

Oladele Ayorinde

Through team playing, critically engaging innovative ideas in transforming tradition.

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CURRENT POSITION, AUGUST 2022

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA
Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology

University of Bonn, Germany
Argelander Music Fellow/Lecturer,
Department of Musicology/Sound Studies 2022

University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Johannesburg
‘THInK’ (Transforming the Humanities through Interdisciplinary Knowledge) Postdoctoral
Fellowship 2022

Stellenbosch University, Cape Town
Research Fellow: Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation (AOI)
November 2018-present.

EDUCATION

University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Johannesburg, South Africa
Ph.D., Music/Ethnomusicology, 2021/2022
Dissertation: ‘Music, Agency and Social Transformation in Africa: A case of Fúji
Music in Lagos, Nigeria’
Supervisors: Marie Jorritsma (Ethnomusicology/Music), Maria Suriano
(African/Urban History), and Rogers Orock (Anthropology)

University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany
Doctoral Certificate, Global South Studies, 2022

Stellenbosch University (SU), Cape Town, South Africa
Certificate in Music, Jazz Studies, 2016
MMus, Music/Musicology (South African Music/Politics and Society) 2017
Thesis: ‘Dizu Plaatjies and the Amampondo: Music, Agency and Social
Transformation’
Supervisor: Stephanus Muller

University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa
BMus. Hons., Musicology: African Music and Festival, Ethnomusicology,
Anthropology, 2015

University of Education, Winneba, Ghana
BA (Hons), Music Education, 2012

Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Lagos, Nigeria
NCE (National Certificate in Education), Music and Education, 2006

Professional Course/Certification

MUSON School of Music, Lagos, Nigeria
Diploma in Music. Major: Piano Performance, 2012
Grade 7, Piano Performance, 2011

Trinity Guildhall Music Exams, Trinity College of Music, London
Grade 7, Theory of Music, 2008
Grade 8, Theory of Music, 2009

The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) Exams, London
Grade 8, Theory of Music, 2012

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Research and Teaching

Ethnography of African musics and cultures
Urban ethnography and participatory-action research in music
Artistic research in music
Western classical music: history, theory and analysis
South African and Nigerian musics
African popular music/music industries
Music of the African/Black Diaspora and festival cultures
Economic Ethnomusicology: methods, theories and practices
Ethnomusicology
Ethnomusicology Lab: music in social justice/restoration and community
engagement/development
Sound Studies: methods, theories and practices
Musicology Workshop: music/sound media, global music history and transnational modernism
Music Education: teaching methods, practices and community music pedagogies
Social, Cultural and Identity theories: symbolism, semiotics, critical race theories, power etc.
(Anthropology and Cultural Studies)
Music Documentation/Archive: methods, models and practice
Global South Studies: Local logics and theories of modernity ‘from below’

Artistic and Performance Studies

African Ensemble: African drumming
Highlife and Afro-jazz band
Contemporary African popular music practices and bands (Hip-hop, Gospel, RnB, etc.)

Modern African choral cultures and practices from West Africa (including church musics)
African art music (solo instrumental and vocals, choral music, musicals, opera, etc.)

Festival/Event promotion and Production

Festival: genres, models and cities
Festival production and management
Festival promotion

PUBLICATIONS

Ayorinde, O. (Forthcoming). "We had our own Jazz bands": A Five-Bar Intro to Jazz in Lagos, 1950-1980'. In *Jazz and Culture*. (Spring 2023).

Ayorinde, O. (2021). 'Five Decades of Music Transmutation in Nigeria and The Diaspora: A Review Article'. In *Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa*, 18: 143-149.

Ayorinde, O., and S. Ajose. (Forthcoming). 'Music and Spirituality in Africa: Notes on Nigerian gospel music, Spirituality and the Global Economy'. In *Religions*, (Special Issue: under review).

Ayorinde, O. (Forthcoming). "Barrister is Fùjì and Fùjì is Barrister": Fùjì Music, Self-making and the Politics of Genre-making in Lagos'. In *Ethnomusicology Forum*, (under review).

Ayorinde, O. Talabi, O. and A. Okunade. (2020). 'Documenting and Archiving the Nigerian Musical Arts: Note on Methods, Process and Practices'. In *JANIM: Journal of Association of Nigerian Musicology*, 14 (1):78-91.

Ayorinde, O. (2020). 'Dizu Plaatjies and the Amampondo: A case of Music, Agency and Social Transformation'. In *SAMUS: South African Music Studies*, 40:156-184.

Ayorinde, O. (2019). "Unholy Trinity" and "Transformation" in Post-1994 South Africa: Refocusing Transformation in Higher Education for Social and Economic Empowerment'. In *Leeds African Studies Bulletin*, 80: 68-98.

Ayorinde, O. and Sunu Doe, E. (2018). "African Music", an Elusive Concept: Rethinking Music Education and Scholarship for Social and Economic Development in Africa'. Pistorius, M (ed.), *Conference Proceedings of the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM) 2017*, 29 - 44.

Ayorinde, O. (2017). 'Musical Arts Education for Cultural, Social and Economic Development in Africa: Possibilities and Practice'. In *Journal of Musical Art Education*, 1 (2): 15-29.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Book Publication Projects

The Logic of Fújì: Ethnography and Political Economy of an African Popular Music in Lagos, Nigeria (Working title). A Monograph/Book Project.

Sonic Cosmopolitanism: Popular Music, Urban Aesthetics, and the Everyday Experience in Lagos, Nigeria (Working title). A Monograph/Book Project.

Book Chapters/Edited Volumes

Ayorinde, O. (Forthcoming). 'Festival Study as a Critical Social Justice Model: a Perspective from Johannesburg'. In *Festival Activism*, eds. McDonald, D., Reed, J., and Andrew, S. (Indiana University Press).

Ayorinde, O. (Forthcoming). "'Everywhere with My Mobile Phone Studio': 'Afrobeats' and the Transformation of Nigeria's Music Industry in the 21st Century". In *Independence and Digital Technologies: Music Making in the 21st Century beyond Anglo-America*, eds. Nunes, P., Pedro, R., and Shannon, G.

Ayorinde, O. (Forthcoming). 'Street Musicking and Everyday Life in Contemporary Africa: Fújì music and Self-making on the Streets of Lagos'. In *Street Music: Everyday Performance and its Audiences*, ed. Horlor, S. (Routledge).

Guest-edited Special Journal Issues

Ayorinde, O., Pyper, B., and Pooley, T. eds (Forthcoming). 'African Jazz Cosmopolitanism' [Special Issue]. *Muziki, Journal of Music Research in Africa*.

Ayorinde, O., Omojola, B., and Cannon, A. (Forthcoming). 'African Art Music' [Special Issue]. *Ethnomusicology Forum*.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Argelander Fellowship, University of Bonn, Germany, 2021/2022

Andrew Mellon-THInK Doctoral Fellowship, University of the Witwatersrand, 2018-2021

Baden-Württemberg-STIPENDIUM Scholarship, University of Tübingen, Germany, 2021/2022

Humanities Mid-cycle PhD Grants, University of the Witwatersrand, 2020

Research Committee Research Award, Wits School of Arts (WSOA), University of the Witwatersrand, 2019

Ellen Daniel Bursary, Music Department, WSOA, the University of the Witwatersrand, 2019

Andrew Mellon- African Open scholarship, Stellenbosch University, 2016-2017

Post Graduate Merit Award at the South African College of Music (SACM), University of Cape Town, 2015

PR Kirby Memorial Scholarship at the SACM, University of Cape Town, 2015

PR Kirby Memorial Scholarship at the SACM, University of Cape Town, 2014

Wits Postgraduate Merit Award, the University of the Witwatersrand (declined), 2014

UCT Faculty International Student Bursary, University of Cape Town, 2014

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Fuji Gospel” and Tungba modernity: The (Yoruba) Christian’s Sonic Spaces and Everyday Alujo Pedagogues in Lagos’. Paper presented at the 6th Lagos Studies Association (LSA) conference, hybrid (in-person, University of Lagos, and virtual), June 21-24, 2022.

‘Music and Spirituality in Africa: Notes on Nigerian gospel music, Spirituality and the Global Economy’. Paper presented at the virtual conference of The International Network for Music Spirituality and Wellbeing, entitled *Music Spirituality and Wellbeing: Fostering Wellbeing in Times of Global Crisis*, July 2021.

‘Sikiru Ayinde Barrister and the Politics of Genre-making in Post-colonial Africa: Re-telling the Story of Fuji through its Sounds’. Paper presented at the virtual conference of the Lagos Studies Association (LSA), entitled *Postcolonial African Cities at 60: Continuities and Discontinuities*, June 2021.

“Decolonization”, not another (Academic) “Ritual”: Notes on a South African model for a Decolonized Music and Dance Studies’. Paper presented at the virtual conference of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM), entitled *ICTM Dialogues 2021: Towards Decolonization of Music and Dance Studies*, Saturday, February 2021.

‘The “complex whole” called Arts and Culture! Towards an African Model for Inclusive Festival Organization and Management’. Paper presented at the virtual conference of the Art and Cultural Management, United Kingdom, entitled *Revisiting Borders*, January 2021.

‘Saying it with “Jazz”’: Notes on Practice and Social Life of Jazz in Lagos, 1980-2010’. Paper presented at the hybrid colloquium hosted by the Wits Festival Study Group entitled *African Jazz Cosmopolitanisms: Symposium and Trans-Continental Musical Dialogue*, at Wits School of Arts (WSOA), University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, October 2020.

‘Singing Nationalism in the Keys of Crisis: Music, “Wellbeing” and Subjectivity on the Streets of Lagos, Nigeria’. Paper presented at the virtual conference hosted by the Interdisciplinary Centre for Global South Studies (ICGSS) entitled *Wellbeing and Subjectivity across the Global South*, University of Tübingen, Germany, July 2020.

‘The Rhythm of Amampondo, “a Joyous Thanksgiving to Life!” Towards a History of “South African Marimba Music”’. Paper presented at the annual conference of the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM), Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, September 2019.

‘Documenting and Archiving the Nigerian Musical Arts: Note on Methods, Process and Practices’. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association of Nigerian Musicology (ANiM), Lagos State University, Lagos, Nigeria, August 2019.

‘Rooted in Lagos, global in reach: Fuji music and the re-making of ‘self’ on the streets of Lagos’. Paper presented at the 4th Lagos Studies Association (LSA) conference, University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria, June 2019.

‘Fuji music and the New ways of ‘doing’ and ‘knowing’ on the Streets of Lagos: Notes on Music and Agency’. Paper presented at the Leeds International African Studies Conference, entitled *Contemporary Africas, Creative Africas: Conceptual and Methodological Advances in African Studies*, Leeds University, UK, April 2019.

‘African Art Music and the Elusiveness of Completeness: Notes on African Art Music, Agency and the Archive of African musical knowledge’. Paper presented at the Akin Euba International Symposium, University of Lagos, January 2019.

‘Dizu Plaatjies and the Amampondo: A case of Music, Agency and Social Transformation’. Paper presented at the annual conference of the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, August 2018.

‘University in Africa: rethinking “transformation” and “decolonization” in the present time’. Presented at the Stellenbosch University Africa day 2017 lecture, entitled *Universities in Africa – an inter-generational dialogue on Decolonisation and Activism*, May 2017.

‘Music, Agency and Social Transformation in Africa: An Ethnography of Fuji music in Lagos, Nigeria’. A paper presentation at *Oxford-Ife New Research in Nigeria Seminar*, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU)—a knowledge and research collaboration project between African Studies Department at Oxford University, London and the International Relation Department of OAU, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, September 2017.

“‘African music”, an elusive concept: Rethinking “African music” education and scholarship for social, cultural and economic development in Africa’. African music panel presentation at the annual conference of the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM), Potchefstroom, South Africa, September 2017.

“‘Life after death”, Music, and the Transformation of Eyo Festival of Lagos, Nigeria’. Paper presented at the annual conference of the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM), University of The Free State, August 2016.

‘Musical Arts Education for Cultural, Social and Economic Development in Africa: Methodology and Possibilities through African Indigenous Knowledge systems’. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Pan-African Society for Musical Art Education (PASMAE) entitled *Musical Arts Education for Cultural, Social and Economic Development in Africa*, Mpumalanga, South Africa, June 2015.

‘From Ethnomusicology to African Musicology: the emergence of an Africa-centred Musical Arts Education and Intra -cultural Musical Performances’. Paper presented at the annual conference of the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM), University of Cape Town, July 2015.

‘Re-packaging heritage, reinventing Africa: rethinking musical education, culture, and insight into diasporic cultures’. Paper presented at the 1st ICTM African Music Symposium & 10th African Cultural Calabash, University of KwaZulu-Natal, October 2015.

‘Life after death, celebration and internationalization of an indigenous African festival: A Sociological and Ethnomusicological survey of the Eyo Festival of Lagos, Nigeria’. Paper presented at the CrossCurrent Research in Humanities Conference, University of Cape Town, October 2014.

Recent Talks

‘Idioms of Nigeria’s Highlife: The Roots of Jimi Solanke’s Music’. A talk at the *Jimi Solanke @80*, a Highlife Music Conference hosted by the New Highlife Masters Voice, 3 July 2022.

‘Music, Agency and Social Transformation in Africa: A case of Fújì Music in Lagos, Nigeria’. Seminar presentation at the Department of Musicology/Sound Studies, University of Bonn, Germany, 1 June 2022.

‘PhD Completion: A Conversation on How to Keep Going’. A talk (hybrid webinar) at the Centre for the Study of the Afterlife of Violence and the Reparative Quest (AVReQ), Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, 8 March 2022.

‘Welcome to the Future: (Re)locating Nigerian Music Studies in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)’. A talk at the Music Department, Mountain Top University, Prayer City, Ibafo, Nigeria, 14 February 2022.

‘The Logic of Fújì: A Peep into Economic Ethnomusicology and the Decolonization of Music Studies’. A talk at the Music Department, University of Tübingen. 23 November 2021.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany

- Lecturer: *Popular Music and Everyday Life in Contemporary Africa*, 2022
- Lecturer: *The Sound World and Music in/from the Global South*, 2022

University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany

Lecturer: *Music and Society in West Africa*, Winter 2021/22

Univeristy of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

- Guest lecture entitled ‘Heritage form Below and the Post-aprtheid Public Sphere’ at the Department of Cultural Policy and Mangament, 25 April 2022.

- Tutor: *Film, Visual, Performing Art (FVPA 1)*, 2020 (1st year critical/social and cultural theory class)
- Convener: *The Wits Festival Study Group*, since 2019 (Knowing through (i) festival organization and management, (ii) performance and, (iii) research)
- Sessional Lecturer: *Critical Music Studies: Concepts and Contexts*, 2019 (Topics and Themes in Ethnomusicology, African Music, Musicology, Sound Studies, Jazz, Popular Music and Music Education)

Stellenbosch University, Cape Town

- Teaching Assistant/guest tutor: Postgraduate Music Education Seminar, 2017 (Research methodology, critical thinking, research reporting, writing skills and academic/creative writing for undergraduate, Postgrad Honours and Masters students)
- Guest tutor: 3rd Year Music Education Class, September 2016 (Teaching methods with a focus on Dalcroze Eurhythmics)

Greenspring Schools Lagos, Anthony Campus, Lagos

Music Teacher: Elementary and Secondary, 2008-2010

Major music production/concert performance includes:

- ‘The Sound of Music’ by Rodgers and Hammerstein, 2009
- ‘Holy Joe! The Unsung Hero’ by Sheila Wilson, 2009
- ‘Do You Believe in Father Xmas’ by Golden Apples, 2008
- ‘Pocahontas’ by Alan Menken and Stephen Schwartz, 2008

Roemichs International Schools, Ilorin, Nigeria

Music Teacher, 2007-2008

Creative Director of Roemichs School of Music and Drama, 2007-2008

Classic School of Music, Onipan, Lagos,

Piano and Music Theory Teacher, 2005- 2007

RESEARCH-WORK EXPERIENCE

Stellenbosch University, Cape Town

Archival Assistant:

- The Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS)
Digitizing the Arnold van Wyk Music Collection, 2016
- Hidden Years Music Archive Project (HYMAP)
Digitizing, Sorting and Cataloguing South African Music Collections, 2016

The University of Cape Town, Cape Town

Administrative Assistant to Dr Sylvia Bruinders: Department of Music, 2014-2015

Volunteer Programme:

- Department of Anthropology’s team at the UCT Open Day, 2015
- As a member of UCT International Office outreach for Mandela Day, 2014-2015

Sages Consult Limited, Lagos

Graduate Intern/Data Analyst, October 2017-January 2018

- Data analyst for ‘NIPEP Project’ research report, a World Bank development project in Katsina State, Nigeria
- Research Designer for ‘Dinosaurs of Industry and Businesses in Nigeria’, a policy-oriented research project that aims to unravel factors that contributed to the extinction of industries and conglomerates that were giants of the industry from 1950 to 2000 in Nigeria

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Consulting Experience

- **Designed a new Curriculum for the Higher National Diploma Degree programme of the Nigerian Musical Society (MUSON) School of Music, 2022.**

The MUSON School’s Diploma programme is conservatory-like education that is premised on multicultural music education—drawing references not only from Western Classical and Nigerian music cultures but also from music cultures of the world. The objective of the new MUSON School’s Diploma curriculum aligned closely with the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and with the agenda of the Nigerian Ministry of Education and the National Board for Technical Education (NABTE)—to advance Nigeria’s economic growth and global competitiveness through the provision of accessible, relevant, and high-quality education in Nigeria.

Research Consultant for Community Music Outreach, Cape Town Opera’s ‘Opera and Social Transformation in South Africa’, 2015.

Through ethnomusicological tools, practical frameworks were designed for mediating the post-apartheid social and economic issues in the Western Cape’s townships—through forms of Opera that was not only written in local languages but also rooted in the black people’s everyday life.

New Distribution Model for the Music Label Owners Association of Nigeria (MULOAN), 2019-2020

Through the logic of economic ethnomusicology, a series of lectures and consultations were conducted for MULOAN on how to reduce leakages and manage piracy and bootlegging in the music record business and distribution channels in Nigeria.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Steering Committee member for the “SOUNDINGS–Assemblies of Listenings and VoicesAcross the Souths” research initiative in Germany (https://www.adk.de/en/programme/?we_objectID=64208), 2022.

Student Representative, the Wits School of Arts IPC, 2019
Student Representative, Council for Higher Education (CHE) Doctoral Degree Review, University of Witwatersrand, 2020

RESEARCH/ PUBLIC ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS/INITIATIVES

Below is a summary of some of my ongoing research/academic-public engagement initiatives:

Recently organized Research Events

- **Nigerian Film in Motion: Music as a Creative and Economic Tool for the 21st Century Nigerian Film Industry (a virtual and in-person, Lagos, symposium), 25 May 2022.**

The symposium explores music as a vital economic resource and a tool for advancing Nigerian films, particularly the Nollywood film industry. Initiated as a collaborative research agenda, the symposium was jointly hosted by the Ayo Bankole Centre for Arts and Cultural Expression, Lagos, the Department of Music, Mountain Top University, Ogun, the MUSON School of Music, Lagos, the Department of Musicology/Sound Studies, University of Bonn, Germany.

The Past, Present and Future of Nigerian Art Music: Celebrating Theophilus Ayoola Bankole through Ayo Bankole junior at 60 (a virtual and in-person, Lagos, symposium), 25 May 2022.

The symposium is one of the processes that seek to explore and understand contemporary art music in Nigeria through the lens of Theophilus Ayoola Bankole, one of the many under-celebrated Nigerian composers and scholars who have contributed to the development of expressive cultures and arts education in postcolonial Nigeria. Initiated as a collaborative research agenda, the symposium was jointly hosted by the Ayo Bankole Centre for Arts and Cultural Expression, Lagos, the Department of Music, Mountain Top University, Ogun, the MUSON School of Music, Lagos, the Department of Musicology/Sound Studies, University of Bonn, Germany.

The 2nd African Jazz Cosmopolitanism Colloquium (a virtual and in-person, Johannesburg, colloquium), 29 April 2022.

Musics called jazz have historically become important vehicles of aspiration and sociality in South Africa and other Afrodiasporic societies. These layers of jazz-centred aspirations, sociality and their sonic specificities have become generative sites of enquiry for ethnomusicologists, musicologists, anthropologists, sociologists and a range of cultural scholars. This colloquium builds on the success of the first, which was convened at the Wits Theatre, six months into the pandemic lockdowns, on 29 October 2020. It was initially conceived as part of a two-day exploration of expressions of African jazz cosmopolitanism in

and beyond Johannesburg. Conceived as a collaborative research agenda, the colloquium was jointly hosted by the Wits School of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand and the Department of Musicology/Sound Studies, University of Bonn, Germany.

Ongoing research collaboration initiatives

- **The Intra-African Musical Knowledge and Documentation Project (since 2016)**

The Intra-African Musical Knowledge and Documentation Project initiative emanated from my experiences while working at Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS), Stellenbosch University and Hidden Years Music Archive Project (HYMAP) in 2016, and my training at the Africa Open Institute (AOI) at Stellenbosch University between 2016 and 2017. The initiative was launched as a music research, knowledge and documentation collaboration project between Stellenbosch University and the University of Lagos, Nigeria, in 2016, and by 2022 four other universities were already included in the project—namely the University of Port Harcourt, University of Ibadan, Lagos State University, and Mountian Top University, all in Nigeria. The project aims to promote academic and African music knowledge exchanges between scholars (in Africa and beyond) through a unified-shared documentation practice—with a workstation at each University.

- **The Wits Festival Study Group (since 2019)**

The Wits Festival Study Group is an extra-curricular study group for both registered Wits students and professionals in the arts and culture sectors. The group is premised on blurring the gaps between theory (academic and scholarship) and practice (professional and policy-oriented practical knowledge) in arts, culture, and heritage event planning/management (broadly understood as 'Festival'). In other words, (i) we read and rigorously engage theoretical concepts that are informed by well-researched data and (ii) practical/ professional business ideas and knowledge—that are also policy-oriented. Since the inception of COVID-19, the 'Festival' study initiative's members have grown from 9 to 68 members (from across Africa, the US, UK, Europe, and Asia).

- **Jazz Cosmology (since 2020)**

I and Prof. Bret Pyper (of the Wits School of Arts) started curating a two-day mini-jazz festival (colloquium and concert) that has since October 2020 become an annual event. The two-day festival started with a colloquium entitled 'African Jazz Cosmopolitanisms: Symposium and Trans-Continental Musical Dialogue'. The colloquium (at the Wits School of Arts (WSOA), University of the Witwatersrand) was part of ongoing research initiatives that aim to connect and bring jazz practices and cultures across Africa into a conversation. These initiatives are (i) the Wits Festival Study Group convened by me, and (ii) Prof Pyper's research projects with the Mamelodi Jazz Appreciators. Through our collaboration, the two-day festival addresses issues around social justice in contemporary South Africa, and through the concept 'Jazz cosmopolitanism', the initiative aims to establish a proverbial pan-African call and response between Johannesburg and other African societies—by exploring how jazz has articulated notions of cosmopolitanism across African cities and beyond. The Jazz Cosmology project is practice-led research and social justice project that aims to empower and tell the stories of the historically disadvantaged jazz musicians and the community of jazz appreciators in Mamelodi, Pretoria, South Africa, and beyond.

- **THInK-Africa Network and Research Collaboration (since 2019)**

'THInK' (Transforming the Humanities through Interdisciplinary Knowledge) is an interdisciplinary doctoral research cohort within the Humanities Graduate Centre, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand. Its goals include opening an enabling space for experimentation—a laboratory environment that foregrounds and supports creativity and collaboration. Building on THInK's aims of

that opening-up trans-disciplinary ways of imagining Africa's future in light of a serious engagement with its past, I facilitated THInK's research collaboration with two Nigerian Universities: the University of Lagos and the University of Ibadan. THInK had a joint research Symposium with the Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos, and participated in the 4th Annual Lagos Studies Association Conference from 27-29 June 2019, at the University of Lagos. THInK also had a joint research Symposium with the Institute of African Studies, the University of Ibadan, from 1- 2 July 2019.

- **The Wits Felabration Symposium (since 2019)**

'The Wits Felabration Symposium', an initiative of THInK (Transforming Humanities through Interdisciplinary Knowledge) and the Wits School of Arts (WSOA) aims to mark—and indeed to celebrate—cultural phenomena that unite rather than divide the African people, in part by engaging the very issues that usually incite division from a more positive perspective. In so doing, the Felabration Symposium focuses on celebrating intra-Africa relations and synergies between Nigeria and South Africa—providing an apt point of departure for discussing the relationship and linkages between the peoples of Africa, including their cities, histories and cultures, both on the continent itself and in the African diaspora. The 'Wits Felabration Symposium' was launched as an annual event in 2019.