

PLENARY: FAGE LECTURE

16:30-16:45 Welcome by Chair Professor Karin Barber

16:45-17:00 Welcome by Head of College Professor Michael Whitby

17:00-17:30 Professor Antony Hopkins

How We Got From There To Here: Fifty Years In Thirty Minutes

This talk offers a personal view of the evolution of African history, particularly economic history, during the past half century. It charts five phases, beginning with modernisation theory and ending with the current global 'turn'. Each phase exerted a profound influence on the subject, even though none was able to monopolise the research agenda. To some extent, the talk is an exercise in nostalgia for lost paradigms. As such, it should resonate with colleagues of a certain age, who are invited, accordingly, to sing along (though preferably silently). It is also, however, nostalgia with a purpose and is aimed at the current generation of post-graduate students. Each phase enjoyed a ten-year run during which its apparent infallibility gave it immunity from successful prosecution. Yet all have either withered or been struck down. Accordingly, graduates who are beginning to shape the future of the subject need to watch for signs of decay and for the first indications that barbarians have arrived at the gates. In this way, they can guard against the prospect of being left amidst the ruins as collateral damage when the next intellectual empire falls.

Professor A.G. Hopkins retired last year from his position as Walter Prescott Webb Chair of History at the University of Texas at Austin, and he is currently Emeritus Smuts Professor of Commonwealth History at the University of Cambridge (UK) and Emeritus Fellow of Pembroke College. He formerly taught African Economic History at CWAS (1964 to 1988) and at the University of Geneva (1988 to 1994). He has published extensively on African and global history. During his 24-year tenure at CWAS, he published 'An Economic History of West Africa', which is considered the most influential interpretation of West Africa's economic history. His more recent publications focus on the history of imperialism and globalization, and include, with Peter Cain, 'British Imperialism, 1688-2000' (2001), which won the Forkosch Prize of the American Historical Association; 'Globalization in World History' (edited, 2002); and 'Global History: Interactions Between the Universal and the Local' (edited, 2006). Professor Hopkins is a Fellow of the British Academy and holds honorary degrees from the University of Stirling and the University of Birmingham.

17:30-18:00 Professor Gareth Austin

Where is 'Here' Anyway, and Where Should We Be Going? Promise and Problems in the Resurgence of African Economic History

[Draft - The expansion of research in the field, which began early in the last decade and has continued to date, means that the question that my history students in Legon used to ask in the 1980s, 'why are we so poor?' is again receiving plenty of attention. As in the earlier heyday of research on African economic history, the attention comes from scholars in a cluster of disciplines. In contrast to the 1960s to early 1980s, however, the interest is not limited mainly to Africanists. Mainstream economic historians, and economists, have shown sustained interest in 'news' from Africa. Whereas many of their predecessors might have considered Africa as outside economic history, at least until the Europeans imposed themselves, in the early twenty-first century comparative economic historians have become eager to know whether evidence from Africa supports different models from those available in Eurasia, or fits into patterns observable elsewhere – and are relaxed about the answers.]

Gareth Austin is Professor of International History at the Graduate Institute of Geneva. He moved to Geneva in 2010 from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Prior to his position at LSE, he lectured at the University of Ghana and was a temporary Lecturer in the Economic History of West Africa at the University of Birmingham. His PhD, supervised by Professor A.G. Hopkins, was awarded jointly from CWAS and the then Department of Economic History of UoB. His research and teaching interests are in African, comparative, and global economic history. His primary research has focused on West Africa, especially Ghana and the pre-colonial kingdom of Asante. A former editor of the Journal of African History, he is currently president of the [European Network in Universal and Global History \(ENIUGH\)](#). He is also on the advisory boards of the Journal of Global History, the new

journal Economic History of Developing Regions, and the Brill book series in Global Economic History. His publications include 'Labour, Land and Capital in Ghana: From Slavery to Free Labour in Asante, 1807-1956' (2005); and a number of seminal journal articles on African economic development, slavery, labour, markets, and credit.

18:00-18:15 Professor Robin Law, discussion

Robin Law is Emeritus Professor of African History at Stirling and Honorary Visiting Professor at the University of Liverpool. Before joining Stirling in 1972, he held posts at the universities of Lagos and at Birmingham, where he lectured African History at CWAS after obtaining his PhD under the supervision of Professor John Fage. His chief research interests are in the history of pre-colonial West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade. He is the author of 'The Oyo Empire, c.1600-1836' (1977), 'The Horse in West African History' (1980), 'The Slave Coast of West Africa, 1550-1750' (1991), 'The Kingdom of Allada' (1997) and 'Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving "Port", 1727-1892' (2004); and the editor of 'From Slave Trade to "Legitimate" Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa' (1995). His extraordinary scholarly output has been combined with a commitment to African Studies more generally. He was an editor of the Journal of African History for eight years and has been a member of the advisory board of History in Africa since 1974. He served on the Council of the ASUK for two terms. He was a member of the Council of the Hakluyt Society 1993-7, serving as series editor from 1997-2003 and again as member of the Council from 2003-2008. He is a Fellow of the British Academy and was a member of the Academy's International Policy Committee from 2003-9 and Chair of its Africa Area Panel in 2004-2009.

18:15-18:30 Questions

18:30 Reception in 32 Pritchatts Road