



**From the Past President's Desk,  
with Temitope Oriola**

**New Awards, Awardees, and Farewell**

The CAAS Board at the extraordinary meeting held on 5 May 2021 made several far-reaching decisions. We re-introduced and institutionalized two awards of excellence that had not been presented for some years. The “Lifetime Achievement Award for Contributions to African Studies and CAAS” and the “CAAS Award for Meritorious Service” were approved unanimously by the Board.



**DR. TEMITOPE ORIOLA, CAAS PAST  
PRESIDENT**

The Board voted unanimously to present Professor Miriam Grant, the secretary-treasurer, and Professor Christopher Youé, former editor of the *Canadian Journal of African Studies (CJAS)*, with the Lifetime Achievement Award for Contributions to African Studies and CAAS. Professor Grant’s scholarship on Africa requires no introduction. A fine administrator, Grant has been Secretary-Treasurer of CAAS since 1997. This is easily one of the most critical and demanding roles in CAAS. I have benefitted immensely from her wisdom, experience and administrative nous.

The Board also voted unanimously to recognize the contributions of Professor Christopher Youé (1948-2018). One of (continued on next page)

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(continued from previous page) his closest colleagues on the Board of CJAS/CAAS, Professor Roger Riendieu, notes that Youé ‘ranks among the intellectual giants in the field of African Studies in Canada’. Youé served two terms as president of CAAS and was on the Board for three decades. CAAS does not forget. Professor Youé therefore receives posthumously the Lifetime Achievement Award for Contributions to African Studies and CAAS. I am grateful for Youé’s extraordinary contributions. I have notified his daughter, Emily Youé, about the award.

I am delighted to also share that the Board voted unanimously to present to Professor Roger Riendieu the CAAS Award for Meritorious Service. Riendieu has served as the managing editor of the *Canadian Journal of African Studies* since 1986 when the position was created. Dr. Belinda Dodson, coordinating editor of CJAS and CAAS Board member notes Riendieu led ‘profound changes in the production and administration of CJAS during this time... Roger has remained an essential source of administrative and accounting support, along with wise counsel based on his deep knowledge and experience of CJAS and CAAS over several decades.’ I am grateful to the Board for honouring Professor Riendieu. I appreciate Roger for his counsel

*“[Professor Pius Adesanmi] was a consummate mentor of PhD students at various locations on the continent. He died -- literally and figuratively -- in service to Africa”*

and friendship. A plaque will be presented to each of the award recipients.

The Board also established a new award — “The Early Career Research Excellence Award”. The newly minted award was thereafter named after Professor Pius Adesanmi. Adesanmi was a Professor of English, Comparative and African Literatures and Director of the Institute of African Studies at Carleton University until his death in the Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 crash on 10 March 2019. Professor Pius Adesanmi was relentless in his work on higher education in Africa. He was a consummate mentor of PhD students at various locations on the continent. He died -- literally and figuratively -- in service to Africa. He was on his way to a meeting in Nairobi at the behest of the African Union when he died. Adesanmi gave his life and scholarship for higher education, human rights, and good governance. The newly created award is now “The Pius Adesanmi Early Career Research Excellence Award”. I am delighted that the Board voted unanimously to honour Pius Adesanmi. This is a befitting honour. The award is for CAAS members who are within the first six years of completing a PhD. Two awards will be presented annually with attention to EDID (including career interruptions). The award will take off in the 2021/2022 academic year.

Details about all the awards and the nomination process (continued on next page)

(*continued from previous page*) will be posted on our website in August 2021. We are particularly keen to ensure continuity. I am happy to chair the inaugural Award Committee for the 2022 awards.

Finally, I am putting together my handover notes as I write this column one more time as president of CAAS. It has been a huge privilege to serve. I owe a debt of gratitude to several people. I have enjoyed a fine working relationship with the Board throughout my tenure. The 2021 conference organizing committee has done an excellent job. In particular, Professor Nicole Haggerty, chair of the committee, has been exemplary.

Professor Uwa Idemudia handed over the reins of CAAS to me in 2020. I am pleased to handover CAAS (in one piece!) to Professor Isaac Bezie. I am confident Isaac will do well. Dr. Nathan Andrews encouraged me to seek

nomination as member-at-large. I did. Professor Meredith Teretta advised that I put my name forward to be vice president in lieu of member-at-large. The rest, as they say, is history. Thank you, Nathan and Meredith, for your faith and trust in me.

I am grateful to all the members of the Board for your contributions before and during my tenure. I respectfully ask that you extend the same cooperation to Isaac. Thanks to members of CAAS all over the world. You are the reason CAAS exists. I hope I did okay as your president.

May the cup of COVID-19 pass over our world. May those who have lost loved ones find comfort and may the sick recover. E se pupo (thank you).

Temitope Oriola  
Past CAAS President

## **Solidarity with the Black Canadian Studies Association (BCSA)**

The Canadian Association of African Studies (CAAS) observed with deep disappointment the unfortunate events that took place at the 2019 Congress of the Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences held at UBC. The [racist harassment of Shelby McPhee](#), a member of the Black Canadian Studies Association (BCSA), is a reminder that concrete action for profound change must be systematically undertaken to establish an academic culture that is inclusive, open, and respects difference.

The BCSA requested that the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences 1) waive Congress 2021 fees for its student and community members and 2) make a formal commitment to a Black Studies themed Congress in the foreseeable future. We believe these requests were reasonable given the prevailing structures of disadvantage affecting Black scholars as well as the cancellation of Congress 2020, which focused on a theme (*continued on next page*)

(continued from previous page) (*Confronting Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism*) that would have allowed for much deeper conversations around systemic racism. We are therefore disappointed in the Federation’s reactive rather than proactive approach to the current crisis. The Federation’s impression management orientation in its relationship with the BCSA since the 2019 incident is an utter embarrassment. It has become clear that the firefighter approach is no longer acceptable.

As an association with explicit focus on Africa, CAAS is organically linked with the BCSA in addition to the intellectual solidarity that binds us to all other academic associations. CAAS had already decided to hold its 2021 annual conference at the University of Western Ontario, for reasons unrelated to the current situation. However, CAAS stands in solidarity with the decision of associations that have withdrawn from this year’s Congress. We would have done the same.

*“An organization purporting to represent scholarly associations and universities ought to have more than a pedestrian or impression management approach to these issues.”*

CAAS supports the BCSA on the urgency of clearly articulating issues related to anti-Black racism as a Congress theme. The [UN’s statement in its declaration of 2015-2024 as the International Decade for People of African Descent](#) recognizes that ‘people of African

descent represent a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected’. An organization purporting to represent scholarly associations and universities ought to have more than a pedestrian or impression management approach to these issues. The Federation needs to do a lot more on its [vision](#) ‘to build an inclusive, democratic and prosperous society by advancing understanding of peoples, cultures, institutions and social relations’.

CAAS has participated in past Congresses and continues to be part of the Federation. Thus, current and future actions of the Federation regarding this important matter is of interest to CAAS members and will determine our association’s relationship with the Federation. We are, however, hopeful about the work being done by the Advisory Committee on

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID). CAAS looks forward to reading the Committee's report in April and working with the Federation, BCSA and other associations to implement various activities and programs that would

contribute towards eradicating systemic racism and injustice in academia.

In solidarity,

Canadian Association of African Studies (CAAS)

## Post-Doctoral Fellow Profile

**Dr. Ronnie  
Watt**

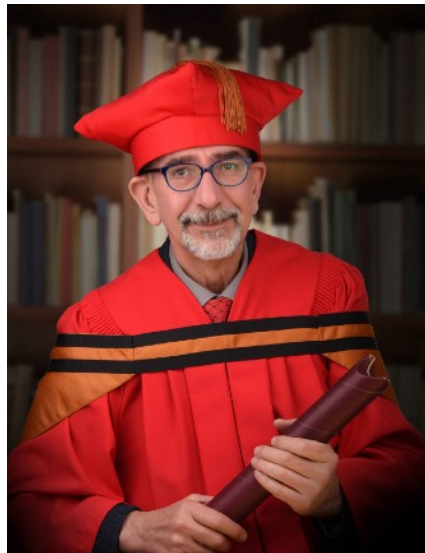
Dr. Watt emigrated to Canada in 2015 from South Africa where he was a journalist and producer of television programmes. Late in his professional career he pursued his interest in the art history of South African studio pottery and ceramic art and gained BA, BA Honours, MA and PhD degrees from the University of South Africa. He is resident in Vancouver.

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH DR. WATT**

#### **What are your research interests?**

My research field is that of South African studio pottery and ceramic art of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries and specifically the contextual settings in which it developed. In a multicultural society with many socio-political challenges, South Africans sought to negotiate and express their identity/indigeneity and deliver commentary. The outcomes of that can be read in the earlier expressions of hybridity and the later works that recall rather than embody culture and heritage and as such could be considered transcultural and transnational. Though known by name and with their works preserved in collections, the life histories and praxes of many of the South African studio potters and ceramists remain unresearched and undocumented. In my ongoing research, I gather and archive whatever incidental knowledge emerges about those role players.

**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?**

The volume of assigned study work and additional required research might appear daunting, but that challenge presents the opportunity to create a personal archive of material for immediate and later use. I filed every snippet of information that I came across and much of that could be absorbed in my post-graduate studies. Read, read and read some more even if the material

appears to be peripheral to your field of study.

#### **What are your future aspirations or career paths?**

I wish for a post-doctoral research opportunity to investigate the parallels and divergences in how multicultural societies - such as Canada and South Africa - negotiate and express the issue of identity/indigeneity via ceramic art. In the interim, I develop journal essays on some of the sub-themes that formed part of my PhD research..

*(continued on page 12)*



**Student Profile**  
**Oghenevwarho**  
**'Gabriel' Ojakovo, MA**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH**  
**OGHENEVWARHO 'GABRIEL' OJAKOVO**



**What are your research interests?**

My research interest focuses on the framing of *nasheed* (Islamic hymnody) by the Boko Haram insurgent to actualize its ideologies of eradicating Bida' (innovations) and to return Islam to its pristine state as practiced by the prophet. I am also interested in the use of songs by Nigerian musicians as a counter narrative to deconstruct the ideological position which Boko Haram proposes.

**If you were to advise young or new Black African graduate students about**

Gabriel is a PhD Candidate in Ethnomusicology Major, Department of Music, University of Alberta. He is a recipient of the 2020 Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship.



**the challenges you faced as a graduate student, what would that be?**

My advice to current or prospective Black African graduate students is for them to believe in the possibilities of achieving academic excellence in their chosen field. They need to get in touch with a Black faculty member within and outside their faculty to mentor them in the art of academic paper writing. Such mentorship relationship will give them a better understanding of the art of drafting quality research proposals for top-notch internal and external scholarships - Killam, Pierre Trudeau Scholarships, Vanier, and others.

**What are your future aspirations or career paths?**

Teaching, of course! My future aspiration is to take up a faculty job. I also aspire to broaden my research on radicalism to provide new narratives of music in the Peace-War Continuum in the global Jihad network and its implications for Africa security.

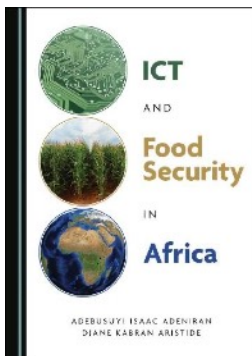
**What would you typically do on a day you want to take your mind off (academic) work?**

On my no work (academic) mode, I visit friends to unwind the stressors associated with my academic activities. I also love to engage in daily exercise (hiking, swimming, walking, cycling, and jogging) to keep me healthy and fit for my academic tasks.

*(continued on page 12)*

## Membership News

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



Adeniran I. Adebunsi (2020), *ICT and Food Security in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing).

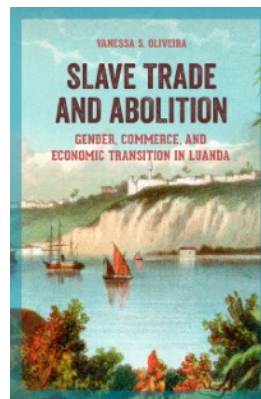
### Book Summary

This volume provides apt and timely insights into how a globalizing African society could use the array of opportunities that various applications of ICT offer to supply much-needed food sustainability for the people of Africa. Looking at the entire agricultural value chain, the book presents a viable empirical framework for engaging with ICT in processes of food production and distribution, especially for rural low-scale agriculturists. It also depicts how the platform of ICT could play a central role in making the larger continental-goal of sustainable food security a realistic projection. In addition, the text considers how different regional dynamics could either enable or disable the efficient deployment of ICTs in the process of agricultural production in Africa, and highlights the relative progress that has been recorded in some parts of Africa in respect to the use of various ICT platforms in processes of agricultural production and distribution. The book will be particularly useful for

students, researchers, teachers and policy makers working in the intersection between technology and food security.

[Purchase the book, here.](#)

**Book Publication:** Vanessa S. Oliveira, Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario



Vanessa S. Oliveira (2021), *Slave Trade and Abolition: Gender, Commerce, and Economic Transition in Luanda* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press).

### Book Summary

Well into the early nineteenth century, Luanda, the administrative capital of Portuguese Angola, was one of the most influential ports for the transatlantic slave trade. Between 1801 and 1850, it served as the point of embarkation for more than 535,000 enslaved Africans. In the history of this diverse, wealthy city, the gendered dynamics of the merchant community have frequently been overlooked. Vanessa S. Oliveira traces how existing commercial networks adapted to changes in the Atlantic slave trade during the first half of the nineteenth century. *Slave Trade and Abolition* reveals how women known as donas (a term adapted from the *(continued on next page)*

## Membership News

title granted to noble and royal women in the Iberian Peninsula) were often important cultural brokers. Acting as intermediaries between foreign and local people, they held high socioeconomic status and even competed with the male merchants who controlled the trade. Oliveira provides rich evidence to explore the many ways this Luso-African community influenced its society. In doing so, she reveals an unexpectedly nuanced economy with regard to the dynamics of gender and authority.

[Purchase the book, here.](#)

**Article Publication:** Temitope B. Oriola, Associate Professor of Sociology and Criminology, University of Alberta



**Temitope B. Oriola (2021), “Nigerian Soldiers on the War Against Boko Haram,” *African Affairs* 120, no. 479: 147-175.**

### Article Abstract

This study explores two main questions: What are the experiences of soldiers who have fought against Boko Haram? What can these experiences teach us about the seeming incapacity of the Nigerian military to defeat Boko Haram? Six major themes are explored. These are perspectives

on the mission, morale of troops, military equipment and weapons, suicide and murder–suicide among troops, intelligence leaks, and relationships of troops with the Civilian Joint Task Force, an extralegal militia. Soldiers’ discourses on the mission against Boko Haram reveal three overlapping dimensions. First, there are suspicions about the sponsors and political godfathers of Boko Haram. This suggests a belief that Boko Haram is a conspiracy involving the government and top brass of the military. Second, the patronage system involved in deployment into key positions on the war front. Third, participants believe that the war is being deliberately prolonged because it is a moneymaking machinery for the political and military elites. The evidence suggests that availability of weapons varies by unit and the agency of commanders—their networks and influence within the military and willingness to disobey orders from superiors if their demands are not met. This situation produces radically variegated wartime experiences among troops. Non-commissioned soldiers believe senior commissioned officers perpetrate intelligence leaks and are responsible for the protracted war. Senior Army Generals interviewed in this study support this perspective. The study has major policy implications for successful operations against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin area and the broader war against terrorism in the Sahel.

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



## Academic Opportunities

### CANADA–AFRICA YOUNG SCHOLARS COALITION: INVITATION



The Africa Institute has launched the *Canada-Africa Young Scholars Coalition (CAYSC)* whose membership will include undergraduate students, graduate students, Postdoctoral Fellows, and other trainees of African heritage or identity from across Canada, as well as allies. Undergraduate students, Graduate students, Postdoctoral fellows and Trainees are invited to become members of the CAYSC.

This coalition will foster and promote collaborative, interdisciplinary scholarly approaches, as well as nurture mentorship and academic support for young African and Africanist scholars. The Africa Institute Faculty and Staff will support and work with this Young Scholars Coalition on an ongoing basis. By becoming a member of CAYSC, you will:

1. Partake in events, including networking opportunities
2. Become a part of a wide community of scholars in various disciplines and career stages, from across Canada and Africa
3. Receive information for research funding, workshops, and other relevant capacity building opportunities
4. Help to build the first Canadian coalition of young Africanist scholars.

The *Canada-Africa Young Scholars Coalition* has volunteer and work study positions for three exciting projects: 1. The Bell 5G Project in Student Mental Health; 2. The CASYC Forum; and 3. the Canada-Africa Alumni Network. You can learn more about these exciting positions [here](#). If you are interested in learning more or getting involved, please send an email to [african@uwo.ca](mailto:african@uwo.ca)

### LAUNCH OF AFROGLOBE, A NEW JOURNAL ON AFRICA FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Isaac Bazié founded an academic journal, *Afrolglobe*, whose first issue was published in May 2021. You can read the articles of the launch issue as well as the current calls for contributions on *Afrolglobe* [website](#).

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## Academic Opportunities

### CANADIAN JOURNAL OF AFRICAN STUDIES — SEEKS FRENCH BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

Applications are invited for the post of French Book Review Editor for *Canadian Journal of African Studies*. The role is for a three-year appointment, renewable.

**Closing date for applications: 30 August 2021**

#### ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The *Canadian Journal of African Studies* (CJAS)/ *Revue canadienne des études africaines* (RCEA) is the official publication of the Canadian Association of African Studies (CAAS). Launched in 1967, it is a bilingual multidisciplinary journal committed to facilitating the dissemination of research on Africa by scholars working in Canada, Africa and elsewhere.

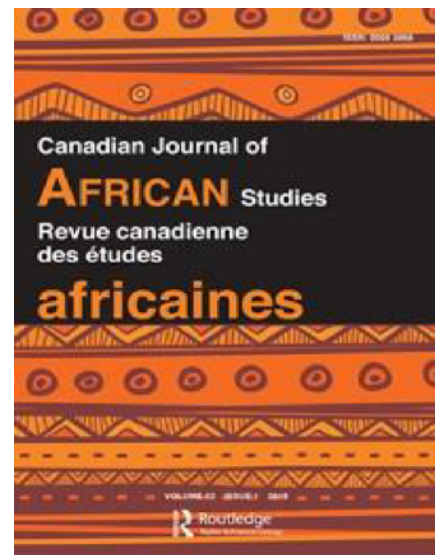
CJAS publishes papers across a range of subject areas including anthropology, political science, history, sociology, literature, geography, and development. The book review/essay review section provides critiques of recent books and reports on Africa in general and on individual countries. For more information on the journal, please visit the journal's website, [here](#).

#### ROLE DESCRIPTION

The French Book Review Editor will initially serve for three years, renewable by mutual consent for further terms at the discretion of the CJAS Board. The Book Review Editor will be supplied with a copy of the journal's guidelines for book reviews and access to a reviewer database. This is a volunteer position, but a modest annual allowance is made to the CJAS editorial team to cover any expenses. The greatest reward of this position is the chance to survey new French language books published on Africa.

The French Book Review Editor will:

- Identify new titles to be reviewed in the journal and contact publishers to obtain copies;
- Receive copies of books sent by publishers to the journal for review;
- Maintain a database of book reviewers and expand this as necessary, in terms of size, subject specialisms, and geographical representation, especially in African countries;
- Work with the Book Review Editor, Coordinating Editor, and Production Editor to process book reviews for the journal in a timely fashion;



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## Academic Opportunities

- Ensure that all reviewers uphold the journal's code of publishing ethics;
- Send PDFs of/links to the published book reviews to the publishers concerned;
- Send an updated list of books available for review to CAAS for communicating via the CAAS mailing list, website, and social media platforms.

### CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants should have recognised expertise and an established record of published scholarship in African Studies, and they should be actively involved with scholarly networks within the field. Although much of the work will be conducted in French, working knowledge of English is an asset. Key qualities sought for the position of Book Review Editor include energy, enthusiasm, organisational skills, and the ability to meet deadlines and work effectively within a team and with a major commercial publisher. Applicants should have clear employer or institutional support for this activity for the duration of the three-year appointment, including release time as necessary.

### APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested candidates are requested to email a letter of interest and a full C.V., including a list of published books and/or papers, to Dr. Jonathan Roberts, current Book Review Editor of the journal, at [jonathan.roberts@msvu.ca](mailto:jonathan.roberts@msvu.ca).

## Job Opportunities

### Political Scientist (International Relations)

Assistant Professor

University of British Columbia, Vancouver  
Campus

Location: Vancouver, BC

Date posted: 9 July 2021

Advertised until: 7 September 2021

[See full posting, here.](#)

### Political Studies (Black Political Thought)

Assistant Professor

Queen's University

Location: Kingston, ON

Date posted: 13 April 2021

Advertised until: 12 July 2021

[See full posting, here.](#)

### Dr. Ronnie Watt (cont. from p. 5)

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

I am a keen flower photographer and paint landscapes and have exhibited these works in galleries in both Canada and South Africa.

**Do you have any relationship to or warm memories of Africa? And what would that be?**

I maintain strong ties with South Africa and have vivid memories of the country's rich cultural heritage and environmental diversity. I do miss the wide-open spaces, traditional

foods and long conversations in my home language Afrikaans.

### Gabriel Ojakovo (cont. from p. 6)

**Do you have any relationship to or warm memories of Africa? And what would that be?**

I certainly do. I grew up in Warri – located in the coastal region of southern Nigeria, and the memories of the city's rich cultural experiences formed my musical experiences. As an ethnomusicologist, the ethnography approach is core for my study. Hence, visiting Nigeria as part of my fieldwork is always an opportunity for me to get connected to my historical base.

## 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!

**Newsletter team contact information:** [caasnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:caasnewsletter@gmail.com)