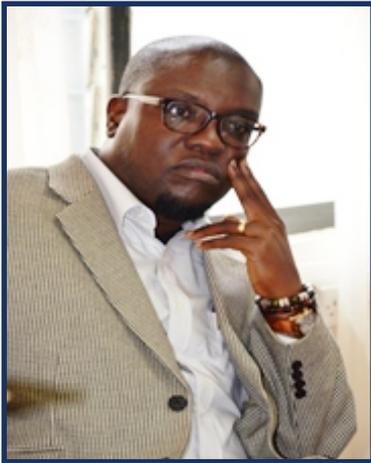

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POSITIONING CAS AS THE FOREMOST ASIAN STUDIES HUB IN AFRICA: CONSOLIDATING THE PROCESS



Another academic year has passed quickly ushering the Centre for Asian Studies(CAS) into its third year. We have gone through our challenges, confronted them with innovation and gusto, made mistakes (and learnt from them) and succeeded too. The annual report for the 2017/2018 bears witness and provides an account of our efforts, both surefooted and otherwise.

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 for 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 has been 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. In the second year we have continued on that path fine-tuning our methods, extending our networks and reach and drawing in critical financial resources.

We extend our sincerest thanks to Prof. Samuel Agyei-Mensah, Provost of the College of Humanities for his keen interest and guidance. CAS's Working Group made up of Prof. Ama deGraft-Aikins, Prof. Boateng Onwona-Agyeman, Dr. Bossman Asare and Dr. Alidu Seidu deserve special mention for their continued keen interest, support and advise.

In the coming academic year(2018-2019) kindly join us on the journey to continue to make CAS the go to place for Asian Studies in Africa. As always your interest and support matter deeply to us.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Samuel Agyei-Mensah'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

CAS, Director(Ag)
July 2018

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 (2016-2021)

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

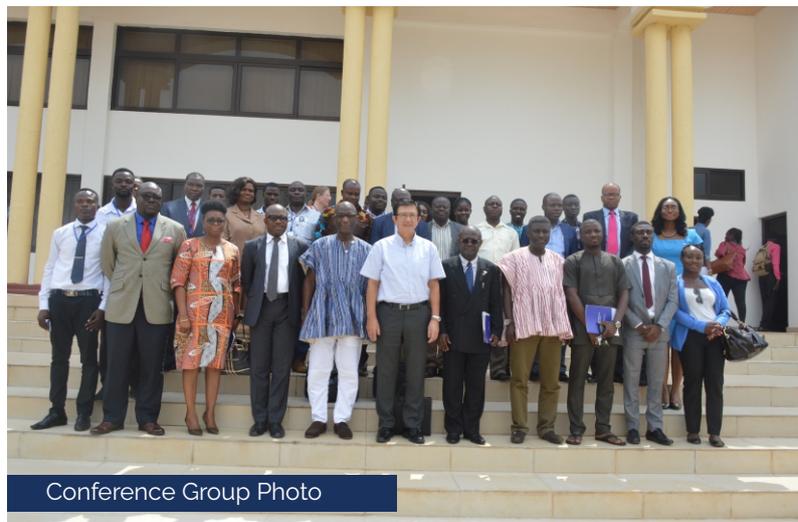
a. CONFERENCES

The Centre for Asian Studies (CAS) held a 2 day (Nov.13-14,2017) historic International conference commemorating 60 years of Ghana-Japan Relations. The theme for the conference which took place on the beautiful and idyllic campus of the University of Ghana, Legon, was: **60 Years of Ghana-Japan Relations : Reflections on an Enduring Partnership for Development.** Over 600 participants (academics, policymakers, civil society organizations and students) took part in the conference during which four roundtables were held and five papers were presented on various facets of Ghana-Japan relations.

The opening ceremony was chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of the



Conferences attendees



Conference Group Photo

University of Ghana, Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu. The then Japanese Ambassador H.E. Kaoru Yoshimura was the

Special Guest of Honor. Ghana's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFARI) through her senior

officials including the Director of Asia-Pacific Bureau Mrs. Apaloo took active part in the deliberations of the conference.

A selection of the best papers presented at the conference is undergoing further editorial work for publication in in 2019.

b. LECTURES-TRILOGUES II

CAS's Trilogues, was instituted to serve as a regular timely discussion platform on Africa-Asia-Global events and issues. Prof. Kweku

Ampiah (Department of East Asian Studies, Leeds University), Visiting Scholar, University of Ghana, Legon delivered the Second of this Lecture Series on March 21, 2018. His topic was on *The Discourse of the Asian African Conference of 1955: The Economic Implications for Africa-Asia Relations*. The first lecture was

delivered on April 6, 2017 by Prof. Annette Skovstad Hansen, Associate Professor (Japan historian), Department of Global Studies, Aarhus University, Denmark. Her topic was titled: *Global, social, and cultural implications of Japanese foreign aid: The case of an alumni network*.

c. CAS-FOCAC ROUNDTABLE I

The first Roundtable on the Forum on China Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) was hosted by CAS on the 26th of April, 2018 at the University of Ghana,

Legon. The roundtable was attended by officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance, government agencies and leading Ghanaian think-tanks. The Roundtable seeks to institutionalize a process by which Ghana's participation in FOCAC will be consistently analyzed with a view to offering policy useable feedback to Ghanaian policymakers. The Roundtable forms part of the activities under the Asia Globalizing Research Cluster.

d. STUDENT EXCHANGE



Ms. Nancy Kye and Mr. Kwadwo Amankwah will spend a semester(2018-2019 academic year) at the prestigious Tokyo University of Foreign Studies(TUFS), Tokyo, Japan.

Nancy and Kwadwo are M.Phil Part 1 candidates at the Department of Political Science and were chosen following intense consultations between the CAS, the International Programmes Office and the Department of Political Science. The two have demonstrated keen interest in Asian Affairs.

While in Japan, they will be attached to Graduate School of Global Studies and conduct their research under that school's Peace and Conflict Studies Programme.

This is the second time the exchange programme signed between the University of Ghana and

the TUFS goes into full operation. This programme should provide useful experience for Ghanaian students to deepen their knowledge of Japan in particular and Asia in general.

e. **JAPANESE PROGRAMME**

The Japanese Language and Culture Programme took off in September 12, 2017 as part of our Cultural Events Plan. This is an important step for exposing students and the interested public to Japanese Studies in a more organized and

sustainable manner. Mr. Henry Adjei and Madam Yuko Yamabayashi were the two volunteers mounting the classes. The classes covered topics such as Japanese tea culture, fashion traditions, calligraphy etc. Through this process, the Japan Foundation with the active collaboration of CAS and the Ghana Embassy has agreed to conduct Japanese Language Tests in Ghana for the first time. The tests will take place in late 2018.

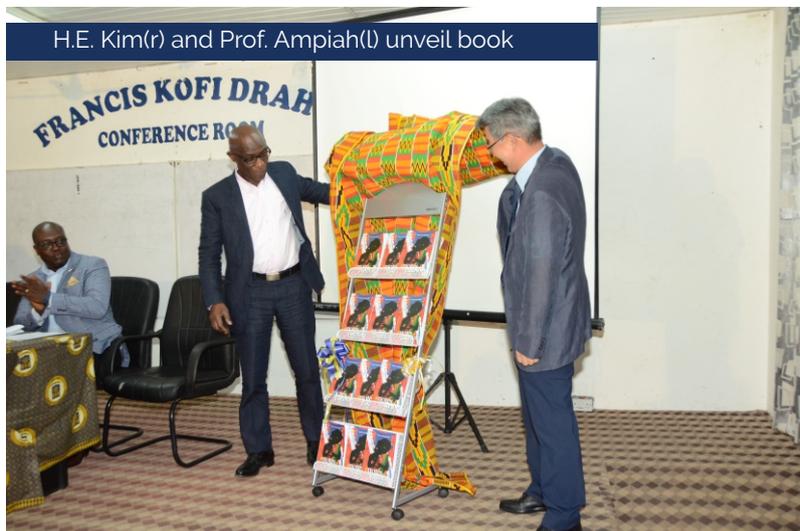
f. **BOOK LAUNCH**

CAS's Dr. Lloyd G. Adu



Amoah launched his latest book, *#notesofapatriot: On Ghana, Asia, China, Fela, Women, Zidane and more*, on the 4th of May, 2018 at the Kofi Draah Conference Centre, Department of Political Science, University of Ghana,

to understand, interpret and communicate the writer's experience of China and Asia to his compatriots and then to the world. Penned in Accra as well the work seeks to capture Dr. Amoah's engagement with his country, continent



H.E. Kim(r) and Prof. Ampiah(l) unveil book

Legon. The book (published by the University of Ghana Press) had been in preparation over the last 20 years. Written in Beijing, Shanghai, Wuhan and other parts of China the writings reflect an African's sincerest attempt

and our world as a patriot, citizen, fellow human being and intellectual. The Special Guest of Honour for the event was the Korean Ambassador to Ghana H.E. Kim.

g. Research Collaboration

The Centre for Asian Studies began collaboration in research with the University of Michigan through two of its researchers, Drs. Seyram Avle and Silvia Lindtner (also affiliated to the [Lieberthal-Rogel Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan](#)). A part of the process, first in a series of research workshops was held in Accra (hosted and supported by Impact Hub, Osu-Re) on May 11, 2018.

The one day workshop was on the theme - "Making Tech-Entrepreneurial Connections : Ghana and China" and is part of a research project examining (in order to visualize, unpack and map) the form(s), circulation and impact of high technological innovation through the frames and particularities

of Silicon Valley, Shenzhen and Accra in a globalizing world. The workshop was attended by scholars, entrepreneurs, policymakers and techies drawn from Ghana, the US and China. The National Science Foundation is the funder.

CAS Networking

CAS's offices was graced by very important visitors from all over the world including academics, diplomats and researchers. The new Japanese envoy to Ghana H.E. Himeno paid a working visit to the Centre. Korean Embassy officials also paid visits to CAS to familiarize themselves

with our work. A delegation from Kyung-Hee University(Korea)visited CAS to explore opportunities for academic/research collaboration and co-operation .

CAS's acting director, Dr. Amoah also paid courtesy calls on some of the leading Asian ambassadors[H.E. Tsutomu Himeno (Japan's ambassador to Ghana) and H.E. Kim Sungsoo(Korean ambassador to Ghana)] in Accra to apprise them of the work of CAS.

Dr. Lloyd G. Adu Amoah successfully completed a comprehensive working

study tour of China in November, 2017. The tour included visits to industries, firms, universities and historic sites across a selection of provinces. Among Asianist scholars from several African countries including South Africa, Nigeria and Botswana Dr. Amoah was unanimously chosen as head of the delegation and represented the team in high level interactions with some of China's leading scholars and senior officials.

Dr. Amoah also represented CAS at the 10th International Convention for Asian Scholars(ICAS) meeting which place in ChiangMai,



Thailand, 20-23 July, 2017.

CAS Adjunct Researchers

Our work is supported by a team of adjunct researchers who share their expertise with us on our projects. Below is the updated list of our adjunct researchers:

Dr. Seidu Alidu, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana.

Dr. Kwesi D.L.S. Prah, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China.

Dr. Nene-Lomotey Kuditchar, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana.

Mr. Jay Jangho Park, Consulant, Crimson Park Partners, Seoul, Korea.

Dr. Seyram Avle, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA.

Dr. Kojo Odoom, University of Alberta, Alberta, Canada

Dr. Jemima Yakaah Amoah, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana.

Ms. Zahra Baitie, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China.

CAS MoUs

CAS has worked this year on deepening our international networks with other Asianist institutions. CAS through the University of Ghana has MOUs with the following organizations:

i. International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) based in Leiden, the Netherlands

ii the Korean Africa Centre in Seoul, Korea.

iii. KyungHee University

iv. CAS facilitated an MoU with Aarhus University(through its Faculty of Arts which has a well-established Asia programme) and the University of Ghana).

GRANTS

a. **ANDREW M. MELLON FOUNDATION**

CAS won a research grant from the prestigious Andrew M. Mellon Foundation. We thank the Mellon Foundation for this critical support.

This financial support forms 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 grant offers CAS close to \$45,000.00 to conduct groundbreaking research on Ghana-Korea relations over a four year period. The Research Team will be led by CAS's Dr. Lloyd G. Adu Amoah who is the Principal Investigator.

CAS extends its deepest

appreciation to the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Prof Samuel Kwame Offei and Prof. Samuel Agyei-Mensah (Provost of the College of Humanities) for their great leadership and all our hardworking colleagues at the various units of UG for their collegiality and camaraderie as we all worked on the proposals.

b. **NIPPON FOUNDATION**

The NIPPON Foundation, one of Japan's most prestigious organizations selected CAS as a recipient of Japanese writings through its Read Japan "100 books for Understanding Contemporary Japan" project. The letter dated November 17, 2017 and signed by its Chairman Yohei Sasakawa communicated the great news.

Chairman Sasakawa hoped that the " books will

make a most useful addition to your library and that many will be inspired by the information contained in its pages."

The 100 books which have been duly shipped and received were carefully chosen and cover seminal works on Japan in the field of politics, economics, literature, history, the arts and business.

As CAS works hard on its Japan Studies programme these books should prove a useful resource for students and faculty of the Centre and the wider University of Ghana community.

c. **JAPAN FOUNDATION**

The Centre applied for and won another grant from the prestigious Japan Foundation after a rigorous application

process. The grant will support the Centre's Japan Language and Culture Exposure Programme with teaching materials.

We thank Henry Adjei and Yuko Yamabayashi for their extensive contributions via the running the programme as volunteers and supporting the grant process with their insights. We thank as well the Japan Embassy in Accra for their keen support.

We thank too Dr. Bossman Asare(Head of Department, Political Science) for supporting the Programme so generously at its difficult inception.

d. KOREA FOUNDATION

CAS applied for and won the Korea Foundation Grant for Visiting Professors. The grant will finance the visit of the second

Visiting Scholar to join CAS. The Korean Scholar will spend two semesters at the University of Ghana beginning in the 2018/2019 academic year.

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 (*40Years 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.