



BRILL

AFRIKA FOCUS 36 (2023) 149–150

AFRIKA  
FOCUS

brill.com/afoc

## Editorial



Dear readers,

*Africa is the continent of the future*, is what I keep repeating to academics, students, policymakers and civil society staff. I am still convinced this mantra is truthful: many research domains remain unexplored in Africa; there is no other continent where the young population is so eager to progress – an eagerness expressed through creativity, perseverance and sometimes anger; and, of course, based on the level of technological innovation, grassroots entrepreneurship and natural resources too, Africa will be the place to be in the foreseeable future.

Some recent evolutions in Africa are worrisome, although we know that the causes of these evolutions are often linked to geopolitics and external influences. The coups d'état in Niger and Gabon, political struggles in Senegal, controversial gender laws in some East African countries, and the connections of African governments with the Russian leadership in Moscow have been widely picked up by the European media and European political leaders. Suddenly, Europe has begun to realise that Africa is becoming an important player on the world stage. And indeed, all of these developments in Europe's neighbouring continent have a direct – economic and political – impact on European societies. The indirect impact, for instance in the form of increasing migration, has also become more prominent. Europe has to start paying more attention to Africa, as the African continent is becoming more self-conscious, claiming its role in the geopolitical constellation and demanding a rapid decolonisation of world politics.

*Afrika Focus* may play only an insignificant role in the empowerment of Africa. But still, the editorial board is proud that we can offer a publication channel to emerging scholars, predominantly from the African continent, thus assisting them to build their academic careers. Since the beginning of 2023, *Afrika Focus* has been indexed by Scopus, which makes publishing in the journal even more valuable to international scholars. This decision by Scopus

can be seen as a recognition of the academic quality of the journal, and of the professional approach offered by the editorial team, in collaboration with publishing house Brill.

The editors are therefore very pleased, and of course proud, to present to you this new issue of *Afrika Focus*, issue 36:2. The article by Inge Brinkman, “Knowledge is Power: Politics and Formal Education in the Sixteenth-Century Kongo Kingdom”, discusses the school system in the sixteenth-century Kongo kingdom and gives us some unique insights into its global connectedness. The text by Stuart Garfield Strauss, “Exploring the Language and Literacy Challenges of Entry-Level Education Students and Experienced Teachers at a South African University: A Stance-Taking Analysis”, takes us to the post-apartheid South African education system to explore ongoing challenges related to poor literacy in the classroom. Robin Jilesen and Marc Wegerif’s article, “Climate, Environment and Migration: Experiences of Migrants in South Africa”, examines the impacts of climate- and environment-related adversity on migration to South Africa from other sub-Saharan African countries. Dap Louw and Christa Beyers’ research is also located in South Africa: their article, “Exploring Negative Teacher Behaviour towards Learners: The Long Term Psycho-Emotional Effects”, discusses the influence of South African teachers on a child’s psycho-emotional development. The article by Mahlompho Talasi and Vusilizwe Thebe, “*Basali ba lifemeng*’: Gender Stereotyping and the Low Absorption of Male Labour in Lesotho’s Textile Industry”, explores the reasons behind this historical low absorption rate. Finally, Oluwatoyin Bukola Chete’s text, “Rural Youth Involvement in Oil Palm (*Elaeis guineensis* Jacq) Processing in Okitipupa Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria”, takes us to a different academic domain – the study investigates rural youth involvement in oil palm processing in Okitipupa in Nigeria, thus combining agricultural and social research. A number of reports – summaries of PhDs on Africa defended at Ghent University, and one tribute to Breyten Breytenbach’s involvement in the Gorée Institute in Dakar – complete this issue of *Afrika Focus*.

In conclusion, scholarship on and in partnership with Africa is booming, and the editors are delighted that this journal is increasingly used as an international publication forum for all these types of fascinating research. Please enjoy this new edition of *Afrika Focus*.

*Annelies Verdoolaege* | ORCID: 0000-0002-4568-7753

Chief Editor

*Annelies.Verdoolaege@UGent.be*