



## From the President's Desk, with Temitope Oriola

I am pleased to share with you a piece I wrote at the request of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. It is titled "Universities and the George Floyd moment". The blog post speaks to the call on universities for action on social justice. It covers issues such as hiring, research chairs and other awards, senior university administration, race-based data, retention and the meaning of EDI policies. Click [here](#) for the full article.



**DR. TEMITOPE ORIOLA, CAAS PRESIDENT**

Temitope Oriola  
CAAS president

## The Creation of an Africanist Community in Canada<sup>1</sup>

In his article on the prehistory of CAAS in the September 2020 issue of this newsletter, Roger Riendeau cites the unhappiness of McGill anthropologist Ronald Cohen, who complained 1963 about the lack of support for African studies in Canada.<sup>2</sup> Of course, Canada did not have former colonies in Africa, nor did it have a large body of Afro-Canadian students advocating for recognition of their heritage in university curricula.<sup>3</sup> Canada also did not have the global interests that drove American and Soviet involvement in *(continued on next page)*

<b>From the President's Desk</b>	1 + 9
<b>On Africanists in Canada</b>	1 -
Dr. Martin Klein	3
<b>Faculty Profile</b>	4 +
Dr. Sarah Katz-Lavigne	8 -
<b>Student Profile</b>	9
Samuel K. Adesubokan, MA	5
<b>Membership News</b>	6 -
<b>News from Africa</b>	7
In French and English	8
<b>Call for content</b>	9
E-mail us!	

(continued from previous page) Africa. Though Ronald Cohen left Canada to take a position at Northwestern University, an Africanist community developed in the subsequent years, particularly among people who studied in Britain and France and took teaching or research positions in Africa. Many were also excited, as I was, by the independence movements, by the end of colonialism and the building of new nations. Riendeau has described how they came together in the Committee of African Studies in Canada (CASC) and the leadership role played by Donald Savage.

The growth of this Africanist community received some institutional support. Anthropology departments were perhaps quickest to hire Africanists, but by the mid-sixties, there was growing interest in the politics of African and development studies and the expansion of Canadian universities provided the jobs. A key group that responded to these opportunities was a group of young scholars studying in Britain and France, who took teaching positions at the young African universities. John Flint taught at Ibadan before taking a position at Dalhousie, heading the African Studies Center from 1967. Bertin J. Webster, also from Ibadan, later joined him there. Cranford R. Pratt taught political science at Makerere when he was tapped by Julius Nyerere to become the first principal of the University of Dar es Salaam. He left Dar es Salaam four years later to take a position as head of the International Studies Programme at the University of Toronto. Douglas Anglin spent four years as Vice-Chancellor of the

University of Zambia before settling in at Carleton. In Quebec, Alf Schwartz had a similar trajectory, pursuing a doctorate at the Sorbonne and then holding research positions in Senegal and the Congo.

The Tanzania connection was particularly important in Toronto. Griff Cunningham at York had been Principal of Kivukoni College and was the first of a series of Africanists at York. John Saul returned to York several years later. Gerald Helleiner came to Toronto in 1965 after doing a thesis on Nigeria at Yale, but soon after, went off to head the Economic Research Bureau in Dar es Salaam for two years, followed by a number of other Toronto faculty members. Another group came from graduate programs in the United States and Europe. Myron Echenberg studied in Wisconsin and Richard Stren at Berkeley. Gerald Caplan taught at the Ontario Institute for the Studies in Education after doing a doctorate at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and a thesis in Zambia. Then there was a group of Americans like Jonathan Barker, Frank Chalk and myself attracted by good jobs and the chance to teach about Africa. Finally, there were academics from South Africa like Arthur Keppel-Jones at Queens, Peter Carstens at Toronto, and Donovan Williams in Calgary. Laval, where a Belgian anthropologist Albert Doutreloux, started teaching in 1963, became the most important center of African Studies in Quebec. He was followed by Andre Lux, Alf Schwartz, Renaud Santerre and Serge Genest. There were other centers. Louis Molet, who did research in Madagascar and briefly taught in the (continued on next page)

(continued from previous page) Congo, took a position at the University of Montreal, as did Bernard Charles. Louis Sabourin, a political scientist, who had studied both in Paris and at Columbia University in New York, was at the University of Ottawa. There was also a scattering of Africanists at other Canadian universities.

In 1965, Peter Gutkind, a McGill anthropologist, and Donald Savage, joined by Frank Chalk, who had arrived at Sir George Williams University one year earlier, organized a bilingual Inter-University Faculty Seminar on Africa in Montreal, which regularly had over 30 participants. In 1967, the Bulletin of the CASC was transformed into the Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue Canadienne des Etudes Africaines, which soon established itself as a leading journal in the field by publishing outstanding special issues. By Volume 3 (1969), they were publishing three issues a year. In the same year, the University of Toronto had 13 faculty members who had done research, taught in or written about Africa.

Thus, by 1969, there was a small but significant body of Africanists and a growing group of African students. When I arrived in Toronto in September 1970, there were a number of African graduate students. My first graduate student was a brilliant Kenyan, Peter Oloo Aringa, who decided at the end of the year to pursue a political rather than an academic career, but others created a significant African presence in CAAS. Support for African studies was not large. My department was more divided about whether

to create a position in African history than it was about who to choose. The Trudeau government was interested in Africa, but CIDA was created only in 1968 and the IRDC in 1970. The small band of academics were the leaders.

History and Literature departments were often hesitant. Myron Echenberg was hired at McGill in 1969 to teach both African and Latin American history. Later when Bogumil Jewsiewicki was hired at Laval, he was asked to teach both African and Eastern European history. Soon after I was hired at Toronto, I met another new hire, Frederick Case from the French Department. Though his department had no reluctance to hire a Black scholar, they would not let him teach courses on African and Caribbean literature. Once we got into the classroom, we found that students were more eager to study what we wanted to teach.

In November 1969, the annual meeting of the African Studies Association was held in Montreal and co-sponsored by CASC. At the time, members of the Canadian Africanist community were not sure whether they wanted to become a section of the American organization or for a separate organization. The Montreal meeting was disrupted by African-American activists. One of the results was the creation of the Canadian Association of African Studies. I will tell that story in a subsequent article.

Martin Klein  
Professor Emeritus  
University of Toronto

## Faculty Profile

### Dr. Sarah Katz-Lavigne

Dr. Katz-Lavigne holds a joint PhD in International Affairs at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University and in International Relations at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. Her PhD research focused on conflict at and around large-scale mining (LSM) sites in southeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Sarah has published in *The Extractive Industries and Society*, *Resources Policy*, and *Third World Thematics*. She co-authored papers with Moses Kiggundu in the *Africa Journal of Management* and with Doris Buss, Aluoka Otieno, and Eileen Alma in the *Canadian Journal of African Studies*. She has also published in *The Washington Post's Monkey Cage* and in *Africa is a Country* and advocated against the idea that the artisanal mining of cobalt in the DRC is "conflict-affected" or "dirty."

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH DR. KATZ-LAVIGNE

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**What alternative career pathways would you have taken?**

That's hard to say! I'd like to think I'd be studying English or African literature, or maybe pursuing my dream of being a writer. I'd love to be an artist or photographer!

**What are your research interests?**

My research interests relate to (armed) conflict at and around large-scale copper- and cobalt-mining sites in southeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), particularly conflict between large-scale mining (LSM) and those who mine artisanally or in a "clandestine" manner with high-level support. More recently I have become interested in global governance initiatives related to cobalt, more specifically

looking at how large-scale mining companies and other actors "frame" dynamics in the artisanal and small-scale mining of cobalt to make LSM seem "cleaner" than artisanal mining by comparison.

**Can you share a happy childhood memory?**

Definitely! Spending time with my Black Lab mix doggie Louchka. The sweetest and prettiest dog ever, she was one of my childhood best friends! I used to take her to the park to study, so I guess in a way she helped me on my path to academia.

**What fiction have you enjoyed recently?**

I have not had much time for fiction lately, unfortunately! Not too (*continued on page 8*)

## Student Profile

**Samuel K.  
Adesubokan, MA**

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH SAMUEL K. ADESUBOKAN**

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**What are your research interests?**

African and post/colonial literature and media fiction are the main fields of my research. My interest in media and fiction diverges from conventional classifications based on technology, such as old and new media, and print versus digital. I am interested in the aesthetics and politics of media—as material means, modes of design, and ideological expressions—across technologies, formats, and genres but grounded in fiction—specifically, African, and post/colonial fictions.

**What are your future aspirations and career path?**

Teaching is one of my life’s delight, so I hope to take up a university professorship job after the completion of my doctoral program. As well, I hope to make important scholarly contributions in my fields of research.

**If you were to advise young or new Black African graduate students about the challenges you faced as a graduate student, what would that be?**

First, I would tell them to believe in themselves as they may encounter challenges, social or otherwise, that may call to question their capability for graduate study here in Canada. Imposter syndrome is real and prevalent in academia; they should avoid that trap. Also, I would like them to know that the academic culture here may be quite different from that of

Samuel is a PhD student in the Department of English at the University of Victoria, BC. Samuel is originally from Nigeria. He earned his BA and MA from Obafemi Awolowo University, and University of Lagos, respectively.



their homeland, hence, a quick adjustment to the order of academic life here is crucial for success. To cite a personal example, when I came here, I realized that writing a good term paper alone would not earn me a good grade if I don’t make frequent contributions during seminars as participation weighs a good part of obtainable marks.

**Do you have any warm memories of Africa?**

Of course, I do. Aside from the social life of Lagos, I think what I love and miss most are the people back home who have been a huge part of my life and the connections I share with them. These relationships give me a clue to meaning in life, and this has become so poignant in the face of the current pandemic.

**What would you typically do on a day you want to take your mind off (academic) work?**

Recently, cycling has become one of my favourite pastimes. I have taken the habit of riding around Victoria to see parts of the city I have not visited, and I think it is a good way to get some exercise as well. Another thing I do is play games. I exchange game recommendations with friends and colleagues, and I must say, it’s one good way I have found to connect and network with others within the context of play.

## Membership News

**Book Publication:** Adeniran Adebunsi, Senior Lecturer, Obafemi Awolowo and Research Consultant, UN Office on Drugs and Crime



Adeniran I. Adebunsi (2020), *Migration Crises in 21st Century Africa: Patterns, Processes and Projections* (Singapore: Palgrave MacMillan).

### Abstract

*Migration Crises in 21st Century Africa* explores the ever-expanding crises of migrations from various regions of Africa to other parts of the world; notably the pattern that utilizes the pre-existing trans-Saharan trade route via North Africa and the Mediterranean to Europe's southern fringes. Dr. Adebunsi Isaac Adeniran explores key interrelated factors in astonishing depth, examining the nature of mobility in pre-modern African society; the impact of governance structures, demographics and economics; and the roles of both state and non-state actors. Adeniran additionally interrogates possible interventions and considers what the future of mobility within and beyond the boundaries of Africa might look like in an increasingly mobile world.

[Purchase the book, here.](#)

**Book Chapter Publication:** Timothy Adivilah Balag'kutu, Adjunct Lecturer, Babson College



T.A. Balag'kutu, J.J. McSparren, and S.D. VanDeveer (2018), "Extractives and Environmental Governance Research," in *A Research Agenda for Global Environmental Politics*, eds. Peter Dauvergne and Justin Alger (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited), 65-86.

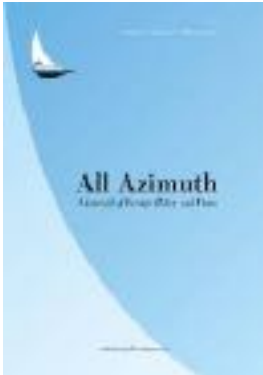
### Book Summary

In a world confronted with escalating environmental crises, are academics asking the right questions and advocating the best solutions? This Research Agenda paves the way for new and established scholars in the field, identifying the significant gaps in research and emerging issues for future generations in global environmental politics.

[Purchase the book, here.](#)

## Membership News

**Article Publication:** Nathan Andrews, Assistant Professor of Global and International Studies, University of Northern British Columbia



Nathan Andrews (2020), “International Relations (IR) Pedagogy and Diversity: Taking the IR Course Syllabus Seriously,” *All Azimuth* 9, no. 2: 267-281.

### Article Abstract

The field of International Relations (IR) has experienced different waves of ‘great debates’ that have often maintained certain theoretical and methodological frameworks and perspectives as core to the field whereas others are seen as peripheral and merely a critique of the former. As a result of this segregation of knowledge, IR has not become as open to dialogue and diversity as we are made to believe. To be sure, aspects of the extant literature speak of IR as being ‘not so international’, a ‘hegemonic discipline’, a ‘colonial household’, and an ‘American social science’, among other derogatory names. Informed by such characterizations that depict a field of study that is not sufficiently diverse, the paper investigates the relationship between pedagogical factors and dialogue in IR. In doing so, it provides preliminary results from a pilot study in February-April 2019 that sought to examine different graduate-level IR syllabi from leading universities in the global North and South (Africa in particular). In particular, the objective was to decipher what course design, including required readings and other pedagogical activities in the classroom, tells us about dialogue and the sort of diversity needed to push IR beyond its conventional canons.

[Read the full article, here.](#)

See News from Africa on the next page →

## News from Africa

### “Sub-Saharan Africa’s Economy to Rebound This Year as Activity Picks Up” by Vuyani Ndaba, Reuters

“Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to rebound this year as the continent’s drivers pick up momentum after activity was halted by the coronavirus pandemic, despite a slower pace of vaccinations compared with the rich world, a Reuters poll found.”

[Read more, here.](#)

### “Les Économies Africaines Face à la Pandémie de Covid-19” par Jean-Pierre Boris, RFI

“L’économie mondiale tente tant bien que mal de redémarrer malgré la persistance de la pandémie de coronavirus. L’économie chinoise est repartie de l’avant, l’américaine va bénéficier d’un énorme plan de relance, les Européens devraient connaître un solide rebond s’ils arrivent à mater le virus. Et l’Afrique ? Et les économies africaines ?”

[En savoir plus, ici.](#)

### “E-commerce in Sub-Saharan Africa: Can Covid-19 Growth be Sustained” Oxford Business Group

“The coronavirus pandemic triggered an e-commerce boom in sub-Saharan Africa, alongside the rest of the world. With a global recovery underway, the question now is: can that growth be sustained?”

[Read more, here.](#)

### “En Afrique, la Reprise Économique Freinée par l’Accès Limité aux Vaccins Contre le Covid-19,” Le Monde

“L’Afrique subsaharienne devrait enregistrer en 2021 la croissance économique régionale la plus lente au monde, avec un taux de 3,4 %, alors qu’elle peine à se remettre de la crise provoquée par le Covid-19, a averti le Fonds monétaire international (FMI) jeudi 15 avril.”

[En savoir plus, ici.](#)

## FACULTY PROFILE OF SARAH KATZ-LAVIGNE CONTINUED...

(continued from page 4) long ago I reread *The Shipping News* by Annie Proulx. It is a wonderful book. In non-fiction I’m finding *Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics* by Nanjala Nyabola to be a great read.

## What would you typically do on a day that you want to take your mind off (academic) work?

I am a big fan of exercise for taking a break. I love running and cardio workouts like kickboxing and weightlifting. I really like going out for a bike ride as well. (continued on next page)



*(continued from previous page)* **Do you have any relationship to or warm memories of Africa? What would they be?**

I have very positive memories of the time I spent in Lubumbashi and in the Congolese

province of Lualaba when I was doing research for my PhD. I met several Congolese colleagues from civil society and the university (several of whom are doing exciting research) that I'm still in touch with several years later. And Lubumbashi is a busy, exciting place to be.

## **“ON AFRICANISTS IN CANADA” BY MARTIN KLEIN, CONTINUED**

### End notes

1. I would like to thank Gerald Helleiner, Frank Chalk, Richard Stren and Bogumil Jewsiewicki for sharing their memories of the early years.
2. Roger Riendeau, “The Origins of CAAS, 1962-1970,” Newsletter of the Canadian Association of African Studies, 1, 1 (2020), 6-8.
3. Though accusations of racism against 6 West Indian students led to a violent confrontation between students and police in Montreal a month before the ASA meeting. Read about that, [here](#).

## **The CAAS newsletter team wants to hear from you!**

### **We want to share your news!**

#### **CONTENT WE ARE LOOKING FOR:**

- Faculty profile participants
- Student profile participants
- Member news: something good or important that has happened in your personal or professional life that you would like to share with other CAAS members. Did you happen upon a strange discovery? Or recently publish something? Perhaps you went on a great vacation and made a friend. Let us know!
- Academic news: Is there a CFP you would like to share, or an academic opportunity? E-mail us!

- News from across Africa: we want the good, the bad, the beautiful, the problematic. Has something happened somewhere in Africa that you think is worth sharing? Perhaps an important political event or just a happy story? Share with us!

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