

IFE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES



NEWSLETTER (2017 - 2019)

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The Convener Speaks on the IIAS Initiative



Prof Jacob K. Olupona, *Pb.D. FNAL, NNOM*
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA
Founder, Ife Institute of Advanced Studies, Nigeria

The birth of the Ife Institute of Advanced Studies in July, 2017 crystalized the envisioned transformation of the Nigerian and by extension, African academic landscape. This initiative is significant in the history of the Institute and that of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife which houses it. Our vision is to engender a process of quality knowledge production that would culminate in a dynamic and vibrant community of scholars who will be supported by a network of non-university intellectuals, thought-leaders and civil servants across the world. We hope to emerge as a recognized body of scholars who will inspire and impact policy matters related to Africa's economic growth and development, to foster cutting-edge research that transcends standard university levels,

and encourage careful interdisciplinary work at the intersection of the humanities, life sciences, social sciences, information technology, and social development.

Since its inception, the Institute has encouraged the exchange of ideas among scholars and promotion of deep knowledge base, in different disciplines. Every year, a retinue of world-class scholars facilitates our Summer Institute. The two-week intensive summer institute is the first program of its kind in Nigeria. It continues to be exemplary in its adherence to fulfilling these laudable goals and inspiring other institutions in Nigeria and Africa; despite its age and limited financial resources. We hope that in a not-too-distant future, the Institute will actualize its plans

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Dignitaries Applaud the IIAS Initiative and Pledge Support

The Vice Chancellor of Obafemi Awolowo University, Prof Eyitope Ogunbodede applauded the IIAS Initiative remarking that the vision of the Institute to nurture young academics aligns with the commitment of the University to attain excellence in research and teaching. He pledged his full support for this noble initiative. The Vice President of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, who was ably represented at the opening ceremony by Dr Dipeolu, also applauded the University for being in support of the establishment of the Institute, noting that the Institute will reinvigorate education in Ife, the cradle of civilization, and the symbol of serenity, tradition and progressive intellectual thought.

The Ooni of Ife, His Imperial Majesty, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi also commended the IIAS initiative. In his speech, he pledged his full and continuing support for the Institute. He promised to assist in realizing the vision of the Institute. Professor Olu Obafemi and Emeritus Professor David Ijalaye also lauded the initiative.



Prof Eyitope Ogunbodede
Vice Chancellor, Obafemi Awolowo University



Dr Adeyemi Dipeolu, *Representative of the Vice President (Prof Yemi Osinbajo)*



Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi
Ooni of Ife, His imperial Majesty



Mrs. Ibukun Awosika, *Chairperson, Board of Directors, First Bank Nigeria*



Emeritus Professor David Ijalaye
Faculty of Law, Obafemi Awolowo University

A Synopsis of “The Knowledge Society and the Challenges of Doing Research in Africa: Theoretical Perspectives and Methodological Approaches”



Prof Adigun Agbaje

Fmr. Deputy Vice Chancellor, (Academic) University of Ibadan

Keynote Speaker at the 2017 ILAS Summer Institute

The 2017 summer institute was held between July 23 and August 5. The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Adigun Agbaje. He set the pace for the first summer institute by noting that, historically, the humanities and social sciences have suffered neglect in Nigeria and in many other parts of Africa and the world at large. He added, however that this was not always the case. During the colonial times, there was a flowering of scholarship in the social sciences yet decline began to set shortly after. Historically, all disciplines received the same treatment in terms of policy and resource provision. This was a time of scarcity, infrastructural decline and curbed intellectual life.

Nonetheless, the humanities and social sciences suffered more than the sciences in terms of resource scarcity as the latter was favored in the context of development. Prof Agbaje gave the example of Obasanjo who is famous for having rhetorically stated: - “*Why do you need to study social studies? Those are not significant to social development.*”

Prof. Agbaje argued that in this contemporary era it is significant for university education to adopt multidisciplinary approaches and to engage young academics in the spread of social sciences and the humanities. He highlighted pathways for realizing this vision of interdisciplinary work, such as building global institutions that focus on

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A Synopsis of "The Knowledge Society and the Challenges of Doing Research in Africa: Theoretical Perspectives and Methodological Approaches"

postdoctoral and research work on the continent. He explained that to fully develop, you have to have a sense of history, a sense of your culture and a sense of purpose. He suggested that it is important for academics in Nigeria to find ways to address the issue of governance in order to overcome some of the challenges facing the social sciences and humanities. He remarked, that the Institute is a source of hope in this endeavor, as it seeks to address the critical stumbling blocks that hinder our progress as a nation and as a continent. As the Institute sails forth, it will create hope for the social

sciences, critically navigating the difficult terrain, vision, content and expertise for the first time on the African continent.

Prof. Agbaje also noted that the opening of the Institute marked a significant moment in the making of Nigeria's history. He expressed his optimism regarding the birth of this initiative and hoped that at the end of the day the initiative will offer significant contributions. He concluded by stating that the Institute is a very important intervention that will rescue the humanities and reinvigorate the academy in Nigeria.



Prof Adigun Agbaje

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The Convener Speaks on the IIAS Initiative

to accommodate postdoctoral researchers from international scholarly communities on long-term basis, possibly in cooperation with other African countries.

The premise of this initiative is to build on the collective vision of the many talented students and scholars in the academy whose research potentials can be further enhanced by an exposure to in-depth learning in the institute. Through this rigorous process of interaction and

interdisciplinary engagement with the impressive mass of senior scholars the project yearly assembles, the fellows would derive maximum benefit from this two-week institute. The central vision of the Institute is to sharpen the thinking of fellows and empower them to make innovative contributions to their respective fields especially in the humanities and social sciences.



Prof Jacob K. Olupona

A Synopsis of “The Social Life of a Scholarly Publication: From Conception to Execution”



Prof. Wale Adebani
African Studies Centre, Oxford University
Keynote Speaker at the 2018 IAS Summer Institute

Prof Wale Adebani was the keynote Speaker at the 2018 two-week summer Institute. He spoke on “The Social Life of a Scholarly Publication: From Conception to Execution” describing scholars as agents of illumination that is made possible through understanding and explanation. He emphasized three main ways by which we carry out the task of understanding and explanation: i) We do research and publish the results of our research; ii) We teach on the basis of extant and on-going research and our own reflections on these; and iii) We offer service to our immediate scholarly community and the larger human community. He explained that “Scholarship is a life of methodical, even ritualistic, consistent and unremitting accumulation of knowledge; [which] involves regular moments of contemplation, of reflection, of intellectual interactions, and of consistent explication”.

Prof Adebani identified and explained three

elements of scholarship namely (a) **Silence**, (b) **Study** and (c) **Time**. On “Silence” he said that apart from the peculiar circumstances of “no light, no water, no salary” in many African contexts, the age of mobile telephony and social media has made solitude almost impossible, yet more desirable...[and] to produce a scholarly work of much value, you must find a regular space of silence to think as well as to write”. On “study” he noted that “to be able to conceive of and write excellent and original articles, chapters or books, we need to study widely and non-purposively [and] sometimes it is fiction, a play or a poem that opens up [our] imagination”. Regarding “Time” he observed that “...the greatest challenge to the life of the scholar is [perhaps] time...It is therefore important for a scholar to protect her time from the rest of the world, including from family members, friends, the church, mosque, burials, weddings and all other social pressures that combine to deny a scholar the time needed for serious work”.



A Synopsis of “Knowledge Society: Scholarship, Teaching and Service”



Prof. Patricia Kameri-Mbote
University of Nairobi, School of Law, Kenya
Keynote Speaker at the 2019 ILAS Summer Institute

The 2019 keynote was delivered by Prof. Patricia Kameri-Mbote who noted that although the theme of the Summer Institute was-: “*Knowledge society: scholarship, teaching and service*” a critical component in this quest is “research”. Prof Kameri-Mbote argued that knowledge generation and sharing should be driven by developments in technology: ICT, Biotechnology and nanotechnology; just like the proliferation of Internet and mobile telephone have also spurred growth. Knowledge is a powerful way of highlighting important issues. She noted that the rise of ICT has made collation, processing and dissemination of knowledge very fast, ultimately changing the nature of research. Prof Kameri-Mbote remarked that for academics who must publish or perish, ICT is an indispensable tool that facilitates access and visibility (i.e. google scholar). According to Prof

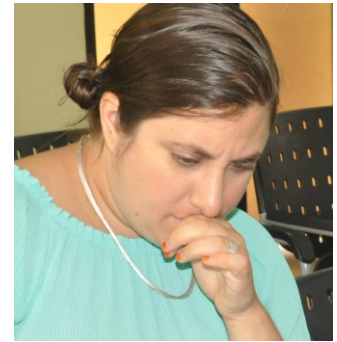
Kameri-Mbote, the poor visibility of African scholarship is attributable to inadequate research resources, dearth of reputable publication platforms and teaching.

Looking towards the future, Prof. Kameri-Mbote contended that information and knowledge sharing is the cornerstone for building the knowledge society we want in Africa. Traditional knowledge plays a crucial role in this quest. She stressed that African Universities are responsible for the production of relevant endogenous knowledge and Nigeria has a huge role to play in this regard due to the sheer number of its inhabitants. Hence there is a need to rethink, reimagine and reengineer African universities as knowledge societies. They should be doing research on issues that Africans consider important and build knowledge premised on African values. Notably, the context for knowledge generation and transmission in universities has changed due to easily accessible information and, increasing use of data. As a teacher, Prof Kameri-Mbote said, she learns a lot more from students than they learn from her. Since the role of a teacher has changed to more of facilitative sharing; it is critical to rethink our classrooms by introducing radical changes to the curriculum and our pedagogical approaches. Prof Kameri-Mbote believes that once the African university ensures availability of knowledge on issues important for Africans, we can avoid the ghettoization, marginalization and mis-characterization of knowledge. Africa, and particularly Nigeria, needs to lead in generating knowledge and challenging the established knowledge hegemonies.

Experience at IIAS: Fellows Speak

“The IIAS Summer Institute helped me develop my professional skills and reignite my motivation to become a top academic in my field. Collaborating with the other fellows and learning from the attentive and generous

lecturers was a highlight of the IIAS. I think every emerging academic should have the opportunity to be trained and mentored as we were at the IIAS in Ile-Ife.”



Samantha Lakin, PhD Candidate
Clarks University, USA

My experience at the Summer Institute was memorable; one I will not forget in a hurry. It was a gathering of scholars, both fellows and faculty members, from different disciplinary backgrounds, institutions, cultures and countries, which in no time grew to be a one big lovely family! The course content was very rich. Course facilitators were highly competent. I was exposed to contemporary issues in teaching, learning and research which I am gradually incorporating in my sphere of teaching, research and community service. Besides the classroom lectures, I was amazed at

how the convener and faculty members were more than willing to listen and share their advice and experience with us during lunch breaks and outside the classroom. The most useful piece of advice which consistently rang out in all their presentations and informal discussions (and which I always hold dear) was “Cross the disciplinary boundaries, and embrace interdisciplinary research”. Above all, the whole summer school experience has made me rethink my career trajectory, and redefine myself to be the 21st century scholar-practitioner”.



Dr. Tolu Osayomi,
University of Ibadan

The quality of the sessions was really impressive. I found the combination of local participants (Professors and students) and academic staff from the USA to be especially successful.

From my perspective, I acquired very useful information about science and mentalities in Nigeria, because they were given through Nigerian didactics and American

methodologies that are closer to my academic experience. What I did not like is the Entrepreneurship part, but that is just personal taste! I learned a lot from the sessions and I do not have anything negative to say about it. In general, the organisation was appropriate. correct time schedules, an impressive ceremonial dinner, nice food and clean water, facilities, etc. I would love to come again!



Theodoros Pelekanidis
PhD Candidate, Humboldt University, Berlin

I am grateful to the Convener (Prof Olupona), the organisers (Profs Ogungbile and Adesina) and the facilitators of the first Ife Institute of Advanced Studies for the opportunity to learn and be mentored by them. I testify that my academic life has received huge boost from my participation in the program. I look forward to being a

part of next year's summer Institute. Thanks to my co-fellows for the opportunity to meet them and represent them. I look forward to working with you all soonest.



Dr. Oluwabunmi Bernard
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Ile-Ife, Nigeria*

The Ife Summer Institute Program effectively reactivated my passion for serious doctoral research. It revealed my inadequacies with respect to postgraduate studies and availed me of invaluable, requisite information on how to settle down for such high calling that is doctoral research. I came in contact with bright and excellence-driven scholars whose commitment to sound scholarship inspired me. Not once before the Program had I met at one single gathering for days such array of matchless scholars in diverse fields farming out ideas to young scholars. The lives of those facilitators and the tested and lived nuggets they shared enabled me to rededicate myself to the life of the mind anew. The topics

covered in each day of the event were apposite and addressed practically the challenges of young scholars like myself. I can report that my horizons as touching the life of a scholar and his scholarship were sharpened and broadened. I am in Canada now and I do not exaggerate to say I came here more confident and ready to grab the horns of the bull of my research. Why? Because the Ife Summer Institute Program happened and I was fortunate to be a part of it. The program accurately exposed my ignorance, put my feet firmly on the part of how to be an organised, dutiful scholar, and imbued me aptly with the confidence I need to take the world stage of scholarship.



Ademola Adesola,
*PhD Candidate, University of
Manitoba, Canada*

This has truly been a wonderful loaded two weeks. I can tell you that as a PhD student who has just finished coursework; this is the same quality of work that I have been doing for the past two years at Boston university. I truly pray that everybody here has taken this stuff to heart because it is important. This year we

were three Kenyans, last year there was one Kenyan, and next year there will be ten Kenyans and after that, we pray that we will move the Institute to Kenya... Thank you so much for the hospitality. We have truly had a great time here.



Sheila Otieno,
Boston University, USA

Some Facilitators of the Annual Ife Summer Institute



Jacob Olupona
Professor of African Religious Traditions & African American Studies, Harvard University (ILAS Convener)



Josephine Olupona
(Jacob's partner)



Prof David Ògúngbilé
Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria. (ILAS Coordinator)



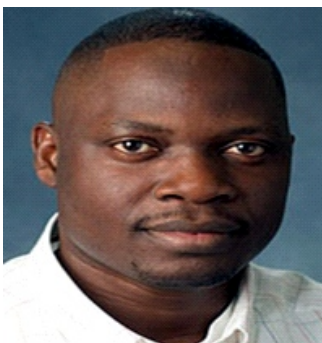
Prof Olutayo Charles Adesina
University of Ibadan, Nigeria (ILAS Coordinator)



Prof Simeon Ilesanmi
Wake Forest University, USA



Prof Olufemi Vaughan
Amberst College, Amberst, USA



Prof Ebenezer Obadare
University of Kansas, USA



Prof Oyeniyi Okunoye
Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria



Dr. Laura Grillo
Georgetown University, USA



Dr Enoch Gbadegesin
Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria



Prof Funmi Soetan
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Afe Adogame
*Princeton Theological Seminary,
USA*



Prof Oyeronke Olademo
University of Ilorin, Nigeria



Prof Tang Xiaoyang
Tsinghua University, China



Prof Akanni Akinyemi
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Bola Udegbe
University of Ibadan, Nigeria.



Prof Taiwo Soneye
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Margaret Lombe
*Assoc Professor, Boston College
School of Social Work*



Dr Olubunmi Asaolu
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Olatunde Bayo Lawuyi
University of Ibadan, Nigeria



Mr Kayode Gbolahan,
*Federal University Gusau, Zamfara,
Nigeria. ILAS Program Officer (2017)*



Oladimeji Ogunoye, PhD Student
*Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria
ILAS Program Officer (2018-Till Date)*



The Program is anchored annually by an impressive number of senior scholars from Nigeria and abroad, engaging a wide range of themes and issues designed to deepen the understanding of research and teaching mission in the academy. The scholars lead discussions on various conceptual, methodological and theoretical topics central to their various fields of interest, including tools of research in the fields of humanities and social sciences, networking techniques and ethical principles of the profession.

Some Facilitators of the Annual Ife Summer Institute



Prof Funmi Togonu-Bickersteth
*Pro-Chancellor, Federal University,
Kebbi, Nigeria*



Prof. Abiodun Alao
Queens College, UK



Dr. Naluwembe Binaisa
University College, London



Prof Femi Mimiko
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Alade Fawole
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Sheriff Folarin,
Covenant University, Nigeria



Prof Morenike Ukpong
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Charles Ukeje
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Remi Sonaiya
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Olatunde Oyeshile
University of Ibadan, Nigeria



Prof Matthews Ojo
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Gbemisola Adeoti
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Prof Chris Ajila, DVC (Admin.)
*Obafemi Awolowo University,
Nigeria*



Lady Justice Nancy Baraza
Former Deputy Chief Justice, Kenya

Rewards of IIAS Fellows' Networking with IIAS Faculty

The IIAS Faculty undertake panel discussions and lecture with rare passion and determination on various themes focusing on both theoretical and practical knowledge and issues underpinning scholarship, research, mentoring, teaching, writing and publication skills. This is already yielding commendable results. For instance, several projects have materialized from these efforts:

"Transnational Pentecostalism in the Age of Sexual Violence and Harassment: From Lagos to Los Angeles". Prof. Corey Williams of Leiden University, Netherlands with IIAS Fellow- 2017/18, Oladimeji Ogunoye of Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria.



Prof Corey Williams
Leiden University, Netherlands

"Musical Narratives of Oil Exploration, Land Degradation, (In)justice and (Dis)placement: in the Niger Delta of Nigeria" – Dr. Lee Watkins of Rhodes University, South Africa, Faculty of Summer Institute, 2017 with IIAS Fellow, Dr. Stephen Olusegun Titus of Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria.



Dr. Stephen Olusegun Titus
Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria

"The Law of Commissions: a comparative study of the place of commissions in law and governance in Africa" – Prof. Simeon Ilesanmi of Wake Forest University, USA and Prof. Jacob Olupona of Harvard University, Faculty Summer Institute 2017/18/19 with Stellenbosch IIAS Iso Lomso Fellow 2018-2019. Dr. Nkatha Kabira of University of Nairobi, Kenya.



Dr Nkatha Kabira
University of Nairobi School of Law

Ise Olokun Esin: Self-apprehension and the Belligerent Poor in Colonial Lagos" – Prof. Wale Adebawo of Oxford University, UK (Faculty, Summer Institute, 2018/19 with Summer Institute Fellow, 2018, Af-Ox Fellow and visiting Faculty, Oxford University, Dr. Tunde Decker of Osun State University, Nigeria.



Dr Tunde Decker
Osun State University, Nigeria

IIAS Fellows and Faculty in Diverse Sessions



Visit to Tourist Sites in Ile-Ife

IIAS Fellows and Facilitators on Visit to Tourist Sites in Ile-Ife





IIAS Fellows with Some Lecturers



IIAS Fellows with Some Lecturers



IIAS Fellows at A Pre-dinner Meeting

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