

# Annual Report 2023

 african studies  
centre leiden





## Preface

2023 was a year full of collaborative engagements, individual highlights and organisational development. Africanists from all over the world gathered in Cologne for the 9th European Conference on African Studies (ECAS) on 'African Futures'. At the ASCL, we purposefully invested in the academic community engaged in and with Africa at Leiden University in the Leiden African Studies Assembly (LeidenASA), and strengthened our joint work with the Netherlands Institute in Morocco (NIMAR). Cementing our collaborative relations with African Studies colleagues in Ghana and Edinburgh, we started the Legon Leiden Edinburgh Academic Partnership (LLEAP). We also expanded our visiting fellow programme from seven to nine positions, and welcomed four self-financed visiting scholars. Staff at the ASCL initiated two new collaborative research groups (CRGs) on African language archives and conflict continuities. Finally, we took time to reflect on our work as an institute that studies and teaches African Studies, in the mid-term review for the Master African Studies, and the 2017–2022 research evaluation. In this annual report we share with you our activities and results for 2023 with some highlights listed below:

- The ASCL welcomed new staff members: INCLUDE knowledge manager Ola Abagun, student assistant Fierke Koolen, student assistant Noa Mes, and intern Walker Swindell. As part of a multi-disciplinary collaboration between the ASCL and the Law, History, and Anthropology departments at Leiden University, we also welcomed Sara de Wit, Miriam Waltz, and Sheila Varadan and the Leiden University Network on Health in Africa (LUNHA).
- We celebrated two PhD defences by Ibrahima Poudiougou and Crépin Marius Mougua.

- We organised a range of public events, including the Studium Generale series 'Africa in 2023', a public lecture by former South African president Kgalema Motlanthe, and a seminar by Prof. Olúfémi Táíwò on decolonisation. During the 2023 Stephen Ellis Annual Lecture, dedicated to the importance of archives in African Studies, we presented the Stephen Ellis archive.
- In collaboration with three African and two European Universities, we successfully launched our first Virtual Online International Collaborative Exchange (VOICE) on well-being.
- Research, teaching, and network awards: Madi Ditmars received a Virtual International Collaboration Award; Karin Nijenhuis received a Senior Comenius Fellowship; John Kegel received a LU-KIEM grant; Akinyinka Akinyoade participated in a successful LDE majority world application, and the ASCL participates in the GROW Marie Curie Doctoral Network.
- The ASCL Library welcomed students, staff, visiting scholars, and guests to enjoy the wealth of resources available; including Dr Graça Machel who visited Leiden and the ASCL library in the context of her Leiden University honorary doctorate.
- Various ASCL colleagues delivered tailor-made training to new staff at the Africa Department of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and we delivered two editions of the 'Regional Course: Africa' for the Academy International Affairs of the Ministry.

Enjoy the read!

Marleen Dekker.



## Address

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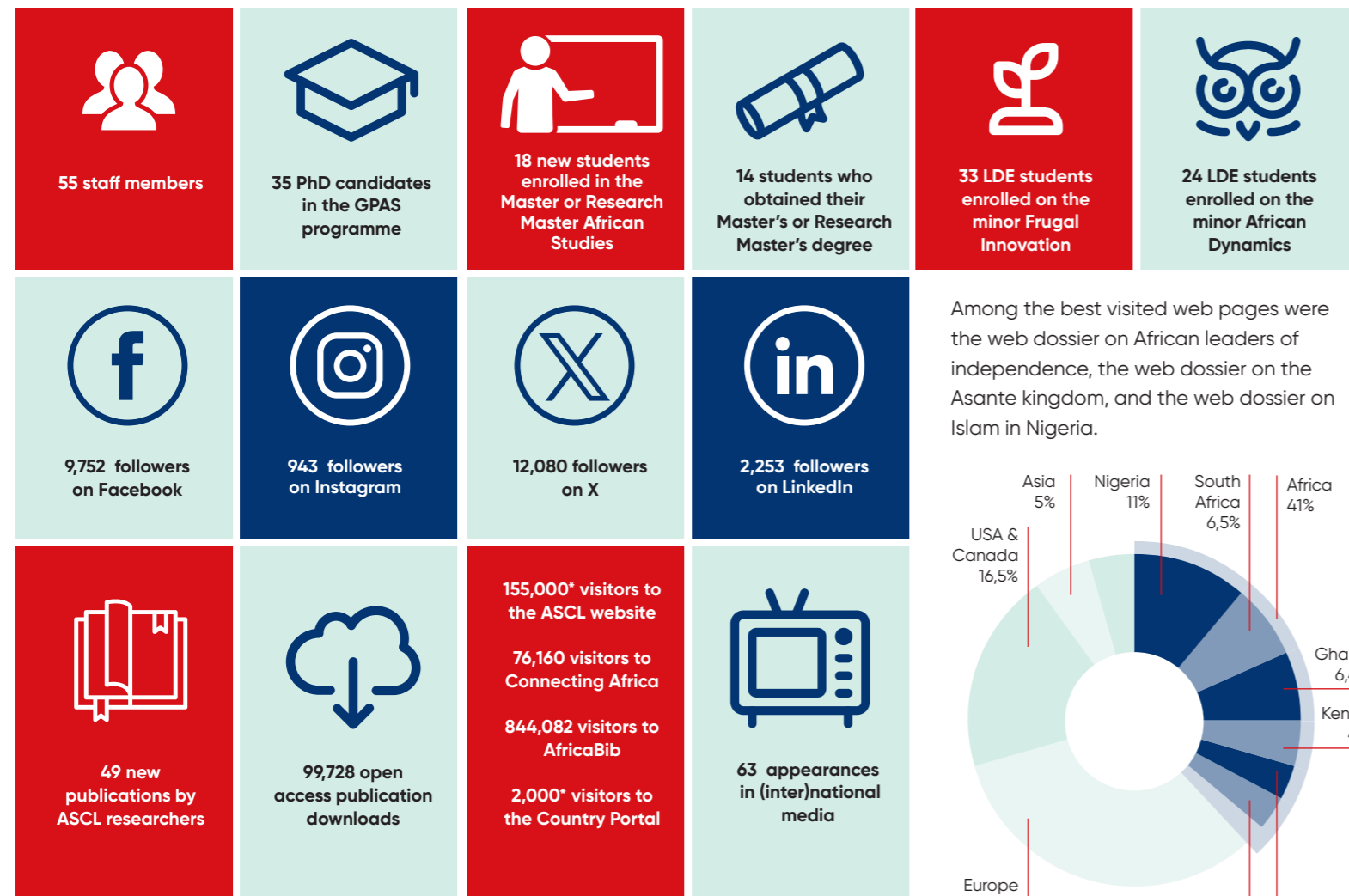
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## Facts and Figures

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In 2023, the ASCL had:



\*data rounded up due to changes in Google Analytics.

## Research

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Some key issues on the continent in 2023.

### Open borders

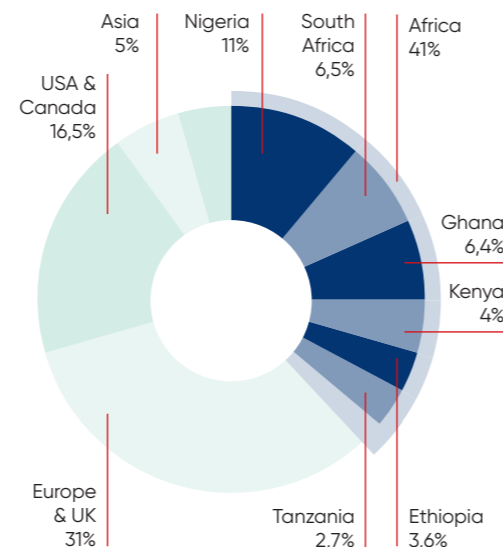
One follow-up to the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is the increasing reduction of visa requirements for travellers between several African countries, a positive indication of intra-continent opening up. High-profile visa agreements announced in 2023 include Rwanda abolishing visas for all Africans, Mozambique's visa waiver for 29 countries, Kenya's 90-day visa waiver with South Africa, and South Africa's agreement with Ghana. It is too early to assess the impact of these policies on increasing trade and generating increased revenue for continental development.

### BRICS expansion

South Africa hosted the 15th BRICS bloc summit in August, which saw the official admission of Egypt and Ethiopia into the BRICS group of countries.

### Economy

African Economic Outlook 2023 underscored "the urgency to fast-track climate action and green transitions to drive the continent's inclusive and sustainable development." Despite the combined effects of the pandemic, climatic, and global supply chain shocks, which led to a reduction in the continent's real GDP growth from 4.8 percent in 2021 to 3.8 percent in 2022, continental economic resilience pointed to a stabilization at 4.1 percent average growth in 2023–24. In as much as "Africa offers the private sector trillion-dollar investment opportunities in climate and green growth sectors, the dynamics of Africa's macroeconomic fundamentals remain mixed and considerable challenges remain."



### FinTech

2023 was not a smooth year for the African tech ecosystem. Less than fifty per cent of the capital attracted in 2022 was obtained continent-wide this year, transactions decreased, and about half of investors exited the African market. In total, only \$3.5 billion was raised from 547 deals by African venture firms. This marks the first decline in eight years. Is the African market cooling?

Africa summits A series of summits were held with African leaders, including the Russia-Africa Economic and Humanitarian Forum (St. Petersburg, 27–28 July) and the Africa Human Capital Heads of State Summit, hosted by the World Bank (Dar es Salaam, 25–26 July). African leaders from 43 countries endorsed the Dar Es Salaam Human Capital Declaration, making concrete commitments to prioritise investments in people, with specific targets in health, education, and jobs.

### Climate shocks

The drought in the Horn of Africa region entered its third year and sixth back-to-back season of failed rainfall. This created conditions worse than the 2011 famine and by August 2023, the WHO had recorded over 2 million people as displaced. Concerned African leaders attending the inaugural African climate summit in Nairobi lamented the disproportionate effects of climate change on African countries, and reiterated the call for Western nations with higher carbon emissions to institute climate taxes. At COP28, African negotiators demanded a "just fossil phase-out with equity and differentiation."

### Cost-of-living crisis

The continuing economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic



and the disruption of global food supply chains due to, among other things, the Russia–Ukraine war resulted in the cost of living escalating to crisis levels. Protests occurred in Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, and Tunisia, while in Malawi, the president suspended foreign travel for all government officials in order to plug a hole in the country’s foreign reserves. Nigeria’s cost-of-living crisis was linked to the devaluation of the Naira (national currency) and an overnight rise in fuel prices following a presidential remark that a decades-long fuel subsidy had effectively been stopped.

### Coups

Military takeovers of democratically elected governments continued on the continent with the sixth and seventh coups occurring in Niger and Gabon, while attempted coups were foiled in Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Many blame these military interventions on a deep dissatisfaction among citizens and the perceived funneling of democratic dividends only to the elected leadership class.

The 2023 coups had regional and intercontinental implications. The latter amplified the decline of France’s influence in the Francophone areas, while the former sparked economic (closure of borders) and diplomatic (suspension from ECOWAS) rows. While France appeared to back the Nigeria-led bloc to reverse the mid-year coup, ECOWAS did not.

A series of contested national elections throughout the year also fuelled the military’s narrative of pervasive political corruption and overbearing external influence. Election results were disputed in Madagascar, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe but these results were ultimately judicially upheld. In Liberia, the incumbent, President George Weah, conceded his loss at the polls, making way for President Joseph Boakai.

### Conflict continuities

In April, conflict flared in Sudan – Africa’s third largest country – when the fragile accord between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces was broken. This has resulted in the loss of lives, destruction of property running into billions of Sudanese pounds, and deep damage to the country’s economy. The human and material implications for the neighbouring Sahelian region and the Horn are still being felt.

In Central Africa, overall peace continue to elude the mineral-rich Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially in the North Kivu Province where, reportedly, the M23 has renewed its offensive. Rwanda denies accusations from the Congolese government and Western countries that it backs the M23.

Peace gradually returned to the northern regions of Ethiopia following the truce between government and Tigrayan forces. Gains made in Tigray, however, were offset in the Amhara region, where Fano militias engaged in heavy fighting with Federal troops, their former ally in the Tigrayan War.

### CRG activities 2023

The ASCL’s Collaborative Research Groups (CRGs) are forums for exchange and debate from thematic, disciplinary, and practitioner angles, as well as for joint activities such as workshops, publication projects, or research. Below, is a summary of CRG activities for the year.

**Governance, entrepreneurship, and inclusive development:** The GEID group aims to enhance understanding of the roles, challenges, and strategies of various economic stakeholders and businesses across the continent. It examines the implications for





(economic) governance and inclusive development, focusing on entrepreneurship and fostering a conducive business environment. In Autumn 2023, this CRG organised a series seminars, delving into the nexus of governance, entrepreneurship, and inclusive development. Topics ranged from the perils and lessons of an ineffective governance culture and kind-based economic systems for inclusivity multinationals in the cement industry and the rhetoric of climate change and sustainable development in Nigeria. GEID also welcomed visiting fellow Dr. Nelson Nkwor, who used his time at ASCL to advance his research and prepare a publication on the Nigerian cement industry and sustainable development.

**Conflict continuities:** This newly established CRG explores conflict continuities – and attempts to disrupt or halt them – probing the intricacies of African societies and the transformative paths they may forge. Our first decision was to foster team building and delve into the conceptual and methodological realms of ‘conflict continuities’ through regular seminars led by CRG members. From April to December, eleven members presented their research, laying the groundwork for a forthcoming writing workshop in January 2024. In its first public seminar in November, Marius Crépin (Leiden University/University of Bangui) dissected the pivotal role of the Central African Republic’s youth as ‘conflict resources.’ The group expanded throughout the year, welcoming researchers from both Dutch universities and African research institutes, along with three MA African Studies students gearing up for their research internships. This diverse group of academics fosters the exchange of ideas, creating a vibrant research community on conflict continuities that bridges Leiden–African connections.

**Patterns of Living in Southern Africa, 1780s to date:** In 2023, the CRG organised nine online Southern Africa Writing Group meetings, inviting external participants to enrich the sessions. These meetings served as a vibrant forum for discussing drafting articles, thesis chapters, and funding proposals. Notable sessions included discussion of chapters of Tycho van der Hoog’s PhD thesis exploring North Korea’s role in the liberation of Southern Africa, and Tanya Hendrik’s article on post-cyclone reconstruction in Malawi. Brian Moore delved into the history of sheep farming in southern Namibia while Jan-Bart Gewald tackled the environmental legacies of mining in Southern Africa. The group continues to foster scholarly exchange and promote collaboration.

**African Language Archives – Unpacking local epistemologies:** Another newly established CRG, this group views archives and communities as co-agents of history and heritage making. Many members have connections to specific archives, recognising both their challenges and their profound significance. Our focus lies on the preservation of cultural knowledge production, culturally endangered languages (such as the Iraqw language in Tanzania), and literary texts (such as the private Ustadh Mau collection on Lamu Island, Kenya). Engaged in conversations and co-creation, our collaborations are ongoing and are initiated and enhanced by relations made before and during (digital) archival work carried out in the demanding context of scholarship and research. In December, we held the first edition of a workshop clustered around the topic of archiving and sharing. This prompted critical thinking on the drawbacks of the digital world and the actual labors and links that archives can and must create with their source communities in multimodal and sustainable ways. We welcomed external members this year, including Chao Tayana (African Heritage,



### **‘The Birth of Modernity’: Fellowship on 16th-century West African History, Sharjah, UAE**

Rahmane Idrissa spent a year (September 2022 to August 2023) at the Africa Institute of Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates having been awarded the distinguished Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellowship. This gave Idrissa an opportunity to focus on a book project that sheds new light on West African history in the sixteenth century and that is based on the relatively abundant sources on the Songhay Empire – a state that dominated the Sahel–Sudan region of West Africa through the period – to build a narrative of ‘the birth of modernity’ centred on that region’s history. In addition, Idrissa was involved in devel-



*Rahmane Idrissa*

oping the Institute’s political science and other social science curricula, particularly in relation to state-building and Islam in Africa. As part of the role he is the mentored junior fellows at the Institute, and workshopped the writing project. During his stay, Idrissa ran two seminars, one at the Institute and one at New York University at Abu Dhabi, on the invitation of NYU historian and head of the Arab Crossroads Program Justin Stearns. The fellowship was a big success, with Idrissa making a breakthrough in his writing; he is now expected to finish the book, which is under contract with Allen Lane and Penguin Books, later in 2024.

*Rahmane Idrissa and other visiting fellows at the Africa Institute, Sharjah, UAE.*



Kenya) and Dr. Jama Musse Jama (Hargeysa Cultural Centre). We look forward to working with Dr. Noemi Alfieri and Jean-Jacques Angoua Tano in 2024–2025.

**Collaboration and contestation in words:** Dialogues and disputes in African social realities. 2023 was a productive year in which the focus was on studying debates and polemics in various Africa contexts. The group explored a range of different settings in which this “fighting with words” resulted in fruitful insights. In this Notable highlights included a presentation by Dr Maarten Bedert on his ongoing research in Liberia and Dr. Mulugeta Tsegaye’s examination of campaign banners in the 2021 Ethiopian Election. In October, Dr. Floris Burger (Radboud Univ. Nijmegen) gave a talk on “Schooling as an alternative to land: Contested intergenerational responsibilities in a community in eastern Uganda.” In addition, the CRG co-hosted two workshops this year: Modalities of Inspection in Policing and Religion in Africa: Exploring their Interactions and Contestations (Leiden, 29–30 June); and Global and Local Political Debates over Women’s Rights and Everyday Life in Muslim Africa (Leiden, 21–22 September).

**Africa in the world – Rethinking Africa’s global connections:** In collaboration with the “Contestation in Words” CRG, our group held a two-day workshop, Global and Local Political Debates over Women’s Rights and Everyday Life in Muslim Africa (Leiden, 21–22 September). Featuring diverse themes (legal aspects, every day experiences, local and global entanglements) and geographical perspectives (the Horn of Africa, West Africa, South Africa), the event boasted eight international speakers and culminated in a keynote lecture by Dr. Joseph Hill on “Muslim Women’s Interpretive Authority Reconsidered: Everyday Interpretation among

Female Islamic Leaders in Senegal.” The discussions sparked lively debates on the complexities of Muslim women in Africa navigating, stimulating, and contributing to public debates over women’s rights while managing their own day-to-day priorities. Additionally, collaboration with the AEGIS CRG “Africa in the World” led to a panel at ECAS in Cologne delving into the implications of digital public infrastructure and the future of African statehood. This year, members’ research output included preparing the edited volume Trust and Trust Making in Africa’s Global Connections for publication in early 2024 and collaborating on a special issue of Islamic Africa on Travelling Islam, co-edited by Annachiara Raia, Mayke Kaag, and external colleagues. Tycho van der Hoog published his article “A Monumental Relationship: North Korea and Namibia” and Abel Ezeoha and Chibuikwe Uche published ‘We will Pay Compensation from Future Profits: The Nationalisation of Foreign Businesses in Post-Colonial Uganda’ in Business History.

**Rethinking African History:** Throughout the year, the CRG organised a series of events, provoking intellectual discourse and scholarly exchange. In March, we co-organised a workshop in partnership with the Sustainability Cluster of the Institute of Cultural Anthropology, on small-scale/artisanal mining in Congo and Ghana, chaired by Prof. Jan-Bart Gewald with presentations from Dr. Jeroen Cuvelier (University of Ghent) and Dr. Sabine Luning (Leiden). September saw the Pulitzer Prize winner Prof. Caroline Elkins (Harvard University) give a lecture on organised violence in the British Empire, followed by a masterclass based on her unique experience as a historical adviser to five Kenyans, tortured by British security forces, who sued the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office for damages. In October, David Jeffery-Schwikkard (King’s College, London), presented his work on the relationship

between religion and politics in South Africa with a special focus on the ANC, while Michael Glover gave a fascinating talk on cattle and colonialism. November brought us Dr. Giacomo Macola, from

la Sapienza, who hosted a lecture on “Warlordism in the Congo Basin (c.1850–1908).”

### Leiden University Network for Global Health in Africa (LUNHA)

Launched on the occasion of the visit of **Dr Graça Machel** in **October 2023**, the Leiden University Network for Health in Africa (LUNHA) is an initiative that fosters collaboration and research related to justice and global health issues on the African continent. It is a platform for interdisciplinary research, knowledge exchange, and partnerships between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners interested in African health and planetary challenges. Dr Sara de Wit (Department of History/ ASCL), Dr Miriam Waltz (Department of Anthropology/ ASCL), and Dr Sheila Varadan (Child Law Department/ ASCL) lead the LUNHA Hub.

The LUNHA Hub aims to shift the focus of global health to be more about justice, fairness, and inclusion. LUNHA wants to create a broader space for social sciences and humanities in discussions about global and planetary health in Africa. In collaboration with various partners, including civil society, policymakers, and academia in Africa, LUNHA is leading a critical discussion and change in the direction of global health research.

In October 2023, we had the honour of organising a meeting together with two representatives of the African Child Policy Forum (‘ACPF’), an independent not-for-profit Pan-African institute for policy research and advocacy on the African child, based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting discussed the potential avenues



*Sara de Wit, Sheila Varadan, and Miriam Waltz.*

for future research-policy collaboration, which will revolve around global health and international children’s rights and child law. ACPF’s work is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Also in October, Miriam, Sheila, and Sara participated in the ‘LDE African Dynamics’ minor and gave a guest lecture in the Social Dynamics Section: Exploring Africa. Our individual guest lectures addressed global health in Africa through a historical, legal, and anthropological lens and we explored the socio-development dimensions surrounding Sustainable Development Goal 3 (good health & well-being).

We are currently developing a new and interdisciplinary module on global health in Africa for the ResMA course ‘Thematic Fields: Linking Theory to Practice.’



### Religious dynamics in the African Slave trade to Malta, 1530–1800: A religious–historical anthropological study

As part of my studies of the religious and ritual expressions in and of the African diaspora, I am developing a religious–historical anthropological exploration of the African slave trade to Malta. This research focuses on the religious aspects of this history in view of Malta’s position in the Mediterranean world of the day. It examines trans–Sahara slave trading from the time that the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta – better known as the Order of Malta – settled on the archipelago in 1530. The Order sought to develop a Christian stronghold there, from where it operated large galleys throughout the Mediterranean Sea in its fight against the Ottoman Empire. Subsequently, the Order was followed by the establishment of the Roman Inquisition, adding yet another tribunal to the hegemonic position of the Roman Catholic Church, its clergy, and its knighthood on the governance of Malta. Some believe that this turned Malta into a ‘second Vatican’, in view of how the combined powers of the knights of the Order, the Inquisitors, as well as the Episcopal authorities, were able to rule over a relatively small population (a number of the Inquisitors on Malta eventually became Pope in Rome). Soon, Malta’s present–day capital, Valletta – named after one of the Grandmasters of the Order – developed as an important slave–trading centre in the region. Slave–trading and the naval ventures, the ‘corsairs’, by



Rijk van Dijk

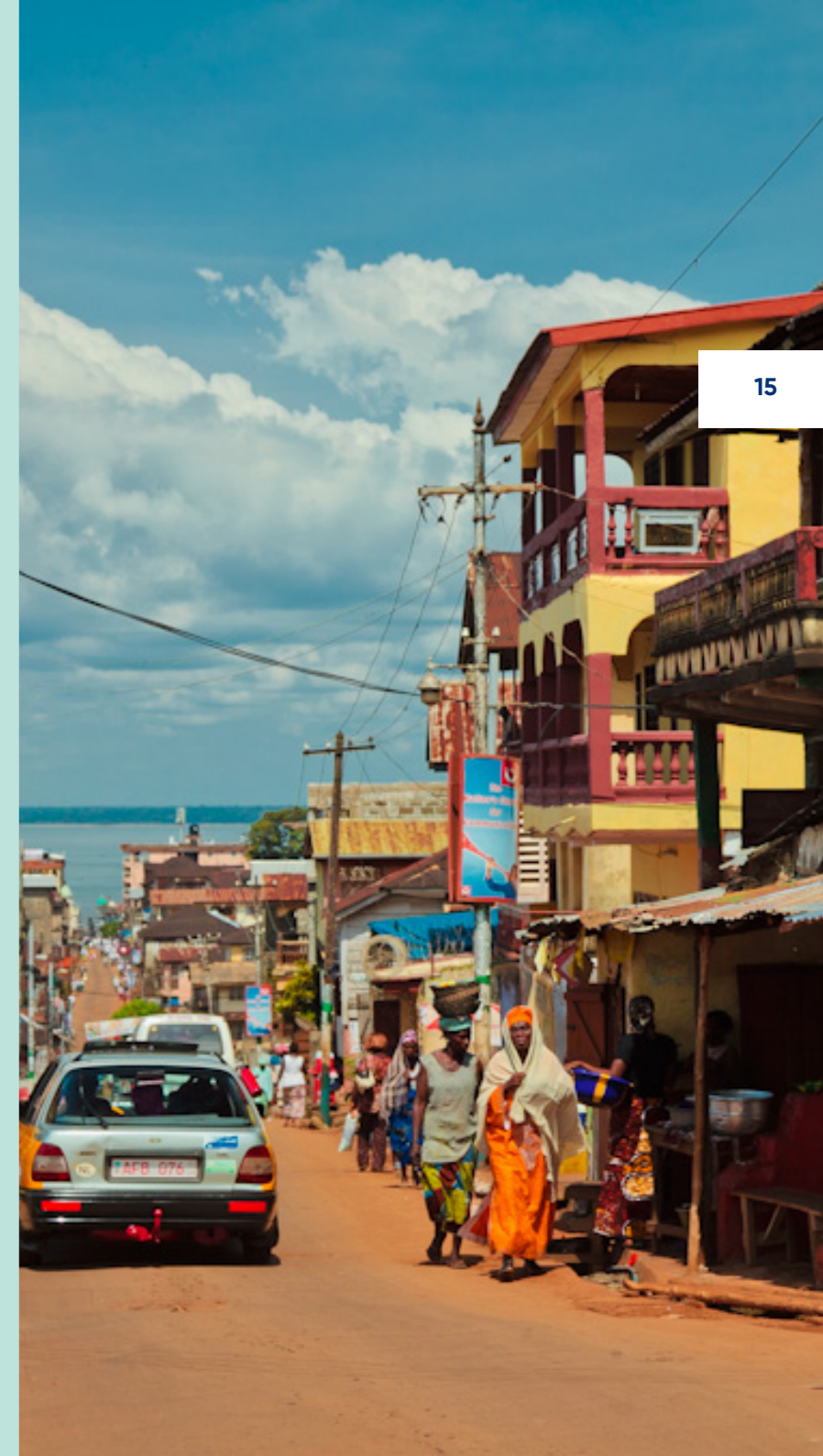


*Monument of Grandmaster Cotoner (1608–1680) supported by a figure representing an African enslaved person, St. John Co-Cathedral of the Order of St. John, Valletta, Malta.*

the Order’s galleys brought a variety of enslaved individuals to the archipelago. This included those who had become enslaved in sub-Saharan West, Central, and East African regions, and who had been transported from there to the Mediterranean world via trans–Sahara slave–trading routes. Scholars such as the late professor G. Wettinger, on whose work this project builds, have demonstrated that Maltese archives commonly identify the African enslaved using terms such as Bornu, Et(h)iopi(co), or Etiope. This provides insight into where these enslaved people originated from (although more research is needed on this point) and possi-

bly also the various religious and ritual practices that were part of their cultural repertoires.

This research uses a historical–anthropological perspective to explore how the religious and ritual expressions of these enslaved were perceived in a context of hegemonic Roman Catholic control and influence. While extensive literature has demonstrated the significance of these expressions for African diasporic communities in other parts of the world – especially where this concerns communities of the enslaved in situations involving hard and relentless plantation labour – little is known about them in a situation that became a ‘second Vatican.’ Was there space for such expressions ‘under the radar’ of an almost panoptical daily supervision of society by such institutions? How did these expressions – possibly involving spirit possession, divination, and healing – interact with local elements of folk–Catholicism? And how were these expressions a means of communication about pain, suffering, and hardship on the part of the African enslaved? This project will explore such questions by applying anthropological perspectives on religion and ritual in local relationships. It focuses on archives on Malta, such as those of the Inquisition and the Order, but, where available, also on family histories, as some African enslaved were also included in households as servants. These materials are studied in collaboration with Bernardo Tiberi Venturucci and by developing exchanges with scholars from the University of Malta. In so doing, the project aspires to contribute to further understanding of how enslavement, diasporic religion, and institutional control relate to each other on an archipelago with a remarkable history.







## PhD Research

### Graduate Programme African Studies

In 2023, the Graduate Programme African Studies (GPAS) continued its monthly seminars and exchange meetings, a highlight of which are our masterclasses. These masterclasses are conducted by speakers invited to the ASCL's regular seminar programme but address a different topic to the one presented at the seminar. This creates a space for PhD candidates to engage with various elements and aspects of the speaker's scholarly work. This year, GPAS also surveyed its registered PhD candidates, asking them to express their views on the GPAS programme, its strengths and weaknesses, and its opportunities for the future. This revealed an issue of particular concern regarding the position and involvement of 'self-sponsored' PhD candidates in the GPAS programme, who often conduct their research while in employment. This combination of having a job and completing a PhD project can lead to complexities including time constraints and the availability of resources. The questionnaire also covered topics such as the content of GPAS seminars and the annual monitoring review sessions. The GPAS Steering Committee will discuss the outcomes of this survey in 2024 and will adapt aspects of the GPAS programme accordingly.

ASCL staff (co-) supervised about 60 PhD candidates based at Leiden University or at other universities in the Netherlands. The following PhD candidates defended their thesis in 2023 (only ASCL promotors are mentioned):



*Ibrahima Poudiougou was one of the PhD candidates who defended his thesis in 2023.*

### PhD Theses Defended in 2023

#### Ibrahima Poudiougou

*Appropriation foncière, migrations agricoles et conflits armés en pays Dogon (Mali)*

12 October 2023 at Leiden University

Promotor: Jan-Bart Gewald

#### Crépin Marius Mougua

*Jeunesse comme ressource des conflits violents: une lecture historique et anthropologique de l'arène politique en République centrafricaine*

22 November 2023 at Leiden University

Promotor: Mirjam de Bruijn



### Meet the PhD candidate - Esma Karadag

The title of my PhD project is 'Representations of Pan-Africanism in the Contemporary Post-Apartheid South African High School History Classroom in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase'. History education is often viewed as social agency shaping national identity for social cohesion. In contemporary South Africa, teaching history is part of the curriculum's stated vision to mould learners' identities in relation to key national and continental post-colonial foundations, such as Pan-Africanism. While the desire for Pan-African social cohesion is a powerful discursive element within the post-apartheid South African government, it carries diverse and sometimes conflicting meanings within civil society.



*Esma Karadag*

Employing a qualitative empirical method, I seek insight into the formation of malleable political and social identities in classrooms, specifically focusing on the embedding of key Pan-Africanism ideas and concepts among learners. Through interviews with teachers in urban schools, I explore the role of teachers as social and political agencies and learners' contemporary understanding of Pan-Africanism.

Using reflexive thematic analysis, my study reveals significant differences in how Pan-Africanism is represented in classrooms. These variations are contingent on factors such as teachers' education and social class, their lived experiences of apartheid, the utilisation of different resources, and the impact of language barriers. Additionally, there is a gap in their understanding of core Pan-African concepts, such as identity belonging to Africa, colonial and slavery emancipation, and human solidarity. The study underscores the significance of 'class' concerning access to resources and digitisation, influencing students' perception of 'African-ness' even within communities of the same ethnic background.

### PhD defence - Dr Crépin Marius Mougua's doctoral journey at the African Studies Centre Leiden

Originally from the Central African Republic, I began my doctoral research on youth and long-term conflict in the Central African Republic under the supervision of Prof. Mirjam de Bruijn and Dr Jonna Both.



*Crépin Marius Mougua*

My thesis benefitted greatly from the academic and social support provided by the African Studies Centre Leiden. The Centre welcomed me and offered me hospitality, and equipped me with all the necessary tools and comforts for me to complete my thesis, which I defended on 22 November 2023. The ASCL online library made previously inaccessible documentation available to me, enabling me to continue my work while abroad. In addition to this rewarding scientific framework, I also availed myself of the positive social environment and human contact through outings, visits, and various extra-university events.

I found the proximity and accessibility of the ASCL particularly helpful, as well as the availability and responsiveness of the staff in providing many forms of advice, support, and assistance during all my Dutch stays. I look forward to seeing future institutional collaboration between the University of Bangui and Leiden University through the African Studies Centre.







## Visiting fellows in 2023

**Emmanuel Adeniyi** holds a PhD in African Diaspora Literature from the University of Ibadan. His research focuses on the imperativeness of interrogating the dependence of African researchers on Western paradigms and developing indigenous theories for reading cultural productions in Africa. Adeniyi was part of the 'Africa in the World: Rethinking Africa's Global Connections' Collaborative Research Group (CRG).



**Michael Glover** is an animal historian interested principally in animals' subjective historical experiences. His current focus area is mostly southern Africa, and his work is preoccupied with cattle. He is a postdoctoral research fellow at the International Studies Group, University of the Free State (UFS), and is based in Cape Town, South Africa. During his fellowship at the African Studies Centre Leiden, Michael's primary objective was to produce a submission-ready monograph to Brill Press entitled *Colonised Cattle: An Animal History of southern Africa*.



**Henry Kam Kah** is an associate professor of History and former acting head, Department of History and African Civilisations at the University of Buea in the South West Region of Cameroon. His research interests include slavery, colonialism, gender, conflict and culture. During his fellowship at the ASCL he worked on a biography (in collaboration with Walter Nkwi) and an article about Vincent Thomas Lainjo.



**Moses Mwangi** is a senior lecturer in the Department of Hydrology and Aquatic Sciences at the South Eastern Kenya University. He has a background in water engineering and water resources management. While at the ASCL in 2023, Dr Mwangi principally engaged in researching 1) the changing fortunes of the female gender in water resources management among the pastoralists of Kenya in light of alterations to rangelands occupancy; 2) temporal shifts in water resource types as a result of pastoralists sedentalisation; 3) consequences of moving from the commons to the privatisation of pastoral land on sand and sub-surface dams; and 4) whether water availability on pastoralists' individual land parcels is a key driver in land-use vicissitudes.



**Badiha Nahhass** is a professor at L'institut universitaire des Études africaines, Euro-méditerranéennes et ibéro-américaines, The University Mohammed V de Rabat. Her research focuses on the construction of national belonging, collective memory, social dynamics, and modes of government in Morocco, using the case of the Rif. Her fellowship focused on the trajectories and memories of the Rifian diaspora in the Netherlands.





**Nelson Nkwor** is a senior lecturer in the Department of Banking & Finance, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State – Nigeria [AE-FUNAI]. He is involved in teaching, research and consultancy services. As a visiting fellow he collaborated with Prof. Chibuike Uche and Dr Akinyinka Akinyoade et al. to complete a study on the drivers of multinationals' commitments to energy efficiency and climate responsibility in Africa.



**Mulugeta Tsegaye** is an assistant professor in the Department of Linguistics and Philology at Addis Ababa University (AAU). His PhD dissertation investigated the psychological reality of gender and number during speech production in Konso, a Cushitic language of Ethiopia. During his fellowship, he worked on a multimodal discourse analysis of campaign banners and speeches in the 2021 Ethiopian election.

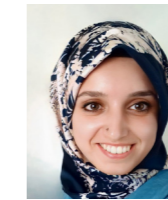


## Other guests in 2023

**Maarten Bedert** holds a PhD in social anthropology from Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg and conducted his research as a member of the 'Integration and Conflict along the Upper Guinea Coast' research group, part of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (Germany). As a guest researcher at the ASC Leiden, Maarten worked on the completion of a book manuscript: *Secret Societies on Trial: Disclosure, Media and Belonging in Contemporary Liberia*.



**Esma Karadag** is a PhD candidate at the Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town. Her doctoral research is an interdisciplinary study encompassing African studies and education. The research aims to contribute to contemporary intellectual thoughts and debates within the framework of Pan-Africanism, as a form of nationalism. She is currently working on a research project on Sudanese and Tanzanian textbooks.



**Katharina A. Oke** is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Fellow at the University of Graz, Austria and the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The Marie Curie project that brought Katharina to Leiden is entitled 'A History of 'Making Things' in West Africa, 1920–1980: Creating, Meaning Making, and Experience.' It studies artisans and craftspeople in Accra and Lagos, in particular bakers and goldsmiths. This project focuses on 'making' as a way of thinking through the relationship between materials, knowledge, people, and productive processes.



**Chong Zang** is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Economic Sociology and Multinationals (IESM, Shanghai University). His doctoral research is an interdisciplinary study encompassing anthropology, sociology, and African studies. He conducts research on Chinese investment in African countries including Ghana, Ethiopia, and Egypt, especially in the sectors of agriculture and infrastructure.







## Teaching at the ASCL



*A total of 14 new students started the (Research) Master African Studies in 2023*

### **(Research) Master in African Studies 2022–2023**

As an interfaculty institute within Leiden University, the ASCL is actively involved in teaching at the undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate levels. The ASCL chairs the Research Master's programme and the Master's programme in African Studies.

The Master's and Research Master's in African Studies are, respectively, one- and two-year MA programmes. In October 2023, a total of 14 students obtained their diploma. Layla Farah, Kendra Parry, Ailis Oattes, Hannah Kay, Chiara Cozzatella, Beatriz Madaleno Alves, Rachel Dubale, and Leo Dietrich deserve a special mention as they obtained their degree with distinction.



## (Research) Master's theses completed in 2023

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### **Pleun van der Brug (MA)**

*To Be or Not to Be Engaged? That is the Question*

### **Chiara Cozzatella (MA)**

*Contributing to the Economy but Unacknowledged: A Study of Zimbabwean Immigrants in Botswana*

### **Leo Dietrich (MA)**

*The Role of Hip Hop Music in Breaking Political Taboos in Mauritania*

### **Rachel Dubale (ResMA)**

*'They Think We Can Eat the Condominium': Chronicles of Economic, Social and Political Practices in Addis Ababa's Condominiums*

### **Layla Farah (MA)**

*'I Am a Kenyan Citizen, but My Identity Is also Somali': The Kenyan-Somali Feelings of Citizenship and Belonging in Nairobi*

### **Dorine klein Gunnewiek (ResMA)**

*Womanhood in Power: The Influence of Political Participation of Women on People's Perceptions of Female Leadership in Tanzania*

### **Salomé Hindriks (MA)**

*Power Together? Exploring the Ability of the Kenyan National Land Coalition to Enable Its Members to Influence Land Governance Processes*

### **Dian Hulsebosch (MA)**

*Challenges to Community Land Registration: A Case study of the Minority Turkana Community in Isiolo, Kenta*

### **Hannah Kay (MA)**

*Continuously on the Move: A Study on Senegalese Art. Depicting 'Migration' through an Artistic Lens*

### **Beatriz Madaleno Alves (ResMA)**

*Out of Search: In Search of Yaawo Beadwork in European Ethnographic Museums*

### **Ailis Oattes (MA)**

*More than Marginalised: The Indigenous Batwa Condition in Post-Genocide Rwanda*

### **Kendra Parry (MA)**

*Even Machines Need Servicing: Strained and Silenced Voices in Institutional Structures and Nurses Agency in Kenya*

### **Idil Samatar (MA)**

*The Guides: Examining the Current Views on the Images of Marabouts in Senegal*

### **Emma Velásová (MA)**

*Silence, Shame, Stigma: The Perspectives of University Students in Nairobi and Their Grandmothers about the Shape and Implications of Menstrual Stigma in Kenyan Families*

### **Alumnus MA – Leo Dietrich**

I completed a Master's degree in African Studies at Leiden University in August 2023. The Master's was a great experience that I look back on fondly. Since my previous Bachelor's programme in Germany focused on Arabic Studies, Islamic Studies, and History, many topics covered in Leiden were completely new to me. I highly appreciated the lecturer-student relationship in Leiden because of its rather flat hierarchies, which contrast with those in Germany. I also developed a strong appreciation for my international peers, and I think we formed a close-knit community over time. The methodological freedom in Leiden was particularly noteworthy, as I had never before engaged in academic podcasting, blogging, or documentary-making. During my academic work, I was lucky enough to combine my personal interests with my research. I also had the opportunity to submit my Master's thesis in the form of a documentary film about Mauritanian hip-hop, which was mainly based on interviews. The three months of fieldwork in Mauritania were a life-changing experience that had a significant impact on me. I hope to publish the documentary soon. We humans grow in the face of adversity (indeed, in the face of a Master's thesis): I will definitely never forget what it feels like to worry about data on broken external hard drives, buying a new (hopefully working) computer a few days before the submission, or spending my nights in my bathrobe watching the same scenes over and over again, fuelled by coffee. After completing



Leo Dietrich

my Master's degree, I worked in analysis as part of a military exercise. I am currently applying for a job as an intercultural counsellor and am also planning to start a PhD in 2024 in parallel with a job. Let us see which geographical region would be suitable. I think I have a rough idea...

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### Alumnus ResMA – Rachel Dubale

The Research Master's in African Studies has been a continuous journey of discovery for me. My first year at Leiden showed me how to refine my research techniques and methodology, and how to turn a passion (writing) into an academic task and eventually a profession. Perhaps what I have appreciated most is the versatility and interdisciplinary nature of its fields, ranging from



*Rachel Dubale*

Economics to History. I believe that only by looking at the 'bigger picture' can one understand how fields are not separate but rather interconnected: it is hard to be a good historical researcher if you do not have the flexibility that drawing a picture upside down during a methodology class can give you (it really happened!). The second year, spent in Ethiopia, was equally remarkable, for various reasons, but I cannot fail to mention the unparalleled satisfaction of designing a research proposal, refining it for over six months, and then finding myself there, in the field, in Addis Ababa; seeing ideas shift from paper to reality. Moreover, comprehending the stark differences between them, for better or for worse, has greatly enriched my growth and left me with cherished memories. The Master's has certainly shaped my professional aspirations: after spending four months in Fort de France, Martinique, assisting refugee women from Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the field, I am now in Brussels, Belgium, where I work as a Policy Research Assistant at the Africa-Europe Foundation. And who knows what else awaits me in the future!

## LDE Minor African Dynamics (MAD) 2023–24



*Students of the LDE minor African Dynamics during a visit to the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

The African Dynamics minor provides a broad understanding of Africa's past, present, and future to final year Bachelor's students from the Leiden–Delft–Erasmus (LDE) universities. Starting with reading about the past, students gain insight into what created the present realities that they explore deeper during the second course. The third and last course looks further ahead to co-create strategies that could contribute to creating 'The Africa We Want', in line with the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063.

This complex transition requires a sustainable, decolonised, and interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, the 24 LDE students – originating from academic disciplines that range from Applied Earth

Sciences (TUD) and Cultural Anthropology & Development Sociology (LU) to International Business Administration (EUR) and Human Geography & Urban Regional Planning (RUG) – joined forces with students from the University of Nairobi and Namibia University of Science and Technology to collaborate online to explore the challenges of Systems Thinking, Partnerships, Participation, and Adaptation Planning.

Listen to their [podcasts](#) in which they discuss their personal aspirations and/or the role of the youth as actors of change (exact link to follow) and read some of their blogs on the [MAD\\* Student Blog](#) site.



As a history student with an interest in colonial Africa, I chose the African Dynamics Minor in order to learn more about contemporary Africa. The course more than met my expectations. Historic subjects with a contemporary tint, such as neo-colonial contracts still in place today, are extensively discussed. The team around the minor has created a syllabus that will spark everyone's interest, no matter what their respective is. The educators and staff from Leiden, Delft, and Rotterdam impressed me at every turn. This is definitely also true for the guest lecturers who made an appearance. Although I would recommend this minor to everyone, I think it is particularly attractive to students who have a heritage connection to the continent. My advice to anyone attending this minor: prepare to be amazed!



Luke Blomsma, Leiden University, BA History

My studies is very much based on maths, physics, facts, and figures and I wanted to do a minor that was completely different. I eventually chose this minor because of its multidisciplinary approach and due to my personal interest in Africa. During the semester, we attended interesting and interactive classes in Leiden, Delft, and Rotterdam given by amazing guest lecturers. The topics started with basic knowledge and background information but became increasingly in-depth. In the last block we did a course together with students from Kenya and Namibia. Talking



Dunya Schotman, Delft University of Technology, BSc Applied Earth Sciences

about real life problems with them gave the minor a dynamic twist. In January, we had excursions to the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands African Business Council (NABC), Nuffic, and the International Institute of Social Studies.

This minor was of huge value for me. It broadened my view on the world and gave me insights into topics other than technological science. The way of thinking was very different – I was used to a straightforward approach where something is either right or wrong. During this minor, I realised that it does not always have to be like that. Some answers to a problem are more complex and can differ depending on your point of view. The multidisciplinary aspect also made it interesting, seeing different universities from the inside out. Lastly, the group who participated in the minor was small and extremely varied. There were students of history, economics, different sciences, and many other studies. People had different mindsets and our conversations and discussions were extremely interesting! In sum, I had a very good experience during this minor.

The African Dynamics Minor provided me with a vast and interdisciplinary perspective on the African continent. As a student of African descent, I missed the inclusion of Africa and African perspectives in my studies. The minor helped me to identify areas where I could contribute professionally, and led me to embrace movements such as Afro-futurism. I was introduced to essential topics like the changing demographics on the African continent, the ongoing shift in geopolitics, and Africa's



Chido M. Schurgers, Erasmus University Rotterdam, BSc Management of International Social Challenges majoring in International Law

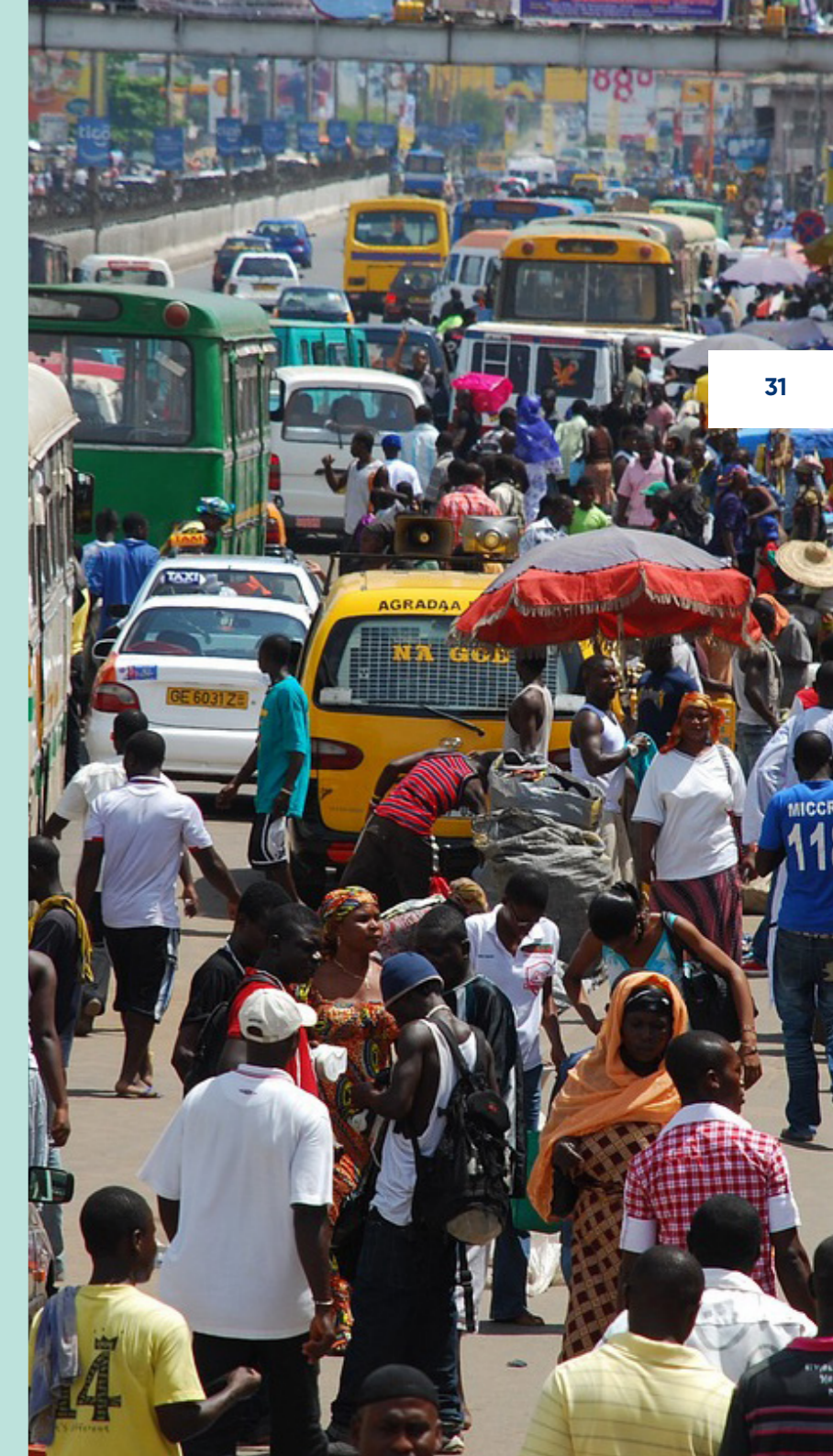
role in the global green energy transition. The latter particularly interested me, as the green energy transition necessitates critical raw materials from the African continent, prompting me to explore ways that Europe and Africa can collaborate on equal footing, justly and fairly, going forward. Lastly, in the spirit of Ubuntu, I am very thankful for the people I met during the minor, both fellow students and professionals, who continue to inspire me endlessly – I am because they are.

I was very fortunate to be a part of this minor as a guest student from outside the LDE universities. It provided deep insights into the realities of African countries and offered a glimpse into what research on the continent looks like in the past, present, and future tenses. I was really impressed that the lecturers and guest lecturers came from different backgrounds. They were very friendly and easy to talk to, and illustrated various career opportunities. The course was focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Agenda and the assignments were a way for students to connect their main degrees to what they were learning.

As somebody who has lived in East Africa my whole life, this minor gave me the opportunity to access resources and research from meaningful work and a network of professionals. If I had to describe the minor in one word it would be 'opportunity creating'. The overall environment of the minor was very friendly and welcoming, allowing students to easily communicate and make friends with one another and the lecturers.



Natalie Hagert, University of Groningen, BSc Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning





## LDE Minor Frugal Innovation for Sustainable Global Development (FI4SGD) 2023-24

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*The sixth cohort of the minor Frugal Innovation for Sustainable Global Development*

Between September 2023 and January 2024, the FI4SGD minor had its sixth edition, organised by the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus (LDE) International Centre for Frugal Innovation (ICFI) and convened by the African Studies Centre Leiden (ASCL). Thirty-three students participated in this minor, representing three universities and a multitude of disciplines. They learnt about frugal innovation – an emerging alternative theory and practice on innovation, and how frugal innovation can contribute to striking a better balance between attaining sustainable livelihoods for everyone while respecting planetary boundaries. From September to October, the students attended courses on frugal innovation and society and development, frugal innovation and technology, and frugal inno-

vation and entrepreneurship at Leiden University, Delft University of Technology, and Erasmus University Rotterdam, respectively. Between November and January, students worked in small multidisciplinary groups (3–4 persons) on ‘field assignments’ abroad, in which they addressed real-life frugal innovation challenges, issued by societal stakeholders across the globe. In the 2023–2024 edition, six field assignments took place in Africa (Rwanda, Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa). Three projects took place in Asia (India and Nepal), and one in the Dutch Caribbean (Saba). Societal stakeholders that issued the field assignments included NGOs, social enterprises, and university-community consortia. Read more about their projects on the [ICFI website](#).

As an LUMC medical student with a keen interest in health issues in low-resource contexts, the minor on Frugal Innovation significantly broadened my understanding beyond traditional medical education. The programme effectively integrated theory with practical application, encouraging creative thinking and preparing us to work effectively in unfamiliar environments. It emphasised the importance of legitimacy, active listening, and bottom-up innovation. I gained not only the skills necessary for innovating in low-income countries, but also insights to start thinking about how frugal innovation can be applied in European contexts, such as making hospitals more resource efficient. Moreover, our three-month project in Kenya taught me invaluable lessons in collaboration and organisation. Overall, this minor has been a transformative experience for me, greatly enriching my journey as a medical student committed to making a sustainable impact.



*Laura Molenaar –  
Leiden University,  
Leiden University  
Medical Centre,  
BSc Medicine*

Frugal innovation gave me a new perspective on approaching complex solutions by doing the best with limited resources. As a student in aerospace engineering at TU Delft, I often find myself discussing advanced technologies and complex processes and systems. I felt drawn to a different perspective, one that values frugality without compromising the innovations themselves. I chose the minor for the chance to connect with peers from different universities and study backgrounds who challenge the way I think. It also gave me a closer look at potential professional

environments for the future. Through the minor, I gained lifelong friends, people who I would never have met otherwise, so I am extremely thankful for that. Going abroad (I went to Saba in the Dutch Caribbean) was definitely the highlight of the experience. I met people with perspectives that I never would have experienced. I listened to them, learned about their problems, and saw the opportunities that lie within their – a different way of doing things than we are used to in the Netherlands. This sparked new ideas and viewpoints that changed the way I think about projects. I found out that I can apply frugal thinking everywhere, whether it is in the Caribbean, the Netherlands, or my home country, Egypt. I managed to do so due to the unique organisation of the minor. I enjoyed and learnt a lot from the courses on entrepreneurship, development, and technology, and in the bootcamp I learned how to listen and engage the community to find real solutions to real problems. Overall, the minor was extremely enjoyable and valuable to me, and I highly recommend signing up.

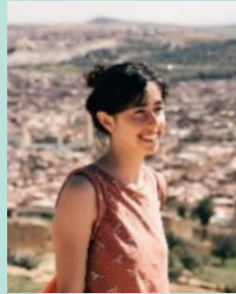


*Ibrahim Ahmed Soliman  
Hussein Mohsen, Delft  
University of Technol-  
ogy, BSc Aerospace  
Engineering*

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I am grateful I participated in the Frugal Innovation for Sustainable Global Development minor. I enjoyed the first months of classes and I had an amazing time during my field assignment. It was interesting to attend classes with people from different study backgrounds, as it allowed us to tackle academic topics from a variety of points of view and areas of expertise. As an economics student, I especially appreciated the classes on social entrepreneurship and its link with frugal innovation, as it gave me a new perspective on topics I was already familiar with. For my field assignment, I spent three months in Rwanda, working with a company of social entrepreneurs who offer agricultural products and services, especially training, to farmers of all backgrounds. It was fascinating to see the practical side of entrepreneurship in a context like Rwanda, and how the company tries to be both profit-driven and impact-driven, taking on board a frugal innovation perspective. Furthermore, during these months in Rwanda, I had the opportunity to work with many local people, which gave me an insight into the country I would not have gained otherwise. It was a valuable learning experience for my academic, professional, and personal development.



*Alice Yuki Girardi –  
Erasmus University  
College, BA Liberal  
Arts and Sciences,  
Economics major*





2023 marked the beginning of the third phase for the INCLUDE Knowledge Platform. To kick off this phase, a hybrid platform meeting was held on 2–3 March 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda. Over the two days, the platform engaged in a collective reflection on INCLUDE's journey since inception in 2012, highlighting the platform's development and extensive contribution to knowledge uptake/policymaking on inclusive development across Africa, the Netherlands, and beyond. The INCLUDE Secretariat also facilitated World Cafe and plenary discussions focusing on the proposed themes, topics, and knowledge questions that would be relevant for INCLUDE's work over the next four years. Additionally, the platform zoomed in on the strategies, progress, and impact of the African Policy Dialogues (APDs), with the APD leads sharing insightful lessons from the implementation of their APDs in their respective countries. A key outcome of this learning session was the resolution to focus on strengthening the cross-learning component of the APDs in order to facilitate multi-country knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Following the kick-off meeting and based on the discussions and insights from all platform members, a revised concept note was developed. [This document](#) outlines the research agenda that will guide INCLUDE's work in the current phase.

On the programming front, INCLUDE launched '[A Green and Inclusive Future for Youth in the Global South](#)' – a collaborative research project between INCLUDE partners and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The project aims to strengthen the evidence base on low carbon transition (LCT) in Africa by looking at the African energy sector and its complexities in order to understand where opportunities for youth employment are most pronounced and what systemic barriers need to be



*INCLUDE Platform Meeting in Kigali, Rwanda – March 2023*

addressed to create an enabling environment for youth to thrive and drive a truly just transition in Africa. The research combines insights from various research methodologies, including an evidence synthesis through a literature review of grey and academic literature regarding LCT and youth employment in Africa, case study research and two multi stakeholder dialogues in Nigeria and South Africa, as well as a stakeholder analysis of key players in both countries' just transition ecosystem. This [Executive summary](#) highlights key messages and lessons learnt from the project.

INCLUDE also implemented the 'Green Jobs for Youth in the Plastic Waste Recycling Sector in Africa' programme – the second research collaboration with the Challenge Fund for Youth employment (CFYE) under a long-term partnership to strengthen the evidence base around youth employment and the future of work in Africa. Given the high potential attributed to numerous social and technological innovations in plastic waste recycling for generating decent job opportunities, juxtaposed with the indecent working conditions experienced by many informal workers, this research trajectory set out to explore and develop concrete pathways for creating green jobs in plastic waste recycling. The research



*Multi Stakeholder Dialogue in Abuja, Nigeria on policy and programming pathways for a just and youth-centred low-carbon transition in Africa, November 2023*

combines insights from various research methodologies, including a quick scan of academic and grey literature combined with a few expert interviews to capture the barriers and drivers for green job creation; two case studies exploring the opportunities, challenges and best practices of innovative recycling enterprises in Kenya – Mr. Green Africa and Takataka Solutions – in creating decent jobs for youth; and a validation session with CFYE country leads and implementing partners across Africa to validate the project's findings beyond the Kenyan context. Findings from the research were also presented at the Global Growth Week 2023 and SNV Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Global Forum 2023). Several research outputs, including a research report, an infographic, and a recommendations paper for policymakers and practitioners are set to be published in 2024.

Finally, INCLUDE launched a highly competitive application process for new African Policy Dialogues (APDs) in 2023. Through this process, the following new APDs were approved:

- [Ethiopia] Decent Work and Income for Women and Youth and Other Marginalised People in Textile and Garment Sector:** This APD (led by the Forum for Social Studies, FSS) will identify and advocate for policies on how the textile and garment sub-sectors in Ethiopia can contribute to decent work opportunities for youth and women.
- [Ghana] Youth Economic Inclusion through Next Generation Local Economic Development:** The aim of this APD (led by the Institute of Local Government Studies, ILGS) is to promote youth economic inclusion through the adoption of a national programme on Next Generation Local Economic Development



(NGLED). Implementation of the NGLED is expected to create decent jobs and income growth for the youth in local government jurisdictions.

**3. [Mozambique] Strengthening Good Governance in the Extractive Sector:** This APD (led by the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights, CDD) aims to strengthen the capacity of state and non-state actors in the extractives to advocate for and implement policy reforms for a transparent and accountable management in the sharing of extractive sector revenues. This will ensure that poor and vulnerable people, especially from liquefied natural gas-producing regions, benefit from the extractive-led economic growth.

**4 [Uganda] Inclusive Labour Market Institutions for Productive and Decent Work:** This APD (led by the Economic Policy Research Centre, EPRC) aims to support the development of effective regulatory and policy frameworks to foster the coordination and implementation of work-based learning programmes. This is expected to enhance employability, productivity, and innovations that target women, youth, and other marginalised groups.

## Library, documentation, and information

### Key Figures in 2023

	2023	2022
Number of visitors	2016	1864
Loans	3805	3937
Items catalogued	3622	4503
Titles in ASCL collection	223,550	219,928
Titles in Connecting-Africa	93,130	90,673
Connecting-Africa (unique visitors)	76,160	38,071
AfricaBib (unique visitors excl. robots)	844,080	684,827
ASCL Repository (downloads ASCL publ.)	99,728	191,593

### Important achievements in 2023

- ASCL Library became a partner in the ERC project ALMEDA (African Literary Metadata)
- Book acquisition trip to South Africa, Eswatini, and Mozambique
- Monthly screening of African films
- Presentation of the Inventory of the Stephen Ellis Archive
- Preparations for the move to new library premises in Leiden in 2024

### ASCL Library cooperates in Project ALMEDA, funded by European Research Council

The ALMEDA (African Literary Metadata) project, convened by Professor Ashleigh Harris of Uppsala University, received an ERC grant in April 2023. The European Research Council has awarded this advanced grant for a period of five years. Ursula Oberst of the ASCL Library will take part in and contribute to ALMEDA with her metadata expertise.

The project will produce new metadata about African literature. Most of the available metadata on contemporary literature is based on published books, while African literature also includes informal literary forms, such as word poetry, street theatre, and a variety of online forms. The goal of the project is to make African literature easier to find by creating and linking metadata. This project is an attempt to respond to the problem that a large part of African literary culture is less visible and easily lost.



'Zines' from Lamu



### Book acquisition trip to Johannesburg, Mbabane, Manzini, and Maputo

From 2–22 November 2023, the ASCL carried out the annual book acquisition trip. This time the trip went to the inspiring Jozi Book-fair in Johannesburg, followed by visits to Eswatini and Mozambique. Almost 1200 books and over a thousand digital newspapers boosted the Southern African collection in Leiden.

The Jozi bookfair is unique on the African continent: while it sells books, the aim is to promote a reading culture among youth and the backbone is the community activism of the Khanya College. Rooted in the anti-apartheid struggle, it now focuses on other fields of global injustice. Staff of the bookfair donned T-shirts featuring the rallying cry 'Free Palestine'.

There is a vibrant book publishing culture in South Africa, which includes self-publishing authors and small publishing houses. This visit made it possible to focus more on this less visible part of the book market. Contacts with Bridgebooks (in the centre of Johannesburg's CBD) proved very fruitful.

Half a week in the mountain kingdom of Eswatini was a great boost for the ASCL's rather small Swazi collection, though a significant number of titles are understandably published in South Africa. These books originate from major publishing houses like Macmillan and Oxford University Press, but also from smaller players such as Vivlia, which presents itself as an independent, black-owned South African company.

The trip to Maputo yielded a variety of results: the amazing book scene in this historical city led to 375 new titles for the Leiden collection. We obtained digital copies of the last three years' editions



Books acquired during the 2023 acquisition trip

of the newspapers Savana, Noticias, and Domingo. In addition, ASCL received a rare copy of *Demolidora dos prazeres* (Dispute over Islamic Funeral Rites). By Aminuddin Mohamad, one of the few Muslim authors in Mozambique.

Gerard van de Bruinhorst

[Read more about the ASCL book acquisition trips.](#)

### Collection development, acquisitions, and cataloguing

#### Cataloguing and acquisition

In 2023, 2652 books were processed via the acquisition module in the ALMA library system. In total, 3622 library materials were catalogued, including films, novels, etc. Also included were 385 electronic documents and many gifts.

#### Gifts

Gifts are a welcome addition that often fill gaps in the ASCL Library collection. In 2023, the library received donations from several people.

- Alf van Beem kindly donated a box with 58 coloured propaganda lantern slides from the Second Boer War (1899–1902) and six lantern slides with old black-and-white photographs from Egypt (including of the Ibn Yûlûn Mosque Cairo).
- Karin van den Berg donated two archival boxes containing documents from James Kalu Onoh (PhD VU Amsterdam 1972) about Nigeria and Biafra
- Jet Gerla: books from Tanzania (Swahili, literature)
- Rahmane Idrissa donated Mohammed Ibn Abdallah's *Song of the Pharaoh: Abibigoro on the Life and Times of Pharaoh Aknaten*
- Linda van de Kamp: 15 books from Mozambique (in Portuguese)
- Alice Kubo: books about Kenya from the legacy of Jan Hoorweg (including a Malindi handbook, books about fishery, etc.)
- From Julia Rensing and Sindi-Leigh McBride (eds.): *Lost Libraries, Burnt Archives*
- David Sogge: a dozen pamphlets on Nigeria and Biafra, in-



*Transvaal War, part of 58 propaganda lantern slides, c. 1900.*

cluding *One Nigeria Bulletin* (unique) and the book *Nigeria: The Dream Empire of a Rebel*

- Jet Tigchelaar: books on law in Uganda (jurisprudence, land administration, marriage and divorce)
- And several other books, donated by Jan Jansen, K. Just, Kasper van Ommen, and others

#### Spotlight on the collection

Throughout 2023, nine Library Highlights on the ASCL website drew attention to new books and films in the collection:

- *Islands in a Cosmopolitan Sea: A History of the Comoros* by Iain Walker
- *Scatterlings: A Novel* by Rešoketšwe Manenzhe
- Security and crime in Lusophone Africa
- *Against Decolonisation: Taking African Agency Seriously* by Olúfemi Táiwò
- *Encyclopedia of Embroidery from Sub-Saharan Africa*, by Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood and Willem Vogelsang
- *Le spectre de Boko Haram*, a film by Cyrielle Raingou





- *Aqeeqa, a Drama in English & Kreol* by Assad Bhuglah
- *Chika Unigwe, Feminism and 'The Middle Daughter'*
- *Recent publications on climate change and intergenerational justice*
- *River Spirit*, by Leila Aboulela

### Inventory of the Stephen Ellis Archive

Tycho van der Hoog presented his extensive inventory of the Stephen Ellis Archive at the annual Stephen Ellis Lecture on 7 December. All 89 boxes of the Stephen Ellis Archive were exhibited and some interesting items were shown after the lecture.

### Visit by Graça Machel to the ASCL Library

A two-day visit to Leiden by Dr Graça Machel concluded on 27 October with a visit to the ASCL Library. On this occasion, the ASCL library updated a web dossier on children's rights in Africa, which was created in 2021 to mark the conferring of an honorary doctorate from Leiden University to Dr Machel, and an exhibition about the topic was on display in the library. Two magazines from the period of struggle against the Portuguese (A Voz da Revolução and Ressurgimento) were shown to Dr Machel, as well as several books and pamphlets from the 1960s and 70s.



Dr Graça Machel in the ASCL Library, October 2023

### Moving to new premises in Leiden

In June 2024, the ASCL Library will move to new premises in Leiden, the Herta Mohr building on the Witte Singel. This move to a new (partly refurbished) building will mean the ASCL's research, support, and library staff will be more closely located. The African Library will be situated adjacent to the Middle Eastern Library.

### Information services

The Leiden Alert Service on African Studies (LASA) had 227 subscribers by the end of 2023. There were 6379 RSS views per month (on average). When subscribing to the Alert Service, people receive updates whenever new publications on a country or topic (or a combination thereof) are published. This helps subscribers to stay informed about interesting publications in the current sea of information.

Usage figures of the ASCL databases Connecting-Africa and AfricaBib increased significantly: usage of Connecting-Africa doubled to 76,160 and usage of AfricaBib increased >20% to 844,080 visitors.

### Web dossiers

Four ASCL Library web dossiers were published in 2023. Our **web dossiers** are popular with online viewers. Each dossier, made by the library staff, has an introduction written by a specialist, links to the descriptions of books and journal articles in the catalogue, and a list of annotated links to electronic resources and relevant websites.

### • African women entrepreneurs (March 2023)

On the occasion of the ninth annual Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF), the ASCL Library compiled a web dossier on African women entrepreneurs. It contained titles from the ASCL Library catalogue, extended with sources from the broader Leiden University Library collection. The dossier was introduced by Akinyinka Akinyoade and concluded with relevant web resources.

### \* Dutch involvement in the transatlantic slave trade (June 2023)

Extra attention was paid to the history and aftermath of slavery during the national Slavery Memorial Year in the Netherlands. To mark this occasion, the ASCL Library updated its 2013 web dossier on the Dutch involvement in the transatlantic slave trade and abolition.



### \* Women in Muslim Africa (September 2023)

The workshop Global and Local Political Debates over Women's Rights, and Everyday Life in Muslim Africa, jointly organised by the CRGs Collaboration and Contestation in Words and Africa in the World, was held on 21 and 22 September. To coincide with this workshop, the ASCL Library compiled a web dossier on women in Muslim Africa, including titles on Muslim women's rights, their everyday lives, and global and local political discourses around this subject.

### \* African archives (December 2023)

On the occasion of the 2023 Stephen Ellis Annual Lecture on 7 December, the ASCL Library created a web dossier on African archives.

### ASCL Library in education and outreach

- Several introductory tours about the Africa information available in the ASCL Library were given by Marijke den Hartog-Boter, Ella Verkaik, Edith de Roos, and other staff members.
- On 13 March, Elvire Eijkman gave a presentation on the French-language collection to students following the 'French worldwide' Honours College.
- On 17 July, a group of 25 students from the University of Washington's Information School, together with their mentors Trent Hill and Michele Newman, visited the ASCL Library as part of a larger tour of libraries and heritage institutions in the Netherlands. Heleen Smits, Gerard van de Bruinhorst, and Ursula Oberst gave presentations on recent developments and projects in the library.
- The ASCL gave a poster presentation during the 88th IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Rotterdam (21–25 August). Later that week, 25 librarians from all over the world (including



The second African Film Night was a screening of *Touki Bouki* from Senegal.



### Monthly screening of African films

The African Film Nights in Leiden are an initiative of Elvire Eijkman and other ASCL staff members, in cooperation with the African Studies association Mugusa. The aim of the African Film Nights is twofold: to highlight the unique film collection in Leiden and to offer students and staff the opportunity to meet one another and discuss the films during drinks in the library after the screening. For copyright reasons, the screenings are only open to the Leiden university academic community. Several films were introduced by ASCL staff members and university professors, including: *The Battle of Algiers* (Gillo Pontecorvo); *Touki Bouki* (Djibril Diop Mambéty); *Khartoum Offside* (Martha Zein); *Everything Must Fall* (Rehad Desai); *The Train of Salt and Sugar* (Licinio Azevedo); and *Money, Freedom, a Story of the Franc CFA* (Katy Léna Ndiaye) – the last film in collaboration with the iAfrica Film Festival The Hague.

### Presentation booklet: Roel Coutinho on Guinea Bissau 1974

Virologist Roel Coutinho was a doctor with the PAIGC rebels fighting Portuguese dominance in Guinea Bissau in the 1970s. His report of this episode was published by the ASCL in the booklet *De vrijheidsstrijd van Guinee-Bissau: door de ogen van een jonge dokter*. Previously, 750 of his photographs from this period were published on Wikimedia Commons by Hans Muller and Michele Portatadino (ASCL Library). The book (in Dutch) gives a good impression of daily practice during an armed conflict. The book was officially presented on 16 March, and ASCL researcher John Kegel gave some background on this interesting period in Guinea Bissau's history, incorporating some of Coutinho's photographs.

South Africa, Eastern Europe, and the US) visited the library and were treated to two talks and a tour around the library by Ursula Oberst, Heleen Smits, and Machteld Oosterkamp.

- On 25 October, Heleen Smits and Elvire Eijkman gave a class on 'Film as Historical Source' to African Studies' Bachelor's and minor students.
- Edith de Roos guided six Africa walks ('Traces of Africa in Leiden') in cooperation with Leiden Global. In addition, she and Jos Damen guided four walks during Leiden's 3 October festivities.
- The ASCL Library complemented its collection with scholarly work on security and crime in Lusophone Africa, addressing a gap in research on this subject in the Netherlands. Gabriel Pinto Stiebler, student at the Honours Academy in the Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs at Leiden University, worked on this project during his three-month internship at the ASCL Library. A small exhibition of books, journals, newspapers, and reports on security in Angola, Mozambique, Cabo Verde, and Guinea Bissau was on display in the ASCL library, and an introductory talk was given by Gabriel Pinto and Corinna Jentzsch (assistant professor of International Relations at Leiden University) on 30 March.
- Sjoerd Kompier wrote a journal article based on two ASCL archives: "'Mutuality in Mission": Studying the Scholarly Ideals and Practices of Frans J. Verstraelen and Gerdien Verstraelen-Gilhuis (1942–89), in: *Africa Bibliography, Research and Documentation*, vol. 2 (2023).
- On 30 October, the ASCL Library hosted the autumn meeting of the Working Group on Social Science Information on the theme of 'decolonisation.'

## Highlighted events

### ASCL research assessment 2017–2022

In 2023, we conducted the external research assessment 2017–2022, the first assessment of the ASCL as an Interfaculty Institute of Leiden University. It was a stand-alone institutional assessment under the guidelines of the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP) 2022–2027.

In preparation for the evaluation, we organised several internal discussions and composed a self-evaluation report. The contributions by many members of staff were indispensable and highly valued, as were the discussions with members of the scientific council and societal panel, and guidance from the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS).

The report focused on the three SEP main assessment criteria: *Research Quality, Viability, and Societal Relevance*, and on the four SEP specific assessment criteria: Open Science, PhD Policy and Training, Academic Culture, and Human Resources Policy. In addition, the committee was asked to reflect on the following site-specific aspects:

1. The transition of the ASCL from an independent foundation to an institute functioning as a partially externally financed interfaculty research institute within the boundaries of Leiden University. This integration is an ongoing process. Linkages with other bodies and people within Leiden University have been actively built, reinforced, and diversified over the period under evaluation.
2. Doing research 'with Africa' instead of 'on Africa.' The ASCL is a strong proponent of co-creation and decolonisation of the research agenda, research, and documentation activities and publications.



Site visit committee of 2023

3. Interaction between library/support and research staff in education and the societal field. This was visible in many fields, e.g. in the CRGs, in seminars, and in new activities such as film evenings.

The site visit by the external assessment committee took place on 23–24 November 2023. The committee consisted of: Dr Marina de Regt (VU University Amsterdam), chair; Prof. Barbara Hogenboom (CEDLA, University of Amsterdam); Prof. Edward Kikumira (Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS)); Dr Abdoulaye Sounaye (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO)); Jennifer Skinner (Centre of African Studies library, Cambridge University); Yifan Mia Yang (PhD candidate, Bayreuth University). During the two-day site visit, the committee spoke with representatives of the ASCL research staff, support staff, and library staff, with PhD candidates (employed, scholarships, and self-funded), and with representatives of the ASCL Board, scientific council, societal panel, and LeidenASA.

The report with recommendations is expected early 2024.





Opening roundtable of ECAS 2023

### ECAS Cologne 2023

From 31 May to 3 June, the University of Cologne's Global South Studies Centre hosted the ninth edition of the European Conference on African Studies (ECAS). With the theme 'African Futures,' it aimed to explore the continent's critical engagements with the past, present, and future of Africa's global entanglements. The conference brought together over 2000 delegates from 80 countries, delivering 1470 papers across 245 panels or roundtables. Panel members included Marleen Dekker and One Psumane (on urban citizenship and precarity), Mayke Kaag (on green religious activism), Jan-Bart Gewald (on mining history in Kimberley, South Africa), and Mirjam de Bruijn (on youth leadership in times of conflict).

A retrospective report on the conference can be read on the [ASCL website](#).

### Honorary doctorate Graça Machel

On 8 February, human rights and child activist Graça Machel received an honorary doctorate from Leiden University. Machel, a former Minister of Education and Culture in Mozambique and current president of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, was awarded the honorary document in 2021, but could not receive it due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During a festive ceremony and keynote lecture, initiated by Leiden

Law School, Machel appealed to everyone's responsibility to protect the rights of children and individuals everywhere, especially now that the challenges are so immense. After a discussion, Dr Machel visited the ASCL Library, which she referred to as "the pearl in the crown of my visit to Leiden."

### Seminar by former South African president Motlanthe

Former President Kgalema Motlanthe of South Africa gave a public lecture at Leiden University Campus The Hague on 7 July to an audience of students and teachers, African ambassadors and diplomats, NGO staff and other people interested in Africa. His story was about the economic transformation of Africa. This event was co-organised by LeidenASA and Leiden University. An extensive report of the lecture can be found on the [ASCL website](#).



Graça Machel received an honorary doctorate from Leiden University in February 2023.



Kgalema Motlanthe



### LeidenASA

In 2023, LeidenASA continued to function as a network of Africa researchers at Leiden University. Regular mailings were sent to all LeidenASA members informing them of upcoming events, new publications, grant opportunities and deadlines, and much more.

The LeidenASA co-chairs were involved in drawing up the Leiden University Africa Strategy. This new strategy will be used to give direction to future collaborations between Leiden University and partners on the African continent.

The year concluded with an inspirational LeidenASA Annual Meeting. We invited LeidenASA members to talk about their current research projects, with a special focus on multidisciplinary research. The speakers were Sheila Varadan (Just Transitions for AMR) and Marja Spierenburg and Gerrit Dusseldorp (Liveable Planet Programme).

Two of the 2022 seed fund winners gave an update on their project: Emily Strange (Restoring the Rangelands through Collective Biocontrol: A socio-ecological approach to combat invasive species in the SOKNOT region) and Bernardo Ribeiro de Almeida (To move or not to move? In search of secure land tenure in an insecure climate).

Prof. Wim van den Doel gave a presentation on the LDE Majority World and seed fund call. Marc Holtkamp (Strategic Affairs) presented the above-mentioned Africa Strategy. The meeting ended with a new round of fast-paced pitches.



The panel members of the Community Country Meeting included Ola Abagun (INCLUDE Knowledge Platform) and ASCL PhD candidates Victoria Many and Gaddafi Abubakar.

### Community Country Meeting Nigeria

To mark the general and presidential elections in Nigeria in February 2023, the ASCL organised a panel discussion in collaboration with the Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs and the ASCL Community. The panel members each gave a brief assessment of the possible outcomes of the elections. This was followed by a discussion led by Dr David Ehrhardt (Leiden University) and questions from the audience. A word of welcome was given by Arie van der Wiel, chair of the ASCL's Societal Advisory Council and former Netherlands ambassador to Nigeria.



### Stephen Ellis Annual Lecture

Stephen Ellis (1953–2015) was a renowned senior researcher at the African Studies Centre Leiden. He combined a great interest in how ‘real politics’ work and has an impact on people’s lives, with a fascination for the role played by religion and morality. With the Stephen Ellis Annual Lecture, the ASCL wishes to honour his memory and encourage work that reflects his spirit. Every year, Prof. Gerrie ter Haar, Stephen Ellis’ widow, is the guest of honour. The Stephen Ellis Annual Lecture 2023 was given by Dr Mercy Iroaganachi, University Librarian of the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. Stephen Ellis made extensive use of the National Archives of Nigeria at Ibadan, and the focus of the lecture was on the user side with the central question: how to undertake critical, reliable research on Africa making use of African archival collections. The lecture addressed the state of the National Archives of Nigeria at Ibadan, the danger of uncritical history, the representation policy, and the imperatives of archival records for modern African studies.



*Dr Mercy Iroaganachi (University of Ibadan) gave the Stephen Ellis Annual Lecture 2023.*

## Event Overview

11 January 2023

**Ustadh Mau Digital Archive (UMADA) Project Launch**

14 February 2023

**Community Country Meeting Nigeria: Elections panel discussion**

23 February 2023

**ASCL Seminar: Ancestral livelihoods and moral universalism - Evidence from transhumant pastoralist societies**

Speaker: Dr Etienne le Rossignol (University of Namur)

22 March 2023

**CRG Seminar: lecture and documentary screening on mining in the DRC and Ghana**

30 March 2023

**ASCL Seminar: Border closures in East and Central Africa: asymmetry, severance, and disruption**

Speaker: Dr Hugh Lamarque (The University of Edinburgh)

04 April 2023

**Studium Generale: Afrika's internationale migratie**

Speaker: Ton Dietz, Akinyinka Akinyoade

06 April 2023

**Opening library exhibition: security and crime in Lusophone Africa**

11 April 2023

**Studium Generale: Islam in Afrika: diversiteit, wereldwijde verbindingen - en wat heeft de Koran ermee te maken?**

Speaker: Mayke Kaag, Gerard van de Bruinhorst

18 April 2023

**Studium Generale: African Languages and Literature: endangered archives and cultural practices**

Speaker: Annachiara Raia, Azeb Amha

20 April 2023

**ASCL Seminar: Girls' Education, Neoliberal Subjectivity, and Sacrifice in Niger**

Speaker: Prof. Adeline Masquelier (Tulane University)

20 April 2023

**20 April: Africa Thesis Award ceremony**

25 April 2023

**Studium Generale: Movie with introduction: The Wound - Inxeba**

02 May 2023

**Studium Generale: Quaggas en diamanten: de mogelijke relatie tussen diamantwinning en het uitsterven van soorten & Noord-Korea en de bevrijding van Afrika**

Speaker: Jan-Bart Gewalt, Tycho van der Hoog

11 May 2023

**LUCIS/ASCL Lecture: Religiosity and Knowledge in Muslim Context in West Africa: Reconfiguring the Relationship between Boko and Adini**

Speaker: Dr Abdoulaye Sounaye (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient)



25 May 2023

ASCL Seminar: Legitimation as political practice: everyday authority in Tanzania and beyond

Speaker: Dr Kathy Dodworth (The University of Edinburgh)

29 May 2023

Leidse Wereldwandelung: Sporen van Afrika in Leiden

20 June 2023

Seminar: Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Campaign Banners in the 2021 Ethiopian Election

Speaker: Dr Mulugeta Tsegaye (visiting fellow)

03 July 2023

Seminar: Birth of beautiful brides: Rise and transformation of the female gender roles and responsibilities among the Maasai pastoralists of Kenya

Speaker: Dr Moses Mwangi (visiting fellow)

07 July 2023

Public lecture by former South African President Kgalema Motlanthe: Africa's development: Transformation through industrialization

07 September 2023

ASCL Seminar: Africa's Second Struggle for Freedom: What's decolonisation got to do with it?

Speaker: Prof. Olúfémi Táíwò (Cornell University)

14 September 2023

Violence, Liberalism, and the End of the British Empire

Speaker: Prof. Caroline Elkins (Harvard University)

20 September 2023

CRG Seminar: They Came, They Promised and They Failed: The danger and lessons of unavailing democratic governance culture in Nigeria

Speaker: Dr Okey Ndubueze

21 September 2023

Public Lecture: Muslim Women's Interpretive Authority Reconsidered: Everyday interpretation among female Islamic leaders in Senegal

Speaker: Dr Joseph Hill (University of Alberta)

05 October 2023

ASCL Seminar: Seeing Development Approaches and Narratives from the African Periphery, 1979-2023

Speaker: Prof. Peter Little (Emory University)

12 October 2023

Kick-off iAfrica Film Festival 2023: Money, Freedom, a Story of the CFA Franc

12 October 2023

PhD defence Ibrahima Poudiougou

16 October 2023

CRG Seminar: One night with free-roaming Nguni cattle - Emotional priming for writing on cattle's experiences of colonialism

Speaker: Dr Michael Glover (University of the Free State)

18 October 2023

Graduation ceremony Master and Research Master students African Studies

18 October 2023

CRG Seminar: Kindred Based Economic System for Inclusive Economies: Lessons from Imo State, Nigeria

Speaker: Dr Kenneth Amaeshi (School of Transnational Governance)

27 October 2023

Public lecture by Dr Graça Machel and conference on intergenerational justice and human rights in a time of planetary crises in Africa

02 November 2023

ASCL Seminar: Animals in Africa - Human-animal relationships through the lenses of decoloniality and ubuntu

Speaker: Dr Sharyn Spicer (University of the Western Cape)

15 November 2023

CRG Seminar: Multinational Companies and the Rhetoric of Climate Change and Sustainable Development - Evidence from cement production in Nigeria

Speaker: Dr Nelson Nkwor (Alex Ekwueme Federal University)

22 November 2023

PhD defence Crépin Marius Mougua

23 November 2023

CRG Seminar: Jeunesse comme modalité d'explication de la continuité des conflits. Le cas de la RCA

Speaker: Crépin Marius Mougua

07 December 2023

Stephen Ellis Annual Lecture 2023: The Place of Archives in Modern African Studies: A Searchlight on the Patronage of National Archives of Nigeria, Ibadan

Speaker: Dr Mercy Ariomerebi Iroaganachi (University of Ibadan)



## ASCL in the Media

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Annachiara Raia was interviewed on Radio Lamu (Tanzania) in September 2023

ASCL researchers were regularly approached this year to give interviews to Dutch and international radio, television, and press, confirming the ASCL's reputation in the media landscape. Rahmane Idrissa received many interview requests concerning the coup d'état in Niger and the associated threat of military intervention by ECOWAS. Together with Mirjam de Bruijn, he gave an interview about the coup d'état itself (*Algemeen Dagblad*, 01-08), about military activities of the Wagner Group (*De Volkskrant*, 05-08), on popular support for the coup (*De Standaard*, 11-08), and the capture of President Bazoum (*Mahreb Online*, 18-08). Mirjam de Bruijn was frequently interviewed about the unrest in the Sahel, e.g. about the Russian influence in Niger (*NU.nl*, 10-08), the influence of social media on violence in Mali (*Mirage News*, 02-08), and, with PhD candidate Modibo Galy Cissé, about the Russian presence in the Sahel (*EenVandaag*, 08-08).



Mirjam de Bruijn on *EenVandaag* about the Russian presence in the Sahel in August 2023

date Loes Oudenhuijsen appeared on several platforms to give an in-depth reflection. She gave an interview together with Jan Abbink about the law's effect on international development aid and possible refugee flows (*EenVandaag*, 05-06), a radio interview about the link between the law and corruption cover-ups (*Radio1*, 30-05), and about the link between colonialism and the law (*VPRO*, 02-04).

ASCL experts were asked to share their knowledge most frequently in the written media and on the radio. For example, Klaas van Walraven reflected on the coup attempt in Gabon and the house arrest of President Bongo (*NOS*, 30-8 and *Het Financieele Dagblad*, 30-08). Mayke Kaag was interviewed about the arrest and trial of Senegalese politician Ousmane Sonko (*Trouw*, 03-03), and Jan-Bart Gewald spoke on the relation between combustion engines and missionary reports in Namibia (*De Volkskrant*, 17-02). In addition, a number of guest researchers and other ASCL guests appeared in the media. Visting fellow Moses Mwangi was interviewed about the mass starvation caused by Kenyan cult leader Paul Nthenge Mackenzie (*Algemeen Dagblad*, 05-05) and ASCL Seminar speaker Olúfemi Táíwò spoke about the question of decolonisation (*NRC Handelsblad*, 23-06).

A complete list of interviews with different media can be found on the [ASCL website](#).





## Governing bodies & personnel on 31 december 2023

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### Members of the ASCL Board

Prof. M.R. Rutgers	Leiden University, Humanities (chair)
Prof. P.F. Wouters	Leiden University, Social and Behavioural Sciences
Prof. J.P. van der Leun	Leiden University, Law School

### Members of the board of the 'Stichting Afrika-Studiecentrum'

A.C.A. van der Wiel	Former Netherlands ambassador to Nigeria (chair)
M. Diboma	ZSCALE (programme director)
Dr S. Luning	Leiden University

### Members of the Academic Advisory Council

Prof. M.J. Spierenburg	Leiden University (chair)
Prof. F.K. Ameka	Leiden University
Dr E.H. Bähre	Leiden University
K.F.K. De Belder	Leiden University
Prof. E. Bulte	Wageningen University & Research
Prof. B. Büscher	Wageningen University & Research
J.C.M. Damen	African Studies Centre Leiden
Dr J. Fransen	Health Innovation School Rotterdam
	Prof. P. Knorringa International Institute of Social Studies
Dr Y.P.B. van Leynseele	University of Amsterdam
Prof. V. Mazzucato	Maastricht University
Dr L.J. Smith	Radboud University Nijmegen
Prof. R. van Tulder	Erasmus University Rotterdam
Dr A.C.M. van Westen	Utrecht University
Prof. P. van der Zaag	UNESCO-IHE

### Director

Prof. M. Dekker

### Research staff (and their areas of specialisation)

Prof. G.J. Abbink	Ethnicity, conflict management, religion, politics, ethnography, culture, Horn of Africa
Dr A. Akinyoade	Demography, healthcare, education, media, Ghana, Nigeria
Dr A. Amha	Afro-Asiatic languages, linguistics, Horn of Africa
	Prof. M.E. de Bruijn Mobility, social hierarchies, communication technology, Sahel
Dr L.H. Berckmoes	Conflict, children and youth, intergenerational transmission, resilience, cyclical violence, regional conflict, Burundi, Rwanda
Prof. M. Dekker	Inclusive development, social networks, (micro) insurance, land reform, economic development, poverty reduction, Ethiopia, South Africa, Zimbabwe
Prof. R.A. van Dijk	New religious movements, HIV/AIDS, globalisation, Botswana, Ghana, Malawi
Prof. J.B. Gewald	Social and political history, interaction between people and technology, Southern Africa
T.A. van der Hoog	PhD candidate, African history, liberation struggle, liberation movements, frontline states,

Dr A. Idrissa

international relations, nationalism  
States and institutions, political Islam and political secularism, modern and pre-modern history, Niger, Sahel  
Africa in the world, political anthropology, religion and development, migration, land issues, informal workers, West Africa  
History, colonial concessionary companies, conflict, Rwanda, DRC  
Frugality, innovation, community based health insurance, labour movements, trade unions, East Africa  
PhD candidate, urbanisation, militarisation, civil-military relations, youth em-powerment, gender justice, political economy, sustainable African governance, African development, trauma and memory, transitional justice  
PhD candidate, sexuality, gender norms, agency, political economy, Islam, secularity, Senegal  
PhD candidate, sociology, anthropology and history; postcolonial, African, queer, Dalit Studies; diversity, differences that matter (race, gender, caste, sexuality, age); narrative and performance, creative arts practice (film, theatre, drama, live performance); critical pedagogy and educationalism

Prof. M.M.A. Kaag

Dr J.B. Kegel

Dr A.H.M. Leliveld

M.B. Ndlovu

L.W. Oudenhuijsen

K.V. Pancham

Dr A. Raia

C.E. Swinkels

Prof. C.U. Uche

Dr K. van Walraven

### Support staff

T. Blomsma-Peters	Executive secretary to the director
J. Binnendijk	Controller/institute manager
R.G.L. Jongenelen	Events, communications, press
F.W. Koolen	Student assistant
N.A.H. Mes	Student assistant
M.N.J. Stokhuijzen	Project officer
W. Veerman	Programmer, ICT specialist
F. Veldkamp	Web editor, social media, communications, press
H.K. Westra	Programmer, webmaster
M.A. Westra	Policy officer, PhD coordinator
A.L. Yeaddell-Moore	English language editor
W.J. Zwart	Publications assistant

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African languages, comparative studies, Islamic poetry in Africa, orality and literacy, Swahili literature and intellectual practices, Kenya, Somalia  
PhD candidate, entrepreneurship, youth employment  
Political economy, business and financial history, financial institutions regulation and regional integration  
Decolonisation, biography, French Empire, French Africa



**Library, Documentation and Information**

J.C.M. Damen	Head of LDI
Dr G.C. van de Bruinhorst	Collection development
E.M. Eijkman	Information specialist
M. Härnqvist	Cataloguer
M.B. van der Lee	Assistant librarian
H. Müller	Wikipedian-in-residence
U. Oberst	Information specialist
M. Oosterkamp	Assistant librarian, publications assistant
A.E.I. Robson	Information specialist
E.M. de Roos	Assistant librarian
G.M.M. Seuren	Information specialist
Dr H.J. Smits	Information specialist
P.G. Verkaik-Steenvoorden	Assistant librarian

**Educational staff**

M.D. Ditmars	Coordinator of minors' education and student affairs
Dr Mr C.T. Nijenhuis	Lecturer, trainer, coordinator Research Master

**ASCL Publications**

Dr Harry Wels	Publications manager
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**INCLUDE staff**

O. Abagun	Knowledge manager
Dr A. Altaf	Researcher
C.E. Swinkels	Project researcher

**Staff who left the ASCL in 2023**

R.A.O. Baugh	Student assistant
L.R. Bruls	Project researcher
M. den Hartog	Assistant librarian
J.M. Kwaks	Project researcher
L. Wittebroek	Student assistant

**ASCL PhD candidates on 31-12-2023**

Gaddafi Abubakar	Radio in Northern Nigeria: A History of Propaganda, 1944-1979	Rebecca Cudjoe	Resilience in Limbo: Vulnerability or Strength? Understanding Migrants' Coping Mechanisms to Shocks and Trajectory of Resilience
Rashida Adum-Atta	Food and Interreligious Coexistence in Madina	Martin Luther Darko	The Quest for Health in Madina: Health seeking across Religious Boundaries
Jeleel Balyaminu	Natural Resource Governance and Socio-Cultural Conditions in Africa: From Policy to Practice	Yusuf Daud	Federalism in Somalia: Panacea or Predicament? The role of Somali civil society organisations in the federalisation and formation of federal states
Nilza César	Participatory Assessment of Development of the Eduardo Mondlane University (1976-2013)	Paul Deutschmann	Data-driven political campaigns in West Africa: the use of political micro targeting strategies in elections in Senegal and Ivory Coast (2018-2022)
Rishuai Chen	Digital practices and transnational connectivity among African merchant migrants in China	Joseph Fosu-Ankrah	Common Grounds: Urban Spaces, Religious Encounters and Intercommunality in Accra's Madina, ca 1800-2020
Tinashe Chimbidzikai	(Re-) production and imagination of urban social space by Pentecostal Christian migrants in South Africa: A narrative ethnography (Cotutelle with the Georg-August University of Gottingen)	Julia Foudraïne	International labour solidarity: The Netherlands and South Africa during the international anti-apartheid struggle, 1971-1994
Modibo Galy Cissé	Le conflit (terrorisme-djihadisme) dans le Delta Central du fleuve Niger au Mali	Antonio Frank	Interactions between the police and non-state policing actors in the townships of Luanda



Tycho van der Hoog

Blood, Bullets, and Bronze: The Relations Between North Korea and Southern Africa, 1960–2020

Mpalang'a-Maruv  
Liévain Mwangal

Musumb and its emperors (17th–21st century). Laboratory History of cities in Central Africa

Francesca Pugliese

Working experience in the Congolese mining sector  
(Cotutelle with the University of Liège)

Kauthar Khamis

Beauty Practices: A Modality of Religious Co-existence Amongst Christian and Muslim Women in Madina

Mandipa Ndlovu

Urban Governance and Bulawayo's Political Economy in Independent Zimbabwe

Núrel Reitz

Diverging Memories: A comparative analysis of interpretations of the 1904–8 genocide in Namibia and the Majimaji War in Tanzania

Alice Mapeenzi Kubo

Developments in the Shea sector in Ghana and their implications for livelihoods

Belindah Okello

Challenges of Integration: A Case Study of the migrant Luo in Mombasa Kenya, 1902–2015

Reinder Schoonhoven

Exploring Continuities and Contestations of Ancestral Worship in Igede, Benue State, Nigeria

Peter Lindhoud

Ecumenical concern about racial differences and rapid social change in Northern Rhodesia 1924–1964

Penina Olum

Power balance in International Development, its influence in socio economic development in the global South

Caspar Swinkels

Grounded Theory of Change: opening the black box of policy implementation using qualitative process tracing

Victoria Manyá

The African Start-up Ecosystem: funding, informality and the trajectories of maturity

Loes Oudenhuisen

Islam, everyday ethics, and its gendered contestations: 'wicked' women in Senegal from 1950 to the present

Konstantin Valkov

How skateboarding is influencing the social transformation and the construction of identity of South Africa's youth

Koundja Mayoubila

Entrepreneuriat social et connectivité au Tchad: des frictions, aux fractures numériques et sociales, à la rupture

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Performing Bodies across gender, race and spirit borders in South Africa

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'Your custom was bad. It has been changed by Government': Control over women in colonial Kom (Cameroon)

Kim Molenaar

Godly Gays? Sexuality and a Pentecostal Morality in Gaborone

Gitty Petit

Hidden knowledge in Dodoma, Tanzania: Middle class young adults and healers in relation to objects used for health purposes

Marie-Louise Wijne

Digital Data in Development Cooperation





## Financial overview

(in € '000)	2022	2022
<b>Income</b>		
Total contribution Leiden University*	3,366	3,051
Projects for third parties	1,318	1,755
Other income (publications, etc.)	412	414
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,096</b>	<b>5,220</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Personnel	4,173	4,298
Institutional costs	834	1,239
Inventory depreciation	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,007</b>	<b>5,537</b>

\* Of which 3,141 from the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences



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- Abbink, G.J. (2023). Contesting the “secular” via the judiciary: exploring Muslim criticism of the national politico-legal order in Africa. *Anthropos*, 118(1), 349–363.
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- Swinkels, C.E. (2023). *Decent work for self-employed women in Uganda*. Leiden: African Studies Centre Leiden (ASCL). (Blog INCLUDE 15-01-2023)
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## Colophon

### Annual Report 2023, African Studies Centre Leiden

Editing	Rik Jongenelen Anna Yeadell-Moore Fenneken Veldkamp
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Cover photo

'Ghanaian boats'. Photo by Marleen Dekker.



