This term’s seminars will be take place every other Wednesday, 1-2.30 pm in the IAS Common Ground room, ground floor of the Wilkins building, South Wing.

11th October  

**Murray Last (UCL Anthropology)**

The economics of insurgencies in pre- and post-colonial northern Nigeria

Insurgencies, whether pre-colonial or post-colonial, require cash – without it, markets are closed to the insurgents; the grass-roots, so essential to an insurgency, turn against men (and their families) who, in their desperation for food, steal rather than buy. Yet insurgents are rarely rich: radical ideologies, unproven by victory (yet?), are not great money-spinners, at least not in northern Nigeria. And a skint preacher, no matter how charismatic, can’t always attract enough of the tough men he needs if he is to win.

In this seminar I will discuss some of the ways money has been raised, both in the 19th century *jihad* of Shaikh ‘Uthman dan Fodio and in today’s northeastern Nigeria. In both instances, there is currently a huge problem with data: insurgent accountants may have been there, but their notes tend not to survive.
Markku Hokkanen (University of Oulu)

Quinine, malarial fevers and mobility in South-Central Africa: a biography of ‘European fetish’, 1859-1949
1st November

Keren Weitzberg (UCL History)

Political work beyond the archives: poetry and the making of nationalism on the Kenya/Somali borderlands

Photograph: Courtesy of Deghow Maalim Stamboul
22nd November

Wolde Tadesse & Elizabeth Ewart (University of Oxford)

Sustaining one another: enset, animals, and people in the southern highlands of Ethiopia

Enset (ensete ventricosum; Abyssinian banana), uniquely domesticated in Ethiopia, sustains upwards of 20 million people in southern Ethiopia. It also feeds a sizeable animal population and is in turn nurtured by both animals and people.

In this paper we trace some of the relations of co-dependence and mutual sustenance that characterize enset within Ethiopian highland agricultural systems. We further suggest that the idea of ‘sustenance’ be expanded beyond idioms of food and feeding, to incorporate aesthetics as well as relations to the earth and land.
6th December

Elaine Unterhalter (UCL IoE)

Higher education & the public good in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria & South Africa – A comparative perspective

Photograph: Matthew Davies

* Exceptionally, the seminar on 25th October will take place in seminar room 19, 1st floor of the IAS in the Wilkins building.

This seminar series is convened by the African Studies Research Centre/IAS:
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Prof. Megan Vaughan (megan.vaughan@ucl.ac.uk)

ALL WELCOME