

CAS ANNUAL REPORT (2020-2022)



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Resilience and Rebounding from COVID-19

The Centre for Asian Studies(CAS) enters its seventh year in 2023. The COVID-19 pandemic that struck in 2020(our fourth year) pulverized the world and in many ways changed it. CAS had to endure, navigate and respond to this pandemic which was said to have engendered a “new normal” way of life. This Annual Report (2020-2022) tries to capture how CAS as part of the College of Humanities, University of Ghana, managed to thrive and survive during the pandemic and beyond it.

CAS was formally set up in 2016. From the outset we have been guided by the University of Ghana’s overall vision, drawing on its long tradition of excellence, to be a world class centre of learning, teaching and research. CAS seeks to contribute to this effort by positioning itself as the leading Asian studies hub on the continent of Africa. In pursuit of this CAS in its first year was guided by two interlocking goals: building the institutional infrastructure (financial, administrative, logistical, publicity, academic and operational) as a means to make visible and cement the value of Asian studies to Ghana and Africa. As we enter our seventh year we have in clear view our founding vision and spell out in this Annual Report what we have done so far and our plans for the future.

We extend our sincerest thanks to Prof. Daniel Ofori, Provost of the College of Humanities for his keen interest and support and to the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo. In this new academic year (2022-2023) kindly join us on the journey to continue to make CAS the go to place for Asian Studies in Africa and on the globe. As always your interest and support matter deeply to us.



CAS, Director
July 2022





About Us

The Centre for Asian Studies was established following a decision by the Council of the University of Ghana in October, 2015 and begun formal operations on August 1, 2016. The centre is one of the nine research centres under the College of Humanities. We are Ghana's premier and pre-eminent centre exclusively dedicated to supporting research, training and exchange programmes and activities in Asian studies in close collaboration with Asian and other global partners.

Goals

CAS seeks to be a world class platform for innovative research, training and exchange programmes and activities in Asian studies relevant for mutually beneficial relations between Africa and Asia.

Objectives

CAS in close tandem with the University of Ghana's mission to be a world class research intensive institution will focus on the following:

- » build advanced multidisciplinary and comparative competencies and capacity for research and teaching in Asian studies for Ghana and Africa.
- » carry out high quality policy-sensitive and development focused research on Africa-Asia relations to promote the socio-cultural and politico-economic transformation of Ghana and Africa.
- » serve as the foremost hub in Ghana and Africa for academic and non-academic exchanges between cultural, social and policy organizations in Asia and other parts of the world.



Our Research Clusters (2021-2026)

a. Asian Cultures and Values

The links between culture and human progress has long been pondered. This cluster is interested in interrogating this nexus within the context of the contemporary experiences of these two regions. An increasing wealthy East Asia for example points to the guiding force of Confucian values like thrift, filial piety and moral rectitude in explaining that region's transformation. Examining such a claim, for example, set against Africa's search for cultural autonomy and validation in the process of development should offer valuable insights on the limits, possibilities and even necessity of culture as a vehicle for progress in a globalizing world. This sub-theme seeks to inspire cultural dialogue between the two continents.

b. Asian Development

This cluster is concerned about the ideational undertows of modern Asian development experiences after the eras of especially Western imperialism and colonialism. How for example did countries like Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia and Singapore engage ideationally with modern notions of socio-economic organization such as democracy, communism, capitalism, neo-liberalism etc? Was there resistance or accommodation? What was the nature of these? How does this compare with the African experience? In this sub-theme the focus is on the ideational sphere or symbolic realm of knowledge, values, meaning making, or discourses in framing and shaping the future in these two regions.

c. Asia Globalizing

Samsung billboards advertise the company's smartphones, tablets and washing machines across the world. Japanese cars are found on almost every street in the world. China is building railways across the world and her merchants hawk their wares in African cities. All these are visible signs of a globalizing Asia. The cluster will try to unpack the forces shaping this process as Africa and Asia interact from especially a micro-narrative perspective (without neglecting meso-narratives) focusing on the socio-institutional and historical underpinnings and dynamics. This sub-theme seeks to encourage as a consequence the excavation of vital elements such as agency, being, cognition, subjectivity and culture as explananda for particular instantiations of Asia globalizing and how this interfaces with Africa's peoples, institutions, values, hopes and fears. In this undertaking the explication of core concepts such as 'reciprocity', 'mutuality', 'learning', 'modernity', 'futuraity' and 'vulnerability' in the Asian and African settings will be vigorously explored.

Key Events

a. Major Agreement Signed



KOICA Dir. (l), Korean Ambassador (c), Vice-Chancellor(r)

On the 26th of April, 2022, the University of Ghana (UG) and the Korea International Co-operation Agency(KOICA) signed the Agreement for the setting up of the Ghana-Korea Centre of Excellence for ICT-Based Start-Ups and Asian Research(GK-IMPACT).The historic event which took place at the New Council Chamber at the Registry of the University of Ghana was graced by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo; the Korean Ambassador, H.E. Jung Taek-Lim; the Provost of the College of Humanities(COH), Prof. Daniel Ofori; Dr. Lloyd G. Adu Amoah, Director, Centre for Asian Studies(CAS); the Country Director of KOICA, Mr. Moo Heon

Kong; the Senior Deputy Country Director, KOICA, Mr. Seungmin Oh and the Deputy Country Director of UNICEF, Mr. Fiachra McAsey. The Legal Counsel of UG, Prof. Olivia Anku-Tsede coordinated the signing process while Mrs. Elizier Ameyaw-Buronyah, Director of the Public Affairs Directorate, UG served as compere.

The signing ceremony was the culmination of five years of grueling negotiations involving grant writing and visitations of three In-depth Survey Teams from Korea (KOICA headquarters in Seoul) to the University of Ghana over the period, 2019-2021. These teams engaged with the UG side to examine the financial, logistical, technical and operational feasibility of the project.

The grant is the highest ever granted by Korea to any institution public or private in Ghana since the two countries established diplomatic relations forty-five years ago.

b. Major MoU Signed

The Centre for Asian Studies(CAS) through the University of Ghana signed a memorandum of Understanding with the Seoul National University Asian Center(SNUAC) in July 2022.

c. Katekisama Project



The UG, Team in a group picture with the Basel and Bonn Delegation

A delegation from Bonn and Basel Universities in Germany visited the University of Ghana in 2022. The delegation paid a courtesy call on Prof. Gordon Awandare, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs. The visit was to allow the team officially introduce the Katekisama Project which will allow scholars and students of the University of Ghana, Bonn and Basel to collaborate via research, exchange programmes, fellowships, special courses, seminars and conferences. Prof. Dr. Maximilian Mayer, Bonn

Key Events

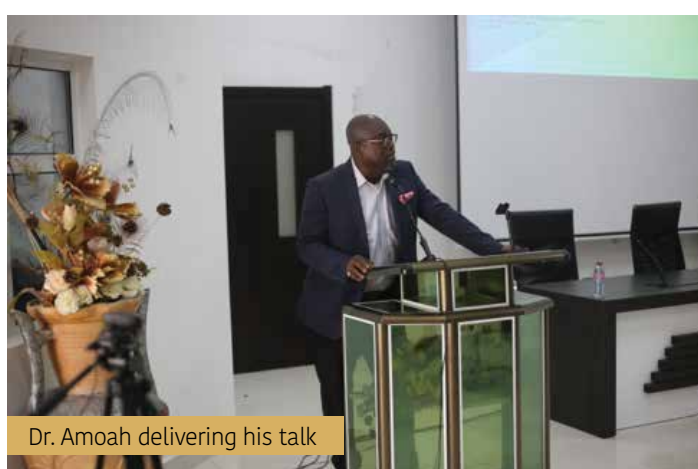
University and Prof. Dr. Ralph Weber, Basel University introduced their team members and gave a brief background to the Katekisama Project. The delegation was hosted by CAS and spent a week at the University of Ghana discussing details of the project.

d. CAS Roundtables

As part of the Katekisama Project(KP) which involves units of the Universities of Ghana, Basel and Bonn, CAS hosted two Special Roundtables. Scholars and students from the Universities of UG, Bonn and Basel took part in the Roundtables. The first roundtable was on the topic, ***Africa, China, Global Infrastructures and Technopolitics***, and was held on August 15, 2022. The other was on ***Higher Education in Africa and the Katekisama Project*** and took place on August 19, 2022.

These roundtables aimed to set off conversations on emergent and critical issues on the topics in focus which have otherwise not been given the needed attention or been neglected completely in dominant policy and research circles around the globe.

e. Extension Services



Dr. Amoah delivering his talk

As part of our extension services, our Director, Dr. Lloyd Amoah, gave a talk at Ghana's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He spoke on 60 years of Ghana-Chi-

na Relations on 23rd March, 2022. The ministry is a major stakeholder of CAS. This is the second time CAS has provided training inputs for the Republic's Senior Foreign Service Officers.



Foreign Service Officers at the talk

f. CAS support for Graduate Students and Studies

One of CAS's former Research Interns, Charles Agyebeng, was admitted in 2021 into a Master's Programme at the prestigious Kobe University, Hyogo, Japan. His studies is supported by the Japanese Government's MEST Scholarship which he won through a rigorous and open competitive process. Fluent in Japanese, Charles, was a dependable supporting tutor for the Japan Language Classes run by CAS from 2017. He won the Japanese Language National Speech Contest held in Accra in March, 2021(<https://www.modernghana.com/.../agye-beng-and-uthman...>). Charles had been slated to actually go and contest at the African level in Nairobi, Kenya but the COVID-19 scuttled that possibility. Mr. Agyebeng had previously been an Exchange Student at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies from the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, Legon, from where he graduated. In addition to Charles, Mr. Nelson Quarme, a research intern at CAS was selected in 2022 to conduct research for a year at the prestigious University of Bonn as part of the Katekisama Project. Nelson is currently a doctoral student at the Department of Political Science.

Research and Publications

a. The Centre wound up and completed its research titled (Un) Settled Strangers? The Koreans in Ghana since Independence (1957-2017). The research was supported by a Mellon Grant of close to \$45,000.00 which formed part of a \$800,000.00 grant the University of Ghana applied for successfully (following two years of rigorous and intense application processes) under the theme: **"Re-Invigorating Humanities Research at the University of Ghana."** The Research Project run from 2018-2021. The final output was a published Working Paper. The Research Team was led by CAS's Dr. Lloyd G. Adu Amoah who was the Principal Investigator. The work was linked to one of the Research Clusters of the Centre, Asia Globalizing.

b. CAS initiated and led a team of scholars to produce in 2019 a Special Issue of the journal, African and Asian Studies (published by Brill) on 40 years of Ghana-Korea Relations. The Special Issue contained eight articles. One of these titled ***Ghana-Korea Economic Relations – The Record after 40 Years and the Future*** and jointly authored by Lloyd Amoah and Kwasi Asante was adjudged one of the best articles during the twenty years of the re-branding of the journal.

c. Books Publication

The Centre published two books to mark 60 years of Ghana-China relations in the year 2020. The first book published in 2020 is titled ***Five Ghanaian Presidents and China: Patterns, Pitfalls, and Possibilities*** and was authored by our Director, Dr. Lloyd Amoah. The other book, an edited (Dr. Lloyd Amoah) volume, was published in 2021 with the title ***Sixty Years of Ghana-China Relations: Friendship, Friction, and the Future***. These works dealt with themes that cut across the three research clusters of CAS.

Grants

The Centre increased its book stock by over 200 new books on Korea. This adds to our growing collection. The books were provided under the CAS-Korea Corner Project by the Korean Embassy and the Korea Foundation.



CAS Key Milestones

Formal Opening- August 1, 2016

First Researcher Visit- Prof. Wakabayashi Chihiro (Saitama Prefectural University, School of Health and Social Sciences) was at CAS on September, 13, 2016.

Inaugural Public Event- October, 19, 2016 (College of Humanities-CAS Dialogue Series 2)

First Ambassadorial Visit- October 27, 2016 H.E. Woon Ki-Lyeo paid a working visit to CAS.

First Trilogues- April 6, 2017 featured Dr. Annette Hansen (Aarhus University, Denmark) who led a discussion on Global, social, and cultural implications of Japanese foreign aid: The case of an alumni network.

First Conference - April 11-13, 2017 (40 Years of Ghana-Korea Relations-Retrospectives and Prospects).

First Research Grant- Andrew M. Mellon Foundation Grant for Research on Ghana-Korea Relations.

First Collection of Books- 100 books from NIPPON Foundation's Read Japan "100 books for Understanding Contemporary Japan" project. November 17, 2017.

First Roundtable- CAS-FOCAC Roundtable. April 26, 2018.

First Publication in an Academic Journal:- 7 March, 2019, *African and Asian Studies*.

First Most Substantial Grant : \$9million under the GK-IMPACT Project

First Book Length Publication : *Sixty Years of Ghana-China Relations : Friendship, Friction, and the Future*, 2021.



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