

CWAS@50



In 2013 the Department of African Studies and Anthropology (DASA) of the University of Birmingham celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of its Centre of West African Studies (CWAS). To mark this occasion, we organized the international conference 'Crossroads in African Studies', which took place on 4-6 September 2013 in the University of Birmingham campus.



For fifty years, research carried out at CWAS has been distinguished by interdisciplinarity spanning the humanities and social sciences, but united by a common focus on people's lived experience in Africa, close and long-standing engagement with African societies and academic institutions, and interest in engaging African perspectives. The conference, attended by almost 200 researchers from all over the world, celebrated this legacy by hosting a broad range of Africa-focused panels ([view programme \(/Documents/college-artslaw/dasa/Cadbury-Conference-2013-Programme.pdf\)](/Documents/college-artslaw/dasa/Cadbury-Conference-2013-Programme.pdf)).



UoB staff and colleagues from the Chicago area- Emily Osborne (Chicago), Max Bolt (DASA), Reginald Cline-Cole (DASA), Corey Ross (Head of SHAC), Benedetta Rossi (DASA), Jonathon Glassman (Northwestern); Jim Brennan (JIUC)

**Crossroads in African Studies** was an important event, not just for DASA/CWAS, but for the field of African Studies as a whole. It enhanced cooperation between international institutions and researchers, including many scholars and students from African universities. It promoted links with museum and library curators responsible for African collections in the UK and abroad. It revived contacts with ex members of staff who had taught at CWAS and are now retired or teaching in other institutions, as well as with a large group of CWAS alumni. It included a graduate and early career researchers' writing workshops. And it featured three plenary sessions, one of which coincided with the launching of a new annual lecture series named after the founder of CWAS, Professor John Fage.



Left to right- Anthony Hopkins, Robin Law, Michael Fage, and Gareth Austin

The first Fage Lecture ([watch lecture \(/schools/historycultures/departments/dasa/news/2013/fage.aspx\)](/schools/historycultures/departments/dasa/news/2013/fage.aspx)) was in fact a double lecture on African economic history from a global perspective and in the *longue durée* with talks delivered by Anthony G. Hopkins (Emeritus Smuts Professor of Commonwealth History at the University of Cambridge, former Professor of Economic History at CWAS and UoB Honorary Graduate) and Gareth Austin (Professor of Economic History at the Graduate Institute, Geneva, CWAS alumnus and former Lecturer in the Economic History of West Africa at CWAS), and a response by Robin Law (Emeritus Professor at the University of Stirling, CWAS alumnus and former Research Fellow at CWAS). Following the lecture, a reception took place in the former home of CWAS on 32 Pritchatts Road.



Alumni and ex members of staff at the reception of 5 Sept 2013

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