

Joining Theory and Empiricism in the Remaking of the African Humanities: A Transcontinental Collaboration

Report for Year Six

Summary of the Project and Purpose of the Grant

This project has the goal of exposing scholars to the particular research philosophies—one theoretical, the other empirical—that are dominant in the universities of Southern Africa and North America. In the process we intend to strengthen and deepen collaboration in the study of the humanities at the universities of Michigan and the Witwatersrand. The grant fosters innovative research in the humanities and closely related fields to build a broader, intrinsically transcontinental community of scholars. We have in mind three specific goals for the research: that it should, first, engage ambitious theoretical questions; second, explore the boundary between the humanities and the social sciences; and third, engage closely with the African continent in a manner that addresses an international scholarly audience.

The main outcome of the grant is a series of thematic conferences, generally two per annum, in Johannesburg and Ann Arbor. These conferences have, in turn, generated a further set of thematic collaborations around problems that are more closely aligned to the research interests of individual scholars. We are encouraging these thematic ‘working groups’ to organize small-scale workshops with the goal of fostering and enlarging substantially shared research projects that will lead directly to publication. Alongside this new work, we have provisioned already-existing collaborations—in African performance and media, in science and technology studies, in medical history, and in heritage studies—that bring Michigan and Wits scholars together. These collaborations are now producing significant published research, and as we describe below, there are now several publications that bring the papers discussed at Mellon-funded workshops to a larger public.

During the year under review we have, for the first time, recruited a post-doctoral scholar in the person of Dr. Okechukwu Nwafor. Dr. Nwafor spent the first six months of his year-long fellowship in Ann Arbor, during which he helped to organize the November conference on photography and visibility (described below). The further six months were spent in Johannesburg, where Dr. Nwafor was vitally involved in the intellectual life of WiSER. Dr. Nwafor’s residency was greatly to the benefit of our two institutions; and his work was considerably advanced as a result of his exposure to cutting-edge scholarship in his field.

Progress made toward the expected outcomes, and other significant accomplishments

25-28 November 2018: ‘African Visual Cultures: The Filmic and the Photographic’ at the University of Michigan

From November 25-28, 2018, U-M’s African Studies Center hosted a three-day workshop on *African Visual Cultures: The Filmic and the Photographic* co-organized by Pamela Gupta (WiSER) and Kelly Askew (U. Michigan).

There is a rich and growing literature in African Studies that critically assesses both past and present generations of photography and film in Africa. One thread in this body of work looks for ways of centering African photographers and filmmakers as creators of new styles, looks, and subjectivities. Another thread looks at the artistic environments that Africans created, at the ways in which images (both still and filmic) shaped religious sentiments and formed communities. A third thread looks at what is termed vernacular photography in distinct African locations, focusing on the materiality and mobility of images. A fourth thread looks at processes of archival preservation, collection and digitization as well as creative acts of recuperation, that is newly curated exhibits of old things—both photographs and films. A final thread explores how Africans engaged, appropriated, synthesized, interpreted filmic and photographic practices from beyond Africa. This workshop brought together a range of scholars working on these and other contemporary issues in the field of African visual cultures. We were interested in blurring the photographic with the filmic in order to explore the qualities of one as inherent to the other.

The workshop featured 28 participants representing 16 universities, 1 art gallery and a professional photographer. They are listed below.

	Last Name	First Name	Institution	Email Address
1	Adams	Tamsyn	Leiden University	tamsynadams@gmail.com
2	Ambler	Charles	University of Texas at El Paso	cambler@utep.edu
3	Angelucci	Federica	Stevenson Gallery, Johannesburg	federica@stevenson.info
4	Askew	Kelly	University of Michigan	kaskew@umich.edu
5	Assubuji	Rui	PhD candidate, U. Western Cape	ruiassubuji@gmail.com
6	Badsha	Omar	Photographer; South Africa History Online	omar@sahistory.org.za
7	Binaisa	Naluwembe	University College of London	inbinaisa@gmail.com
8	Bloom	Peter	University of California-Santa Barbara	pbloom@filmandmedia.ucsb.edu
9	Ekotto	Frieda	University of Michigan	ekotto@umich.edu
10	Fair	Laura	Michigan State University	fairl@msu.edu
11	Gupta	Pamila	University of the Witwatersrand	pamila.gupta@wits.ac.za
12	Harrow	Ken	Michigan State University	harrow@msu.edu
13	Hayes	Patricia	University of the Western Cape	visualhistoryuwc@gmail.com
14	Jansen	Candice	University of the Witwatersrand	jansendannah@gmail.com
15	Kratz	Corinne	Emory University	ckratz@emory.edu
16	Levine	Susan	University of Cape Town	susan.levine@uct.ac.za
17	Mnyaka	Phindezwa	University of the Western Cape	pmnyaka@uwc.ac.za
18	Modisane	Litheko	University of Cape Town	.litheko.modisane@uct.ac.za
19	Mokoena	Hlonipha	University of the Witwatersrand	hlonipha.mokoena@wits.ac.za
20	Monson	Jamie	Michigan State University	monsonj@msu.edu
21	Nwafor	Okechukwu	Nnamdi Azikiwe University	charles21007@gmail.com
22	Okome	Onookome	University of Alberta	ookome@ualberta.ca
23	Peterson	Derek	University of Michigan	drpeters@umich.edu
24	Saint	Lily	Wesleyan University	lsaint@wesleyan.edu
25	Sawadogo	Boukary	City University of New York	bsawadogo@ccny.cuny.edu
26	Thompson	Drew	Bard College	.dthompso@bard.edu
27	Van Laun	Bianca	University of the Western Cape	.biancavanlaun@gmail.com
28	Vokes	Richard	University of Western Australia	richard.vokes@uwa.edu.au

The workshop included six academic panels on the following topics:

1. *African Creators of New Styles, Looks and Subjectivities in Photography and Film*

2. *African Images at the Core of Social/Political/Religious Entanglements, Synergy and Community Networks*
3. *Vernacular Photography in Distinct African Locations: The Materiality and Mobility of Images*
4. *Appropriation, Synthesis, Interpretation of the Filmic and the Photographic from beyond Africa*
5. *Archival Preservation, (Re)interpretation, Recuperation, Collection and Digitization 1*
6. *Archival Presentation, (Re)interpretation, Recuperation, Collection and Digitization 2*

The workshop also included participatory engagements with the filmic and the photographic via:

1. tour of the exhibit “***Beyond Borders: Global Africa***” at the U. Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA) and curated by Laura de Becker (UMMA, formerly of U. Witwatersrand)
2. tour of the exhibit “***Seedtimes***” displaying photography by participant Omar Badsha
3. film screening of the film ***The Vibrancy of Silence***, produced by participant Frieda Ekotto
4. photography workshop to discuss plans for an exhibit at the Uganda National Museum on “***Picturing Idi Amin***” curated by participants Derek Peterson and Richard Vokes
5. film screening of the film ***The Art of Healing: A Portrait of Lizette Chirime***, filmed and produced by participant Rui Assubuji

Plans are underway to publish the workshop papers in two forms. For the more junior participants whose academic careers require publication in peer-reviewed journals, there is a proposal currently under review with the journal *Visual Anthropology Review (VAR)* for a selection of the papers. The remaining papers will be collected into a volume to be co-edited by Patricia Hayes, Pamila Gupta and Kelly Askew and published with Duke University Press.

By all accounts, it was a highly successful event. The post-workshop survey produced comments such as: “I found it a very productive experience” and “it was a wonderfully well-organized and thought-provoking symposium.” Another panelist commented, “The context of bringing together scholars from South Africa with those from North America was truly wonderful. I met many interesting colleagues in related areas.”

Quantitative results of the post-workshop survey are based on responses from 13 of the 28 workshop panelists. All of them agreed that the discussions during the workshop were either “engaging” or “very engaging.” Likewise, all respondents were satisfied with the interdisciplinary character and range of the workshop. They also unanimously praised the high quality of intellectual and social relations fostered through the workshop. Almost all panelists (12) indicated that they expected the workshop to influence their own intellectual agenda in the short term, with 7 panelists saying that they expected the degree of influence to be very high.

7-10 May 2019: ‘Spatial Typologies and the Built Environment: Navigating African Urban Landscapes’ at Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research

‘Spatial typologies’ is a well-worn architectural term that identifies different types of building – gated communities, enclosed shopping malls, residential suburbs, strip malls, etc. The “built

environment” refers to the way these spatial typologies are configured, that is, the distinct patterns that emerge, and shape the ways in which urban residents navigate the city. There is a vibrant literature in cultural geography and urban studies which address these themes.

The mini-conference took place at WISER in early May 2019, and was organized by Martin Murray (Urban Studies, UMich) and Pamela Gupta (WiSER). It included five panels spread over two days. The mini-conference also consisted of outside trips to the inner city and to an Art Gallery. The mini-conference was anchored by two keynote addresses. Danny Hoffman (Anthropology, University of Washington) unfortunately was unable to attend. He delivered a presentation dealing with Monrovia via Skype. Mona Fawaz (American University of Beirut) spoke on navigating Beirut through the lens of mini-bikes and food delivery services.

The participants in Panel 1 (Planned Urbanisms: Gating and Golfing) looked at specific spatial typologies as emergent trends in Johannesburg. The participants in Panel 2 (Durable Materialities and the Built Environment) took an historical perspective, engaging with built forms that has lasted over time. Participants in Panel 3 (Global Imaginaries: Music and Film) focused on the imaginative dimensions of urban space, especially music and film. Participants in Panel 4 (Housing and Land) addressed struggles over residential accommodation in marginal urban spaces. Participants in Panel Five (Comparative City Spaces) looked more broadly, seeking to engage a conversation about the relationality between collapsing housing in Nairobi, Chinese spaces in Johannesburg, and the struggling city of Detroit.

Mini-conference organizers have hoped to pull together papers at the conference in an edited volume or special issue. This plan has struggled momentarily because in order to do this, the organizers need full-fledged papers to present to possible publishers. At present, while many have expressed interest, few have committed to sending full-fledged papers for review.

Twelve of the 16 workshop panellists responded to the post-workshop survey. They were nearly unanimous (11/12) in calling the discussions during the workshop “engaging” or “very engaging.” Almost all (10) agreed that the length of the workshop was about right, and nearly the same number (9) indicated that the format of the workshop (discussion based on pre-circulated papers) was either productive or very productive. Most panellists (9) indicated that they expected the workshop to influence their own intellectual agenda in the short term. Panellists were largely satisfied (10) by both the interdisciplinary character of the workshop as well as the intellectual and social (11) relations fostered by the workshop. One person noted, “There was a good mixture of different disciplinary approaches to the study of spatial typologies represented at the conference from anthropology, urban planning, architecture, history, geography.”

Panellists were enthusiastic about forging new connections as a result of the workshop. One person commented that the intellectual collaborations they expected to follow up on were “both in terms of thinking parallels across geographies and intellectually, in terms of bringing more “time” dimension to my own work. The exchanges were very productive!” Panellists also expressed enthusiasm about working together on a collection of essays.

Overall, comments praised the workshop for its “strong conceptual framing and high-quality papers.” The keynote on the city of Beirut was mentioned more than once as a real highlight.

The excursions included in the program were a highlight for especially the international workshop participants, who were less familiar with the city of Johannesburg. One person noted, “The organizers had set up an excellent plan [for visiting the city]. I learned so much in the few hours we worked around Johannesburg. . . . The timing of the conference *after* the site visits made of Joburg a real subject of discussion and helped us digest/integrate the city in the presentations of colleagues from Wits.”

On a critical note, some panellists indicated that time constraints had prevented them from producing substantive work ahead of the workshop date. This may have had to do with the timing of the workshop (during the South African school year), which was a concern noted by others. Several others noted that it wasn’t always the case that pre-circulated papers had been read in advance of the discussion. The room configuration and lecture-style presentations were thought to have inhibited the flow of the discussion, according to other comments.

An important critical comment was that “more care could have been taken to have a diverse group of contributors from South Africa in terms of positionality, race, age, and perspective. The scholarship was overwhelmingly homogenous, and normative (read: white) which was both avoidable and unfortunate.”

Conference programme

Monday 6 May

9-1030: Keynote 1: Danny Hoffman (U of Washington, Seattle): “Seeing Urban Theory in the African City”

Chair: Pamila Gupta (WiSER)

11-1230: Panel 1 Planned Urbanisms: Gating and Golfing

Richard Ballard (GRC Wits): “Trickle out Urbanism: are Gated Communities in Johannesburg good for poor neighbors?”

Jonathan Cane (WiSER): “The New South: Post-Mining Landscapes and the Un/built Johannesburg”

Federica Duca (PARI Wits): “Is Leisure Innocent? Reflections from Golf Courses”

Chair: Sarah Nuttall (WiSER)

215-315: Panel 2 Durable Materialities and the Built Environment

Alex Wafer (Wits): “The Materiality of Abandonment: obsolete infrastructures as durable presents and imaginary futures in a former township”

Pamila Gupta (WiSER): “Notes for a Visual Essay on the Experience of Art Deco in South Africa”

Chair: Anne Pitcher (UMich)

345-445: Panel 3 Global Imaginaries: Music and Film

Mpho Matsipa (Wits): “Mad Horse as Speculative Future”

Melissa Tandiwe Myambo (CISA, Wits): “#Afropunk, Global Citizen Festival and Class(ist) Borders: Cultural Time Zones of Musical Migrations”

Chair: Hlonipha Mokoena (WiSER)

Tuesday 7 May

9-1030: Keynote 2: Mona Fawaz (American University of Beirut): “Navigating the City as a Refugee Food Delivery Driver”

Chair: Martin Murray (UMich)

11-1: Panel 4 Housing and Land

Sarah Charlton (Wits): “Housing Logics, drivers and consequences on African urban Peripheries: Soweto’s Western Edge”

Fana Sihlongonyane (Wits): “The Role of Swazi Land Tenure in the production of Formal, Informal and Peri-Urban Settlements in Eswatini”

Tim Berke (UMich): “Refugee Camps and Settlements: Planning for the Long Terms”

Taru Taru (UMich): “Contested Memory and Adapting Place in Ghanaian Cities: Old Accra”

Chair: Jonathan Klaaren (WiSER)

2-4: Panel 5 Comparative City Spaces

Marie Huchzermeyer (Wits): “Urban Typology and the disruption of everyday life in Nairobi”

Philip Harrison (Wits), Yan Yang (Wits), Romain Dittgen (Wits), and Gerald Chungu (Wits): “Rethinking the notion of Chinese Space in Johannesburg” (double session)

Martin Murray (UMich) and María Arquero de Alarcón (UMich): “Perforated Detroit: Troubled Histories and Imagined Futures”

Chair: Anne Pitcher (UMich)

Report from Dr. Okechukwu Nwafor, Mellon Post-Doctoral Scholar

I hold a Ph.D in Visual History from the Department of History, University of the Western Cape (UWC), Cape Town, South Africa. I also hold a Post Graduate Diploma (PgDip) in Museum and Heritage Studies from UWC, South Africa. My first Degree was at the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Nigeria, Nsukka while my Masters Degree is in Fine and Applied Arts Department at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria.

I was the founder and artistic director of *Pencils*, an art studio that ran from 2001 to 2008 at Emma Nnaemeka Street in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria. As a former Head of Department of Fine and Applied Arts Department at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria, I brought my wealth of experience to bear on the concept of disciplinarity in courses taught at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels including African Art History, Visual Culture, Painting Theory, among others. My articles have appeared in many journals including, Postcolonial Studies, Fashion Theory, Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Arts, Critical Intervention, African Arts, African Studies, among others.

I spent the first six months of UMAPS fellowship in African Studies Centre (ASC) of University of Michigan while the rest of the Mellon fellowship on ‘Photography and Visual Culture’ was spent at Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER), University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa (Wits). Both Fellowships provided an excellent opportunity for me to concentrate on my book projects and other research activities outside the strain of academic routines and demands at my home institution in Nigeria.

I completed my first book manuscript titled ‘*Asọ ebi: Clothing, Visual and Popular Culture in West Africa.*’ I sent the book proposal to the University of Michigan Press and it was accepted. My manuscript is currently under review with the Press and hoping to get feedback from the reviewers end of this August, 2019.

I assisted in the organization of the 2018 Mellon Conference on African Visual Cultures. The conference titled, ‘The Filmic and the Photographic, African Visual Cultures,’ was a collaborative conference of ASC of UMich and WISER of Wits, South Africa. The conference was successful and generated a corpus of interesting academic papers currently constituting a book project and a special edition of a journal.

I completed an article for the *Journal of Material Culture* and have just received a positive feedback from the editors suggesting that I rework the article and resubmit.

Most activities during the fellowship provided a forum to interact with colleagues from institutions in other countries working in related areas, enabling an exchange of ideas and prospective future collaboration. The excellent research facilities of University of Michigan, including the library, helped me to enrich, and fill the gaps in, my first book and to continue work on my second book project. For example, I was able to access the newspaper archives of early twentieth century Lagos where, incidentally, a rich archival resource on *aso ebi*, the focal point of my book, was available. This archive not only gave my book a strong historical base, it substantially reshaped my initial argument prior to the commencement of the fellowship.

For my second book project, I completed four chapters during the fellowship and currently working to complete the rest of the chapters with introduction and conclusion. There was an excellent mentorship system provided both at University of Michigan and WISER. I worked with Professors Omolade Adunbi and Pamila Gupta at UMich and WISER respectively. Both mentors were professional and offered me quality time through periodic review of my work and discussions. Through them I learnt about, and got, new texts for my book. Pamila's wealth of experience in photography helped me to rethink my initial formulation in, for example, my use of visual economy and the concept of conspicuous consumption while Omolade, as a Yoruba, offered me an in-depth insight into Yoruba idiomatic expressions that helped me to restructure a segment of my first book.

I presented two chapters of my book manuscript at UMich and WISER seminars and the comments I got further assisted me in strengthening my arguments.

There was a smooth and cordial relationship with the rest of the Faculty at UMich and WISER. I attended most of the seminars and participated in the rich intellectual activities that were mostly organized weekly. For example, the African History and Anthropology Workshop (AHAW) at UMich and the WISER seminars proved to be rewarding experiences. I engaged meaningfully with faculty at both institutions, including their invited scholars from many parts of the world. Most importantly, invited scholars for job talks at UMich opened a new vista for understanding such kind of presentation. At WISER, the attendant trajectory of the de-colonial turn in postcolonial education was approached with a sense of positive energy and better intellectual alliance with important academic institutions and centers in the world.

I am strongly convinced that the fellowship, with its unique promise in providing me with a conducive and undistracted atmosphere for research, in establishing collaborative research networks with colleagues and researchers from other institutions, in availing me of the invaluable research facilities that are lacking in my home country, is one of its kind in the world. It connected me to UMich's and Wits' rich cultural and intellectual community wherein my passion for art and literary activities including art exhibitions was continuously enlivened. For example, I attended the exhibition 'Beyond Borders: Global Africa,' curated by Laura de Becker at the University of Michigan Museum of Art which I eventually reviewed. My reviewed article has just appeared in *African Arts* volume 53, number 3, August 2019. Again, in Johannesburg, I attended the exhibition titled 'Face and Phases 13' by Zenele Muholi at the new space of Michael Stevenson Galley at Parktown North in Johannesburg. I am currently completing a review of the exhibition.

Goals for the next reporting period

The next reporting period will cover Year 7 of the Michigan/Wits collaboration. During the year we intend to organize two academic conferences; and we have appointed a post-doctoral scholar to join in our activities.

Appointment of Dr. Johannes Machinya as Mellon Fellow on 'Historical and Contemporary Expressions of Populism'

Dr. Machinya holds an MA in Industrial and Economic Sociology from the University of the Witwatersrand, and recently completed doctoral studies at the same university. His project is entitled "Migration and politics in South Africa: normalising xenophobia through political demagoguery." Anne Pitcher (AfroAmerican and African Studies, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts) is his faculty collaborator.

Dr. Machinya has described his research objectives for the period of the fellowship in this way:

Since the 2008 xenophobic violence in which over 60 people lost their lives and more than 100,000 were left homeless, South Africa has witnessed a spike in incidents of violent attacks targeted at foreign nationals. Meanwhile, a number of politicians have been at the centre of spewing xenophobic bile through their public speeches, especially in the run up to the May 2019 elections even though they, almost always, are quick to hide behind the denialist statement that "I am not being xenophobic."

While scholars have examined the socio-economic and political causes of xenophobia in South Africa, they have scarcely examined how the anti-immigrant public speeches of prominent politicians, their denialism of being xenophobic as well as refusal to name the violent attacks of foreign nationals as xenophobic normalise anti-foreigner sentiments and cultivate a long-standing culture of xenophobia among the general South African citizenry. Without an adequate interrogation of how those people in positions of power create and normalise xenophobia, we will be unable to produce long-lasting solutions to the problem of xenophobia in South Africa.

My postdoctoral research, which I title: **Migration and politics in South Africa: normalising xenophobia through political demagoguery**, remedies this gap by examining how South Africa's prominent politicians, from both the political right and left parties, mobilise and appropriate a populist nationalist narrative in their public speeches on the subject of undocumented migration in South Africa. I demonstrate how this form of populism targets a particular 'Other' – the 'illegal' foreign nationals – as a people whose presence in South Africa defiles the national body politic due to their alleged involvement in prostitution, drug dealing and other criminal activities. These politicians also scapegoat the 'illegal' foreign nationals as the prime causers of the socio-economic problems bedevilling the country – crime, unemployment, poor health, the problem of housing and others. This populist thinking places the 'illegal' foreign migrant 'Other' not only as an enemy of 'the people' but also as a handicap that encumbers the capacity of the political elites to deliver their promises to the people.

Through a close analysis of the politicians' public speeches (at rallies, in national

newspapers or national radio), I will examine the nature of the populist nationalist thinking and the discourse on the presence of ‘illegal’ foreign nationals that these political elites mobilise in order to market their political message that ‘illegal’ foreigners are source of some of the challenges that South Africans are experiencing and that they destroy the capacity of national institutions to solve such challenges. Through an analysis of online social media debates (particularly Twitter and Facebook), I will further explore how these politicians’ often unsubstantiated and anti-foreigner statements, and the way they refuse to name the violent attacks against foreigners as xenophobic (rather choosing to attribute them to criminal motives), normalise xenophobia among the South African populace.

This project is an expansion of my doctoral research titled: **The life and labour of ‘illegal’ and deportable people: undocumented Zimbabwean migrants living and working in Witbank, South Africa**, in which I examined undocumented migrants’ daily lived experiences of migrant ‘illegality’ as people whose presence is threatened and temporalised by the status of ‘illegality’ and the fact of being deportable, and the ways they engage with state officials in order deal with the adverse effects of ‘illegality’ and deportability.

Dr. Machinya intends to compose two academic articles during the period of his residency in Ann Arbor and Johannesburg. He will be directly involved in organizing the November 2019 conference on populism.

November 2019: ‘Historical and Contemporary Expressions of Populism in Africa and Beyond’ in Ann Arbor

This conference is being organized by Anne Pitcher and Derek Peterson (Michigan) and by Keith Breckenridge and Shireen Hassim (WiSER), with Johannes Machinya.

Populism has re-emerged across the globe, displaying multiple, left and right leaning variants and provoking complex engagements with the limits of liberal democracy. There is a new generation of populists on the African stage, offering contradictory and often disturbing visions regarding Africa’s future. Some, including Julius Malema and the Economic Freedom Fighters in South Africa, have re-imagined concepts and policies linked historically to theories on the left, while others, such as David Bahati and the anti-gay campaigners of Uganda, have advanced a deeply conservative and reactionary religiosity. These new forms of populism that are being expressed across the political spectrum invite careful analysis of the continuities and ruptures in African politics from the 20th to the 21st centuries, as well as the ways in which ideas and movements travel across national boundaries. Several contemporary populist movements are historically rooted in older movements on the continent, and those histories provide linguistic markers and affective registers for contemporary encounters. Yet the current brands of populism are also distinctive in their own right, rather than simply being a re-packaging and reiteration of national liberation. As in the 1950s and 60s—the era of decolonization—when newly independent African states were sometimes confronted with populist movements that challenged their technocratic and nationalist frames, the failures of postcolonial developmental projects have provoked contestations today. Moreover, in the 1970s, African dictators drew on new media—radio and television in particular—to define for their

audiences new modes of political and cultural belonging. Social media today is different from that period in reach and in tone, but it has made possible the creation of new spaces and organisational forms for politics. For example, aided by social media, social movements, especially queer and feminist organisations, have escalated in intensity and appeal over the past several decades, and these also shape the contours of populism. Their aspirations and objectives significantly inform populist rhetoric, either acting as subjects of its many demands, or as the objects of derision.

This workshop will reflect on the cultural and political registers and infrastructures of populism in Africa (and elsewhere). What circumstances invite (some) people to see themselves as an oppressed majority? What work do authenticity and other nativist agendas do to clarify identities and marginalize minorities? What is the relationship between African forms of liberal democracy, and development in particular, and populism? Are populist movements opening up spaces for new forms of gendered political performances? Finally, what lessons can be learned from the past as African and American democracies together confront a renewed wave of nativist enthusiasm?

An engaging collection of scholars is slated to participate in this occasion, many of whom will thereafter travel to Boston, where they'll take part in the African Studies Association's annual meeting. Participants include—from Wits—the political scientist Rod Alence, the cultural studies scholar Alice Wabule, the anthropologist Julia Hornberger, and several others. We are also bringing in Elizabeth Matynia, from the New School for Social Research, who studies populism in Poland; Ben Fogel, from New York University, who studies Brazil; Jacqueline Mgunia, from the University of Dar es Salaam, who studies Tanzania; and several other scholars who hail from institutions other than Wits or UMich. In doing so we intend to further widen our collaboration and extend the spaces for comparison across geographic fields.

May 2020: The Paradoxes of Crisis and Its Aftermaths: Humanities from the South

This final workshop will be held in May 2020 in southern Africa. The aim would be to re-unite the large group of scholars who attended the first workshop in the series ('Theory from the South', in Johannesburg in May 2014) and a new group of researchers, to present work that has arisen out of our collaboration, and to plot paths forward. We anticipate this to be quite a large occasion, a 'big tent', where working groups that have been developing shared research agendas will offer their scholarship for criticism and comment. The six year period of the collaboration has coincided with several powerful thematic challenges to scholarship and society, not least the Fallist movement on the South African campuses. The four broad challenges (all simultaneously global political movements) – Anthropocene, Decolonization, Surveillance and Populism – are also all framed as crises that have given the past six years an increasingly apocalyptic mood. In this workshop we invite scholars to give careful thought to the achievements, paradoxes and consequences of the lines of crisis that have shaped humanities research over the past decade. We also, and particularly, invite research into new terrains of investigation that may have been obscured or reframed by the priorities of the crises of our recent past.

Recent and Forthcoming Publications

Special Issues of Journals

Isabel Hofmeyr and Derek Peterson, eds., 'Authorship and Print Sociability in African and African-American Newspapers'. Special issue of *Social Dynamics* vol. 45 no. 1 (2019).

This special issue arises out of the 2016 Mellon conference on 'African Print Cultures'. Essays include:

- Isabel Hofmeyr (University of the Witwatersrand) and Derek R. Peterson (University of Michigan), 'The Politics of the Page: Cutting and Pasting in African and African-American Newspapers', pp. 1-25.
- Judith T. Irvine (University of Michigan), 'Minerva's Orthography: Early Colonial Projects for Print Literacy in African Vernacular Languages', pp. 26-52.
- Madhumita Lahiri (University of Michigan), 'The Pose of the Author: C. Kamba Simango between Fact and Fiction', pp. 53-74.
- Natasha Erlank (University of Johannesburg), '*Umteteli wa Bantu* and the Constitution of Social Publics in the 1920s and 30s', pp. 75-102.
- Corinne Sandwith (University of Pretoria), "'Well-seasoned talks": R. Roamer Esq. and the Satirical Imagination in South African Letters', pp. 103-120.
- Bhekizizwe Peterson (University of the Witwatersrand), 'Imagining and Appreciating the Long Eye of History: Race, Form, and Representation in Drum Magazine's Serialization of *Wild Conquest*', pp. 121-137.
- Aston Gonzalez, 'William Dorsey and the Construction of an African American History Archive', pp. 138-155.
- Mary Kelley (University of Michigan), "'The Difference of Colour": Reading and Writing Abolitionism', pp. 156-173.

Another special issue, edited by Stephen Sparks, with origins in the 2015 Workshop in Ann Arbor on History after EP Thompson, is scheduled for publication in *Social History* in the second half of 2020. The issue includes articles by Sparks, Sarah Emily Duff, Clive Glaser, Bridget Kenny, Uma Mesthrie, Hlonipha Mokoena, Khumisho Moguerane and Dunbar Moodie, with a reviews section focused on South African scholarship.

Emma Park, Derek Peterson, Anne Pitcher, and Keith Breckenridge, 'Intellectual and Cultural Life in Conditions of Austerity'. Under review at *Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute*. This special issue arises out of the June 2018 conference on 'Intellectual and Cultural Life in Conditions of Austerity', held at the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in Maputo. The contents are as follows:

- Emma Park, Derek Peterson, Anne Pitcher, and Keith Breckenridge, 'Introduction: Intellectual and Cultural Life in Conditions of Austerity'
- Mbongiseni Buthelezi (PARI), Carolyn Hamilton (UCT), Verne Harris (Nelson Mandela Centre) and Jo-Anne Duggan (UCT), 'Archival Remediations in South Africa'
- Edgar Taylor (University of Johannesburg), 'Archival Futures Under Conditions of

Austerity'

Euclides Gonçalves (Kaleidoscopio) and Benedito Machava (University of Michigan), 'The Dead Archive: Local State and the (un)Making of Institutional Memory in Mozambique'

Maria Suriano (Wits), 'Walter Bgoya, the Tanzania Publishing House (TPH) and Mkuki na Nyota: dreams and constraints of an African publisher, 1972-2018'

Marlino E. Mubai (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane), 'The unintended consequences of austerity on higher education in post-colonial Mozambique'

Carlos Fernandes (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane), 'Socialism, Post-socialism and Intellectual Legacies in Mozambique: The Case of CEA (1976-1986) and IESE (2007-2017)'

'African Capitalisms', edited by Keith Breckenridge and Deborah James.

A special issue on African Capitalisms, which has beginnings in the first meeting of the collaboration in 2014, has now passed through the first round of review in *Economy and Society*. The issue, which includes papers by Mekonnen Ayano, Faeesa Ballim, Keith Breckenridge, Greve Chelwa, Jatin Dua, Jason Hickel, Deborah James, Vishnu Padayachee, and Howard Stein, aims to re-awaken interest in this continent in the field of international political economy.

'Social History since E.P. Thompson', special issue forthcoming in *Social History*.

Stephen Sparks 'The Peculiarities of South African History: Thompsonian Social History and the Limits of Colonialism'

Dunbar Moodie 'Using E. P. Thompson to think about South African history: Notes on a personal Journey'

Clive Glaser 'Thompson on the Highveld? Social History and Humanist Socialism'

Bridget Kenny 'The 'Lift Girls' Lament': Sex and Race in Johannesburg Department Stores, 1950s & 1960s'

Hlonipha Mokoena 'Zulu Victorians, or How Can a Man Become to Be of the English?'

Sarah Emily Duff 'Dear Mrs Brown: Social Purity, Sex Education, and the WCTU in Early Twentieth-Century South Africa'

Uma Mesthrie 'Waiting on Cape Town in the Apartheid Era: Work Histories of Indian Waiters and Barmen'

Khumisho Moguerane 'Black landlords, their tenants and the Natives Administration Act of 1927, South Africa'

Individual publications arising out of the collaboration

Pamila Gupta. *Portuguese Decolonization in the Indian Ocean World: History and Ethnography*. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).

Pamila Gupta "Chick Lit in a Time of African Cosmopolitanism," Special issue editor (with Ronit Frenkel) and contributor, "Chick-lit in a Time of African Cosmopolitanism" and "Reading Lesley Lokko", *Feminist Theory*, Volume 20 (2) 2019: 1-10, 23--36.

Pamila Gupta (with Chris Lee, Sandhya Shukla and Marissa Moorman), Special Issue Editor, "the Global South: Histories, Politics, Maps," *Radical History Review*, Issue 131 (2018).

Pamila Gupta (with Tamsyn Adams) “Vernacular Photography from Africa and India,” Special Issue editor and contributor, “Introduction” and “Sensuous Ways of Seeing in Stone Town, Zanzibar: patina, pose and punctum,” *Critical Arts*, 32 (1) 2018: 1-12, 59-74.

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