

Professor Olivette OTELE, PhD, FRHistS, FLSW

School of Oriental and Africa studies

Faculty of Law

Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square

London WC1H 0XG

United Kingdom

oo10@soas.ac.uk

HistorianMemory@gmail.com

CAREER

Distinguished Research Professor of the Legacies and Memory of Slavery, SOAS University of London, UK (2022 -)

Professor of History and Memory of Slavery, University of Bristol, UK (2020-2022).

Professor and Chair in History, Bath Spa University, UK (2018-2020).

Reader in History, Bath Spa University (2016-2018).

Senior Lecturer in History, Bath Spa University (2013-2016).

Associate Professor in British and French Imperial History, Université Paris XIII, France. (2007-2013).

Part-time Lecturer in Modern French and British Political and Religious History, Institut Catholique de Paris, France (2006-2007).

Part-time Teaching Fellow in European Colonial, Early Modern Social History and in History of British and American Feminism, Bath Spa University (2006-2007).

Post-Doctoral Fellow, University of Paris XII, France (2005-2006).

Black and Minority Ethnic Project Officer, Charter Housing Association, post funded by the National Assembly of Wales, UK (2003-2005).

Lecturer in Modern French History, Politics, Culture and Language University of Hull, England (2001-2002).

Teaching Assistant (French), Llantarnam School Cwmbran, Wales (1999-2000).

EDUCATION

PhD in History: Université La Sorbonne, Paris (2001-2005).

DEA (Diplôme d'études approfondies), Government sanctioned Master of Advanced Studies, until 2005, was required to enrol for a PhD in France (2000-2001).

MA in British Colonial History, Université La Sorbonne (1999-2000).

Joint Honours BA in American and British Literature and History, Université La Sorbonne (1996-1999).

LANGUAGES

Fluent: French, English and Fang-Beti Languages which are three languages spoken in Cameroon, Equatorial Guinee and Gabon. Basic level: Spanish.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Professional Societies, Funding Bodies and Heritage Sector

Research Committee Member, British Museum (2020-).

Research Committee Member, Victoria and Albert Museum (2019-).

Research Committee Member of La Fondation pour la memoire de l'esclavage (2020-)

Vice President, Royal Historical Society (2019-2022).

Member, Strategic Advisory Group for Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre (2019-2021).

Committee Member, Society for the Study of French History, (2018-2021).

Member, Strategic Advisory Group for the Global Challenges Research Fund, Arts and Humanities Research Council (2018-2021).

Grant and Peer Reviewer

European Commission, Expert Evaluator, Horizon 2020 (2017-2021), peer reviewer of Marie Curie Fellowships and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research and Innovation Staff Exchange Evaluations (MSCA-RISE) projects.

Peer Reviewer, UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (2018-2021).

Member of the UK's Overseas Development Assistance College and Reviewer Global Challenges Research Fund applications (2018-2021).

Editorial board member, *Journal of Global History*, CUP (2020-)

National and International Honours

Honouris Causa: Doctor of Laws, University of Concordia, Canada (2022)

Chair of Judges: Hessel-Tiltmann Book Prize (2022)

Judge of International Man Booker Prize (2021)

Ambassador The UK National Archives Trust (2021-).

Since 2007, I have been consulted on the French national examinations for future civil servants and school textbooks. Honorific yearly invitation from the Overseas Minister and the President of the Senate on behalf of the President of the Republic for the official commemoration of the abolition of slavery, Jardin du Luxembourg, Paris.

Community and City Roles

Chair of Bristol Commission of Racial Equality (2020-2022)

Deputy Chair of Pillgwenlly Local Partnership Board under the umbrella of Community First, (2003-2005).

Consultant, South Wales Racial Equality Council (2003-2013).

Member of Newport and District Refugee Group, UK (2004-2005).

MAJOR RESEARCH GRANTS

European Commission: H2020-MSC-RISE, SLAFNET. 1,107,000 Euros (September 2017-September 2020). Major research project creating a pioneering collaborative team of African and European academics and students on 'Slavery in Africa: A Dialogue between Europe and Africa'. Lead investigator on the theme of Understanding Citizenship, Marginalization and Injustices in Post-Slavery Societies in Europe and Africa (Work Package 1, <http://bit.ly/2hPAQUI>).

AHRC (UK) and LABEX (France) joint grant, £79,794 (March 2016-March 2019). One of five Co-Investigators from Britain and France. My case study 'Telling One's Story, Redefining Collective Memory: The Challenges of African Refugees and Migrants in 21st Century Europe' received £10,000.

AHRC Networking Grant, £24,022, Principal investigator (May 2017-October 2018).

On the theme of 'People of African Descent in the 21st Century: Knowledge and Cultural Production in Reluctant Sites of Memory'.

Galen Funds, Huron University, Canada, 12,000 CAD annually since September 2016. Joint Principal Investigator for this Canadian-UK project on 'Phantoms of the Past' to facilitate exchanges between undergraduates, postgraduates and staff.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1,000,000 CAD (2007-2012). I was a European Collaborator on *The Promised Land Project: The Freedom Experience of Blacks in Chatham and Dawn Settlements*, led by the Community University Research Alliance. Final report: <http://artsites.uottawa.ca/lamacs/doc/LAMACS-PLP-Report.pdf>.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Books

African-Europeans: An Untold History (Hurst, 2020) is a major reassessment of the African presence in Europe. 288p. Now translated into French, Italian, German, Portuguese and Portuguese. Published in paperback in the US in August 2023.

Missing Memorials and Absent Bodies: Negotiating Post-conflict Memorialisation, L. Gandolfo, O. Otele., Y. Galai, eds (Palgrave, 2021). The volume is about Memory, Trauma, Memorialisation and Recovery. 274p.

Does Discrimination Shape Identity? Identity, Politics and Minorities in the English-Speaking World and in France: Rhetoric and Reality. Special issue of *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, O. Otele and R. Latrache, eds (Routledge, 2011). 120p.

Histoire de l'esclavage britannique: des origines de la traite transatlantique aux premisses de la colonisation (Editions Michel Houdiard, 2008). 234p.

Reports

Principal Investigator: *The University of Bristol: Our History and the Legacies of Slavery* (2022)

<https://bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/university/documents/university-of-bristol-legacies-of-slavery-report.pdf> 32p.

Task Force Member: *The Slave Trade and the British Empire: an Audit of Commemoration Wales* (2020), co-written as a member of the Task and Finish Group and the first such report for the Welsh Government. 133p.

[The Slave Trade and the British Empire: an audit of commemoration in Wales | GOV.WALES](#)

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

2022

'Moving up North: Disrupted Histories of the Black Mediterranean' in *Disrupted Histories, Recovered Pasts: A Cross-Disciplinary Analysis and Cross-Case Synthesis of Oral Histories And History in Post-Conflict and Postcolonial Contexts*, Eds S. Sullivan, M. Baussant, L. Dodd, O. Otele, I. Dos Santos. <https://journals.openedition.org/cm/5211>

2021

'Mourning in Reluctant Sites of Memory: From Afrophobia to Cultural Productivity', *Missing Memorials and Absent Bodies: Negotiating Post-conflict Memorialisation*, L. Gandolfo, O. Otele, Y. Galai, eds (Palgrave, 2021), pp.35-54.

2019

'Guerrilla Arts in Brexit Britain', in A. Rasch and S. Ward, eds, *Embers of Empire* (Bloomsbury, 2019), pp.133-142.

2018

'Colston: What Britain Can Learn from France', in *Rhodes Must Fall*, Rhodes Must Fall collective, eds (Zed Books, 2018), pp.174-178.

“Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité”: Debunking the Myth of Egalitarianism in French Education', in *Unsettling Eurocentrism in the Westernized*, J. Cupples and R. Grosfoguel, eds (Routledge, 2018), pp.221-234.

2017

'History of Slavery, Sites of memory, and Identity Politics in Contemporary Britain', in *The States of Memory: International Comparative Perspectives*, A. Gueye, J. Michel, eds (Africa World Press, 2017), pp. 189-210.

2014

'Resisting Imperial Governance in Canada: From Trade and Religious Kinship to Black Narrative Pedagogy in Ontario', in *The Promised Land: History and Historiography of Black Experience in Chatham-Kent's Settlements and Beyond*, in B. de B'éri, N. Reid-Maroney, H. Wright, eds, African Diasporic Cultural Studies Series (University of Toronto Press, 2014), pp.131-148.

2012

'Bristol, Slavery and the Politics of Representation: The Slave Trade Gallery in the Bristol Museum', in *The Cultural Politics of Memory Social Semiotics*, 22.2 (2012): pp.155-172.

2010

'Dependance, pouvoir et identite ou les ambiguites de la 'camerounicite'', in *Cinquante ans apres, quelle independance pour l'Afrique?* Gassama Makhily, ed., (Editions Philippe Rey: Paris, 2010), pp.467-482.

2009

'British Slavers against Abolition', in *Aspects du debat sur l'abolition de l'esclavage en Grande-Bretagne, 1787-1840*, *Revue francaise de civilisation britannique*, 15.1 (2009): pp.161-175.

'Religion and Slavery: A Powerful Weapon for Pro-Slavery and Abolitionist Campaigners', in *Le Debat Sur l'Abolition de l'Esclavage en Grande Bretagne 1787-1840*, F. Lejeune, M. Prum, eds (Editions Ellipses: Paris, 2008), pp.89-102.

'Liverpool dans la traite transatlantique : Imperatifs et pratiques des peres de la cite', in *Villes portuaires, du commerce triangulaire a l'abolition de l'esclavage*, Eric Saunier ed., Cahiers de l'histoire et des memoires de la traite negriere (Universite du Havre et Ville du Havre, 2009), pp.57-70.

2008

'Within and Outside Western Feminism and Grand Narratives: Cameroonian Women's Sites of Resistance', in *Nationalism(s), Postnationalism(s)*, M. Piquet, D. Gilfedder, eds, (Presses de Paris-Dauphine: Paris, 2008), pp.119-128.

'Bridewealth and Power: The Struggle of Ewondo Women against a few Traditional Praxes in Cameroon', in *Cultures of the Commonwealth*, 14 (2008): pp.27-36.

'Multiculturalisme et regionalisme: les apories d'une identité britannique au pays de Galles', in *Le New Labour et l'identité britannique*, *Observatoire De La Société Britannique*, 5 (2008):49-64.

2007

'Les ports de Bristol et Liverpool et la traite atlantique', in *Les Ports et la traite négrière*, (Cahiers des Anneaux de la Mémoire : Nantes, 2007), pp.215-234.

2007

'Scientific Racism: A Bi-product of the Slave Trade?', in *Sciences and Races*, G. Teulie, ed. (Presses Universitaires de Montpellier, 2007), pp.435-455.

'Seamen in Bristol and the Lure of Slaving Voyages', in *Transport(s) in the British Empire and the Commonwealth*, M. Lurdos and J. Misrahi-Barak, eds, *Les Carnets du Cerpac*, N.4 (Université Paul-Valéry-Montpellier: Montpellier 2007), pp. 145-156.

2006

'L'Ouganda et l'Arme de Résistance du Seigneur ou les implications politiques et religieuses d'une guerre sainte en Afrique noire', in *Religious Writings and War in Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth*, G. Teulie, J. Misrahi-Barak, eds., *Les Carnets du Cerpac*, N.3, (Université Paul-Valéry-Montpellier: Montpellier 2006), pp. 369-389.

2005

'Bristol et le commerce triangulaire: schizophrénie et enjeux de la mémoire collective', in *Violence d'état, parole libératrice et colonialisme*, E. Hanquart-Turner, ed. (Editions A3: Paris, 2005), pp.69-84.

DISTINGUISHED LECTURES AND INTERNATIONAL KEYNOTES

2023

'A past that keeps on giving: Britain's colonial and post-colonial amnesia', University of British Columbia.

2022

Honorary Doctorate Speech, Concordia University

<https://www.concordia.ca/graduation-convocation/honorary-doctorates/spring-2022/otele.html>

2021

'Women's History: The Future', The Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford

Followed by Address by Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton, 67th United States Secretary of State.

2020

London Mayoral invitation: keynote for UNESCO's Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, chaired by Sadiq Khan.

2019

Gresham College, Black History Month event series: 'Slavery, Memory and Reparations'.

Society for the Study of French, 'Race Matters: Education, Identity, Citizenship and Post-Colonial Memories in 21st Century France'.

Social History Society conference keynote, 'Transnational History and Cultural Memory'.

British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies annual conference, 'Remembering, Forgetting and Memorialising Histories in Contemporary Europe'.

2018

'Memorias manipuladas y desafíos políticos: la cuestión de la esclavitud en Gran Bretaña y en Francia', International Conference on *Mémoire et commémoration: une perspective critique*, organised by French Embassy in Mexico, the University Ibéroamericana and El Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, Mexico City.

Garrison Library, Gibraltar: *Embers of Empire in Brexit Britain*. Co-organised and sponsored by the University of Copenhagen.

'How Historians Address the Legacy of Colonialism?', Historians without Borders annual conference, Johannesburg.

2016

'Mourning in Reluctant Sites of Memory: From Afrophobia to Cultural Productivity', Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam.

'Africans in Europe and across Continents between 1600-1900', V&A, London.

'Historicising Afro-European Experiences', for the Royal African Society and Royal African Society & UCL African Studies Research Centre.

2015

'Black Europeans: Memory and Identity Politics', International conference, *On Memory*, EHESS, Paris.

PUBLIC HISTORY

Television, Radio and Media

I have made extensive international media appearances including, but not limited to, the BBC (World, UK, Africa), Sky News, *HuffPost UK*, *Times HE*, *Sunday Times*, *Guardian*, *Times*, *The Voice*, *La Stampa (Italy)*, *Radio France*, *Jeune Afrique*, *The New Yorker*, *CNN*, *El Pais (Spain)*, *La Vanguardian (Spain)*, etc.

I have also contributed to several podcast, documentaries and film.
Film, *Chevalier* (Dir Stephen Williams), 2023

Netflix & Jada Pinkett-Smith documentary *African Queens*, 2023
<https://www.netflix.com/gb/title/81650731>

Selective list:

British Museum [Podcast](#): A conversation with Hartwig Fischer, Sushma Jansari and Bonnie Greer about Museums, History and Storytelling, 2022

Channel 4: [Summer of contest](#), October 2020

BBC, Start the Week: [Contested Histories](#), October 2020

Channel 4: [Warrior Women](#), October 2019

BBC, *Alt History*: ['A Forgotten Regiment'](#), June 2019

BBC World Service: ['Robinson Crusoe: The Man and his Island'](#), January 2019

BBC History Magazine, [Diversity in History](#), podcast (January 2019).

BBC History Magazine podcast: [100 Women Who Changed The World](#) (August 2018).

BBC Radio 4: [Open Book](#), Chalke Valley History Festival (July 2017).

BBC Radio 4: [Making History](#), 'A Taste of Bordeaux in Bristol' (July 2017).

Dan Snow's [History Hits](#) at Gloucester History Festival, September 2017.

France24 (TV): ['Radicalisation](#): What can we do to reverse what is becoming a trend?' (March 2016).

'L'esclavage dans les colonies françaises 1802-1848', documentary about French transatlantic slavery. Directed by D. Roten (2008).

Nassau Island Radio FM 102.9 about The Promised Land Project, in Sunday Conversation (February 2008).

Chin Radio International, Ottawa 97.5 FM: African Diaspora in Canada and abroad, in Nexus Africa on (December 2008).

Radio France International: four part series [British Transatlantic Slave Trade](#), Abolition and Commemoration of the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Trade (2006-2007).

Press

Guardian: ['More than money, the logic of slavery reparations'](#) (March 2023)

Guardian: '[Roy Hackett was a civil rights hero](#)' (August 2022)
Guardian: '[Black Activism](#)' (October 2020)
Guardian: '[Anti-racism protests](#)' (June 2020)
Sunday Times: '[The anti-racist books everyone should read](#)' (June 2020)
Guardian: '[We need to talk about slavery](#)' (November 2019)
BBC History Extra and World Histories, '[Should Museums Return their Treasures](#)' (March 2019).
BBC History Magazine, '[Do We Need To Decolonise History?](#)' (March 2019).
Slavery and Visual Memory: What Britain can Learn from France', [Open Democracy](#) (29 August 2019).
BBC History Magazine, '[100 who changed the world](#)' (August 2018)
'Re-branding the Trauma of Slavery, or How to Pacify the Masses with Sites of Memory', *Sociology and Social Policy*, [Discover Society](#) (3 June 2015).
BBC History Magazine, review of David Olusoga's *Black and British: A Forgotten History* (December 2017).
BBC World Histories, 'Should we Judge People of the Past by Today's Morality?' (October 2017).

Public Talks (selective list)

2023

Senedd: Black History Month Lecture 2023, *Foremothers*.
University of British Columbia, Canada; Rutgers University (USA), Vienna Public Library, Newbury Library (Chicago), University of Barcelona, National Gallery (UK), Festival Monde en Vues (Guadeloupe, French Caribbean).

Edinburgh Literary Festival: conversations with literary prize winners and writers, Esi Edugyan, Tsitsi Dangaremba, Howard French, Philippe Sands and Dito Faloyin
Edinburgh History Festival in conversation with Angela Saini and Anita Sethi: 'Race Science and Slavery', **2020**.

'Black History Month, Scholarly Activism and the Power of Cross-Community Histories', *St John's College, University of Oxford* (October **2018**).

Gloucester History Festival, Bristol, the Slave Trade and the Legacies (September, **2018**).

Bath Festival, in conversation with David Olusoga at the Assembly Rooms (May **2018**).