

CAS@50

CAS@50 : *Cutting Edges and Retrospectives*

Date and Time

6th Jun 2012 09:00 – 8th Jun 2012 17:00

Location

University of Edinburgh



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



Cutting Edges and
Retrospectives

Over 2012, the Centre of African Studies (CAS) in Edinburgh will celebrate its 50th anniversary. The focal point for the year-long celebrations will be an international conference from 6-8 June on the theme of *CAS@50: Cutting Edges and Retrospectives*.

Emerging out of the Hayter enquiry into Area Studies in the United Kingdom, CAS was established with an explicitly interdisciplinary brief. Since 1962, our researchers have maintained one foot in a core discipline – such as Social Anthropology, History, Geography, Education, Economics, Development Studies, and Politics – and the other in African Studies more broadly. Over the past 50 years, CAS has generated leading research on themes as diverse as Pan-Africanism; Creole communities in colonial West Africa; hunter-gatherer societies in Southern and Central Africa; democratisation; migration and urbanisation; Africa and international education; labour and politics; gender and legal pluralism; and religion and society. More recently, reflecting a generational turnover, it has added biotechnology, borderlands, information technologies, land- and waterscapes, heritage and commemoration, and post-conflict transitions to the list of current research.

CAS@50 expects to use the anniversary not merely to look back upon the history of the Centre with a critical eye, but also to reflect on the trajectories of African Studies itself: to what extent is the terrain of academic enquiry from the early decades recognisable today, and might there be something to be said for looking afresh at some debates that have become obscured with the passage of time? Also, in what respects can one talk of genuine breakthroughs in our understandings, and where do unresolved issues reside? Other aspects of the conference look forward to emerging areas of research and address what might be considered cutting edge today, whether construed in terms of methodology or analytical perspective. Finally, the conference will tackle the contention that interdisciplinarity has been as much a problem for African Studies as its underlying source of strength.

CAS is pleased to announce that there will be two confirmed keynote lectures at the event: *Jean-Francois Bayart (CNRS/Sciences Po, Paris)* and *Frederick Cooper (New York University)*.

CAS invites both panel and roundtable proposals on any theme that relates to the interplay between past perspectives and current research, but is especially interested in the following:

Politics, Power and Popular Culture: labour and politics; popular culture; electoral politics; the politics of the local; youth; international organisations; constitutionalism; urbanism. Contact person: Paul.Nugent@ed.ac.uk

Histories and Connectivities: the slave trade, Africa and the Atlantic world; alcohol; consumption, ethnicity; nationalism; the African city. Contact person: Paul.Nugent@ed.ac.uk

Religion: methodologies for the study of religion; religion in the public sphere; religion and politics; religion and health; diasporic religion. Contact person: B.Bompani@ed.ac.uk

Development: international education; climate change; bioenergy; food systems; law; veterinary health; Scotland-Africa connections. Contact person: James.Smith@ed.ac.uk

Peopling Places and Placing People: symbolising culture and thought, materialising bodies and places, and environmentalising futures. Contact person: J.Fontein@ed.ac.uk

Borderlands: A stream of panels on the topic 'African Borderlands - Regional Integration from Above and Below' will be run by the African Borderlands Research Network ([ABORNE](#)) as a linked conference within CAS@50. The call for panel and paper proposals (deadline 30th September 2011) is [here](#). Contact person: Wolfgang.Zeller@ed.ac.uk

Legality and Illegality: Legal history, property law, customary law, legal pluralism, transnationalisation of law, international humanitarian and criminal law, transitional justice, good governance, crime control, criminal and illegal activities, corruption. Contact person: Gerhard.Anders@ed.ac.uk

Panel and roundtable proposals should consist of a ten line rationale and a list of speakers and paper titles. Please entitle your message 'CAS@50 Proposal' and send to African.Studies@ed.ac.uk. You should also indicate which strand the proposal is intended to relate to and whether it is a panel or a roundtable. We positively welcome proposals from disciplines not traditionally associated with CAS. These might include cultural studies, linguistics, or archaeology.

Proposals should be submitted by 30th SEPTEMBER 2011. It is expected that notification of the outcome will be communicated in October.