, which is only second to South Africa as Africa’s leading technology hub (Global Innovation Index Report, 2019), has seen the launch of various digital platforms as it also seeks to provide local solutions to digital entertainment. The most common of these platforms in Kenya include Viusasa, Kalabars, My Movies Africa, Buni TV, among others. Using the Diffusion of Innovation theory, this paper examines the spread and penetration of Netflix amongst residents of Nairobi, establishing which platforms they use to consume entertainment content. Specifically, this paper examines the types of VoDs used to consume entertainment content in Nairobi, establishing why these platforms are preferred by Nairobi residents, and identifying the preferred digital devices used to access these digital platforms.

Stream 5 – Panel 3

### **African Architecture and the Diaspora**

Panel Convenor: Ola Uduku

#### **At the Right Price - Tolulope Onabolu**

I think I began to engage with the work of David Adjaye sometime around 2011. I was responding to a client’s brief in Lagos, Nigeria, having recently returned to the UK after spending a year post PhD (Edinburgh College of Art) in Lagos. What I was looking for at the time was a response to the trend in Lagos for large design commissions going out to white UK and South African

architects, with clients actively pursuing the latter and having the Nigerian practices as Architects of record.

In one way, the trend was a response to clients seeking Europeanised style, combined with a resistance/reticence towards local architects to deliver on design, or of the architects not having enough global 'prestige' to push clients 'brands'. The somewhat unfortunate arguments coming through the grapevine was that clients believed they got better value for money engaging with white architects, but also from an inverted exploitative mindset, they couldn't find justification in paying internationally competitive rates to 'local' practices. In this context the western trained architect in Lagos is much sought after, as they can be presented as an in-between at the 'right price'.

The concept of the diaspora in the context of Lagos is a complex one, because within the local elite circles of high-profile practice, the main players operate within the sphere of the 'Lagosian' diaspora with global extensions but with its hub arguably in London. I was finally able to visit a project by David Adjaye (the Alara flagship store in Lagos) and have been there on various occasions.

In this session I argue that while there is a lot of engagement with architects of the African diaspora amongst local Western trained (and local diasporic) architects in Lagos, there is very little concern, appreciation, or demonstrable awareness of contemporary diasporic practice amongst the Lagos elite or their commercial proxies who are able to commission said practices.

[How are Diaspora Architects of African extraction viewed in the African Context?](#) – Juliet Sakyi-Ansah – Oxford Brookes University

The term "Western Trained Architect" can be used to distinguish Architects of the African diaspora from the Architecture and Architects of the African continent. However, it can be argued that the geographical location of one's training as an Architect can have very little bearing, if any, on one's intent as an architect in a globally-connected world. There are Architects of the African continent who have been trained by Western thinkers with Western

philosophies on the continent, and whose design processes are not dissimilar from the Western Trained Architects of the African diaspora. There are also Architects of the African diaspora whose training in the West often leads to a disconnection from the African continent, its architecture and Architects.

New models of practice in community organisation have emerged within the field of architecture in recent years to counter existing concepts of NGOs operating in architecture and community development work. Whilst some of these emerging practices have social action at their core, their framing in architecture and the built environment often means a hybrid of approaches that combine elements such as social action and other community organisation approaches.

The Architects' Project (/tap) is an autonomous initiative continuously engaging with industry experts, academics and the wider community. This emerging community organisation aims to empower architecture and the built environment community towards better ways of developing the environment and society. /tap experiments with architecture as a subject that can be translated into a tool for development and focuses on advancing the cause of context-specific architectural learning and practices using 'bottom-up' approaches. The organisation facilitates critical thinking and critical writing, the culture of making, and the application of sustainable methods.

The Architects' Project's vision is to create Ghana's first homegrown and independent architecture hub by its community, for its community and the wider community. Part of the vision is to have a satellite hub in the UK, where the initiative has its second largest concentration of the /tap community after Ghana. The Architects' Project has been creating spaces and platforms for interdisciplinary and cooperative learning and practice in various capacities, both in-person and online. Through these spaces and platforms, The Architects' Project seeks to tap with the people, tap in places, and tap into resources. "Community" is key in this model of practice, as is the concept of sharing.

This panel contribution questions what it means to be “Western Trained” as an architect and how the education and training of the west creates a disconnection between the Western Trained Architects of the African diaspora and the African continent. It will look at how grassroots and community organisations offer opportunities for connections to grow between the Western Trained Architects of the African diaspora with the African continent, and how emerging community organisation approaches offer a sense of community for people with shared place identity, shared experiences and concerns, and shared learning and practice in architecture.

### [African Diasporic Architecture?](#) - Ola Uduku - University of Liverpool

This contribution to the session is to ask the question – is there an identifiable African diaspora architecture, that has been produced by the continent’s Western-trained architects, and how does this contribute to Africa’s contemporary creative design culture. Here I am defining architects trained in the ‘West’ as those who are from the European/American diaspora, as different from those trained in African Universities within a predominantly Western architectural pedagogic canon. My query is can and indeed should the diaspora architects have a mandate to engage more with local African architects to effectively challenge the often colonial architectural ‘norms’ which permeate daily and more mundane architectural practice in much of urban Africa.

Currently the ‘starchitects’ are generally able to arrive with their creations but work outside of local architecture and associated trades to deliver their designs, but for their less ‘starry’ Euro-American-Asian trained affiliates how does this training and affect from the West sit with the African urban cities where most will return to practice. I examine the clear tensions between the translation of African contemporary design culture to three-dimensional materiality with the colonial inherited normative design and planning structures. Also what might an African architectural diaspora architecture mean within today’s context of African modernity.

Stream 5 – Panel 4

## **Perspectives on literary activism and cultural capital: praxis and method as restitution**

Panel Convenor: Madhu Krishnan - University of Bristol

[Literary Activism and Northern Nigerian Literature](#) - Dima Barakat Chami - University of Bristol

The North of Nigeria boasts a historical literary tradition predating colonialism, which has managed to persevere into the contemporary moment. Despite obstacles such as lack of supportive infrastructures and resources, literature in the region has been sustained through a localised, circular economy mainly driven by a network of authors, bookshops, and small publishing houses, in what has become known as Kano Market Literature. While favouring stories written in Hausa, which is the dominant ethnic group in the North, there are still outputs from minority indigenous and linguistic groups such as the Tiv and Fulfulde, which circulate, however sparsely, in this literary market. Taking up these questions of language, ethnicity and identity, emerging literary collectives in the North of Nigeria are creating spaces for the discussion, publication, and circulation of Northern Nigerian—and not just Hausa—literature. In what has been described as the ‘resurgence of Northern Nigerian Literature’, these collectives are on the one hand engaging with existing literary networks while on the other, widening their reach in order to create entirely new ones, thus expanding the literary traditions of the North. This presentation will explore the collaborations among those literary collectives and the new emerging literary networks in the North of Nigeria, as well as their efforts to create and sustain a thriving literary tradition in the region.

[Language and Literary Activism in Eastern Africa: Kiswahili and its dialects](#) - Doseline Kiguru - University of Bristol

Language use in African literature has been a common theme in both academic and non-academic settings over different historical periods. This discussion narrows down the language question to the use of Kiswahili as a language of

literary production in Eastern Africa. I rely on language as a tool for analysing literary activism in the region by exploring how it weaves through from the writing to the publishing and distribution processes as a vehicle for representing local cultural and social identities. The discussion then foregrounds the politics around language standardization and dialects, exploring how this is represented in contemporary Eastern African literature. To achieve this, the discussion focuses on the use of Kiswahili and its dialects, as well as its ‘offshoot’ —Sheng, as literary languages that allow for local literary theorisations and experimentations with form, text, and identity. I rely on local literary platforms such as literary magazines, festivals and regional prizes to explore the use of Kiswahili and its dialects, and discuss the contradictions that arise between the flexibility of dialects and of ‘non-standard’ languages, and their fixed representation in the published text.

['Sadza Parties': On community, collaboration & literary creation](#) - Tinashe Mushakavanhu - Oxford University

In this presentation I want to pay homage to the city women who cook and sell sadza in the nook and crannies of the Harare city centre. We call it colloquially ‘dollar sadza’ - the price of a plate in US dollars. Wherever the sadza is served, under a tree, from a car boot, at bus stations, mini gatherings occur, which become spaces for political discussion, protest, dissent. I will talk about some of my projects inspired by this street culture that have manifested into a run of synchronized events, screenings, exhibitions, and public talks.

Stream 5 – Panel 5

[Futuring in Africa – Part 2](#)

[a prolegomenon for the present](#) - Steven van Wolputte - University of Leuven

Over the past decade the discourse on the African continent has been swinging between a narrative on ‘Africa rising’ and various neo-Malthusian doom scenarios. With this contribution I wish to sketch a rough outline of (borrowing from Appadurai) a scholarship of the possible, and to plead for

African studies to move sideways. I argue that only by shifting its centre of gravity, African Studies will be able to do justice to the complexity and novelty by which women and men on the continent are planning, imagining, working, writing, policing, speculating, futuring their way into the present.

Examining the city through Èkó gb' olè, ó gb' òlẹ1: Precarious intimacies of spaces, bodies, and dreams in Makoko, Lagos - One Pusemane - University of Edinburgh

Focusing on the Makoko slum in Lagos Nigeria, the study uses Èkó gb' olè, ó gb' òlẹ, the idea that Lagos is big enough to hide the thief, the indolent and can accommodate the good, the bad and criminal to interrogate how the city is accommodating of market women' s bodies. In this work, the body is framed as a surface upon which 'things' are inscribed on, and a site of production as such framing helps to engage body differences and how it is connected to capitalistic labour. Drawing on this, I examine the bodies as social entities instead of focusing on the biological. Here, the aim is to examine and view the body not only as subjects for empirical attention but as sites for political and social regeneration (practice, actions and performance- rituals of everyday life and on flows of everyday life).

While taking the notion of Èkó gb' olè, ó gb' òlẹ as my starting point, I examine the body in parts, focusing on the womb, the vagina and the back to understand the intimate obligations mediated by these body parts. The study' s central research question will focus on how market women experience(d) the city undergoing urbanisation processes with a particular focus on how bodies are implicated or feature in that process of urbanisation and modern cities (state-level anticipatory politics, this case Makoko slum evictions) and the everydayness of future-making/anticipating the future and how bodies are implicated or feature in that process.

Playing with time; Singeli Music Production in Dar es Salaam - David Kerr - University of Johannesburg

Over the past two decades a vibrant academic debate about African youth has emerged. Young people have often been cast as living in a time of temporal rupture in which “the future horizon is apparently closed, while the horizon of the past has apparently receded” (Mbembe 2001, 16-17). This paper explores how the emergence in Dar es Salaam’s informal settlements of Singeli a new electronically produced musical genre has provides a space for young people to reimagining their relationship with the past, present and future. Performed at street gatherings on the edges of the cities political, social and musical infrastructure, Singelibegan when DJs isolated, looped and increased the speed of instrumental sections of older popular Tanzanian songs, thus enabling singers to perform live over popular tracks. This bricolage of older Tanzanian song snippets produced a unique sonic landscape. Through its use of an assemblage of sounds from Tanzania’s past Singeli producers not only evoke but conceptualise the temporality of the past, projecting their cultural production both back into the past and through its rather restless appropriation of new sounds into a future. In this paper, I explore the multiple temporalities of novelty, nostalgia and anticipation at play in the process of singeli’ screation arguing that it has been used by young people to reimagine and reconfigure the past while imagining the future.

# Online Links

## FREE ONLINE CONFERENCE – REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Fully funded by the British Academy, the following online sessions are entirely free to attend. Please register through the Eventbrite link below for access to the event.

Click below for the free IBADAN online conference 31st August 2022 –

**EVENTBRITE** registration:

- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/384180252477> – 10:30-12:30 (BST)
- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/384188677677> – 13:30-15:30 (BST)

Click below for the free NAIROBI online conference 1st September 2022 –

**EVENTBRITE** registration:

- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/384130985117> (10:30am-12:30pm East African Time / 8:30am-10:30am British Standard Time)
- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/384144365137> (14:00pm-16:00pm East African Time / 12:00pm-14:00pm British Standard Time)

Click below for the free Liverpool online conference 2nd September 2022 -

**EVENTBRITE** registration:

- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/386019674237> (10:00am BST)
- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/386021248947> (2:00pm BST)

Click below to register for the free film screening Onye Ozi on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 - **EVENTBRITE** registration

- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/395226813037>

Click below to register for the AGM & Posthumous Ceremony taking place on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2022 - **EVENTBRITE**

- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/395237916247> (9:30am – 11:00am BST)

# Campus Map



