

SHAPING AFRICA FROM ABOVE

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ELITES IN WEST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Two-day Symposium 14-15 July 2020
'Every state has the elite it deserves.' Achille Mbembe

Co-organisers: Jean-Frédéric de Hasque (UC Louvain) and Rogers Orock (University of the Witwatersrand)

Venue : University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

This international symposium will examine the role of social and economic elites and the meanings that these actors attach to their agendas, interests, and interventions in a comparative perspective, between West and Southern Africa. We seek to initiate a conversation on the kinds of interests, motivations, spaces, institutions, modes of action and circulation, etc. that old and new kinds of social and economic elites adopt to articulate their visions of leadership and development across these two regions of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Keynote Speakers :

Professor Wale Adebunwa : Rhodes Professor of Race Relations and Director of the African Studies Center, University of Oxford, United Kingdom, as well as co-editor of *Africa: The Journal of the International Africa Institute*. Wale is the author of several publications on nationalism, ethnic and racial politics as well as on the corporate agency of African elites, including notably his monograph *Yoruba Elites and Ethnic Politics in Nigeria: Obafemi Awolowo and Corporate Agency* (Cambridge University Press, 2014). He also recently edited *The Political Economy of Everyday Life in Africa: Beyond the Margins* (James Currey, 2017).

Professor Keith Breckenridge : Professor of History and Deputy Director of the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WiSER), University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, as well as co-editor of the *Journal of African History*. Keith has published widely on the cultural and economic history of South Africa, particularly the gold mining industry, the state and the development of information systems. His most recent book is *Biometric State: the Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present* (Cambridge, 2014)

15 april 2020, proposals of abstracts for participation should be submitted jointly to jean-frederic.dehasque@uclouvain.be and Rogers.Orock@wits.ac.za