



An International Symposium
On African Development

AFRICA AFTER THE END OF HISTORY

October
22-23, 2026
Smith Campus
Center 201



With support from the International Relations Program, the Center for Global Engagement, the Dean of the College, the Office of the President, the Politics Department, and the Benton Museum of Art.



Foreword

Welcome to *Africa After the End of History*, a symposium hosted by **Pomona College**, bringing together Africanist scholars from Africa, Europe, Canada and the United States, as well as students from **the Claremont Colleges**.

In 1989, Francis Fukuyama suggested that the world was **converging towards liberal democracy**, a political system that could not be improved upon and that therefore marked **the end point of History**. In many ways, Fukuyama's vision of modernization structured the participation of African countries in the world system over the following decades: democracy promotion, foreign aid, support for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and accountable extractive industries became the norm.

More than 35 years later, **the rules-based international order is in retreat** and **History is very much on the march again**: liberal democracy is eroding around the world and is no longer a condition of Western assistance to Africa; sovereignty is both weakened internationally and invoked by repressive African regimes to justify their authoritarianism; foreign aid is in decline; non-Western powers vie for influence on the continent; and primary commodities once again attract unbridled foreign interest in a **new “scramble for Africa.”**

In this symposium, participants ask **how the new world system is affecting African countries** from the perspectives of democracy, development, sovereignty, and scholarship. Is what we thought we knew about African development still valid? Where did we go wrong? What has changed? Do we need new theories?



Foreword

Four panels over the course of one day will address these questions through presentations from the scholars and Q&A sessions. In addition, students in Pomona College's course **"Politics 189L: Africa After the End of History"** will present research posters illustrating or engaging with cases and arguments made in the scholars' essays. We invite you to explore the posters throughout the day.

You are also invited to an Africa-focused, student-curated art exhibit hosted and organized by Pomona's **Benton Museum of Art**, opening at 4.00 p.m. on Thursday, October 22, as well as to an *Africa's Got Talent* performance presented by the **African Students Association** on Friday, October 23, at 7.30 p.m. in the courtyard of the Benton Museum.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for the generous support of Pomona College's **International Relations** program, the **Center for Global Engagement**, the **Office of the President** and the **Dean of the College**. We are also grateful to the **Benton Museum** for its hospitality, its programmatic assistance, and its support and guidance for the student-curated exhibit.

Finally, we wish to single out the hard, efficient, and gracious work of **Priscila Alcantara** from the Politics Department, **Courtney Derrico** from the Center for Global Engagement and **Utku Özgür** from the Class of 2029.

Catherine Boone

London School of Economics

Pierre Englebert

Pomona College

Co-Conveners



Schedule

Thursday, October 22

Benton Museum of Art

4.00 - 6.00 PM	Exhibition
6.00 - 7.00 PM	Reception
7.00 - 9.00 PM	Dinner

Friday, October 23

Smith Campus Center, Hart Room 201

8.00 AM	Breakfast
8.30 - 8.40 AM	Introduction and Welcome
8.40 - 10.20 AM	Panel 1: Global Shifts and Domestic Politics: Liberal Democracy's Decline
10.50 AM - 12.30 PM	Panel 2: Changing Patterns of Development and Political Economy
1.30 - 3.10 PM	Panel 3: International Relations and New Sovereigntist Claims
3.40 - 4.50 PM	Panel 4: Epistemology, Scholarship and Knowledge Production
4.50 - 5.20 PM	Wrap Up and Conclusion
5.30 - 6.00 PM	Reception at the Benton Museum of Art
6.00 - 7.30 PM	Dinner at the Benton Museum of Art
7.30 - 9.00 PM	Africa's Got Talent Student Performance



Global Shifts and Domestic Politics: Liberal Democracy's Decline

Friday, October 23 | 8.40-10.20 AM | Smith Campus Center Hart Room 201

Chair: **Catherine Boone, London School of Economics**

Africa After the Authoritarian Turn: Global Realignments,
Domestic Contestation and Shifting Political Subjectivities

Nic Cheeseman, University of Birmingham

The Sahel at the End of the Road: Fragmented Futures

Leonardo Villalón, University of Florida

Women's Rights Agenda in Africa and the New World Order

Aili Tripp, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Unravelling the Complete Gentleman: Incompleteness, Mobile
Juju, and Frontier Democracies After the 'End of History'

Francis Nyamnjoh, University of Cape Town

(Paper submitted *in absentia*)



Changing Patterns of Development and Political Economy

Friday, October 23 | 10.50 AM - 12.30 PM | Smith Campus Center Hart Room 201

Chair: **Mamoudou Gazibo, Université de Montréal**

On the Lack of Liberal Convergence in Post-Cold War Africa

Utku Özgür and Pierre Englebert, Pomona College

Emergence: Statism After the End of the Western

Developmentalist Paradigm

Catherine Boone, London School of Economics

Africa's National Political Economies and its Transnational Elites

Anne Pitcher, University of Michigan

Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, CERI Sciences Po

Global Shocks and Strategic Choices in African Development:

Multiple Pathways, Multiple Outcomes?

Peter Lewis, Johns Hopkins University



International Relations and New Sovereigntist Claims

Friday, October 23 | 1.30 - 3.10 PM | Smith Campus Center Hart Room 201

Chair: **Pierre Englebert, Pomona College**

African Sovereignty at a Crossroads: Global Restructuring,
Intervention Failures, and the Reassertion of Strategic Agency

Jessica Piombo, Naval Postgraduate School

Africa and the International System

William Reno, Northwestern University

Africa's Surprising Assertiveness After the End of History

Mamoudou Gazibo, Université de Montréal

Examining Varieties of Sovereigntism in the Sahel

Jaimie Bleck, Lehigh University

Alexander Thurston, University of Cincinnati

Beyond the Third Wave: Coups, Praetorian Populism and
the Future of African Democracy

Sebastian Elischer, University of Florida



Epistemology, Scholarship and Knowledge Production

Friday, October 23 | 3.40 - 4.50 PM | Smith Campus Center Hart Room 201

Chair: **Aili Tripp, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

African(ist) Knowledge Production After the End of History

Zachariah Mampilly, City University of New York

The Pretend of Consistency: African Politics and African AI Sovereignty

Mareike Schomerus, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics

Political Culture and African Politics After the End of History

John Clark, Florida International University

Beyond the Divide: Towards a Middle Ground in Africanist Political Science

Anne Mette Kjaer and Mesharch Katusiimeh, Aarhus University



Africa-Related Collection Display at the Benton Museum of Art

Thursday, October 22 and Friday, October 23 | Benton Museum of Art

Starting at 4 p.m. on Thursday, October 22, and remaining on view until the museum closes on Friday, October 23, students in **Politics 189L: Africa After the End of History** will display **Africa-related objects from the museum's collection** that they have individually curated with guidance from **Solomon Salim Moore**, Academic Curator. Come and read the object labels the students have written and explore the connections they have drawn between the pieces and the symposium's themes.

On Thursday and Friday evenings, the Benton Museum's courtyard and Pavilion will also **host the symposium's opening and closing receptions and dinners**, reserved for conference participants and invited guests. After dinner on October 23, the **African Students Association** will present ***Africa's Got Talent***, open to the public, in the Benton's courtyard.

As a teaching museum, Pomona College's **Benton Museum of Art** cultivates rigorous collaboration with the Pomona College community to create **compelling and innovative art experiences** within a welcoming environment. The symposium's co-conveners express their gratitude to the staff and leadership of the Benton Museum, including **Justine Bae Bias**, **Victoria Sancho Lobis**, **Solomon Salim Moore** and **Nilofar Naraghi**.



Student Poster Presentations

Students enrolled in **“POLI 189: Africa After the End of History”** explore the symposium’s central questions through **posters examining African societies and states in a changing world order**. The posters listed below will be on display in the **Smith Campus Center Hart Room 201** for the duration of the symposium.

The Implications of Capital Flight on Development

Elias P. L. Bartolomeu, International Relations, Pomona College, Class of 2028

Ghana: A Model of Emergence?

Charlotte L. Patel, Politics and Economics, Pomona College, Class of 2028

Exported Costs and the Limits of the Public Veto: Two Kenyan Foreign Policy Decisions

Sinan Walji, International Relations, Pomona College, Class of 2028

Who’s Really in Charge? Fano and the Question of Ethiopian Sovereignty

Mahbuba Mohammed, International Relations, Pomona College, Class of 2028

Powering Diversification or Financing Dependence? The Case of Zambia

Roystone Varuma, Financial Economics, Claremont McKenna College, Class of 2028

Sovereignty After the End of History: Self-Determination, Secession and the Politics of Recognition in Africa

Utku Özgür, Politics and History, Pomona College, Class of 2029



Student Poster Presentations

African Youth *Before* the End of History

Carson Heaney, PPA-Politics, Pomona College, Class of 2028

Diverging Trajectories: Digital Growth in Africa

Oak Jarvis, PPE-Politics, Pomona College, Class of 2028

From Hashtags To The Streets

Abigail Homan, Economics, Pomona College, Class of 2027

Beyond Western Democracy: Rwanda and the Limits of Cultural Difference

Mujeebat Gbolahan, Anthropology and Politics, Pomona College, Class of 2027

Negotiations in the New World Order: DRC-China Sicomines Contracts

Nyakiriri Kanefu, Economics, Pomona College, Class of 2027

Aid Cuts and Women's Rights in the DRC

Julia R. Scott, Political Studies, Pitzer College, Class of 2027

Africa's Lack of Democratization and the International Liberal Agenda: The Case of Rwanda

Ducquaine Himbaza, International Relations and French, Pomona College, Class of 2027

Storytelling African Values

Amy Weng, International Relations and Public Policy, Claremont McKenna College, Class of 2027

Panel 1 Presenter Biographies

Nic Cheeseman

Nic Cheeseman earned his D.Phil. in Politics from the University of Oxford. He is Professor of Democracy at the University of Birmingham and founding director of its Centre for Elections, Democracy, Accountability and Representation. His research focuses on democracy, elections, development, and authoritarianism, with extensive fieldwork across Africa. His books include *Democracy in Africa: Successes, Failures, and the Struggle for Political Reform*, *How to Rig an Election*, co-authored with Brian Klaas, *Authoritarian Africa: Repression, Resistance, and the Power of Ideas*, co-authored with Jonathan Fisher, and *The Moral Economy of Elections in Africa: Democracy, Voting and Virtue*, co-authored with Gabrielle Lynch and Justin Willis. He previously directed Oxford's African Studies Centre and co-edited *African Affairs*, and is founding editor of the *Oxford Encyclopaedia of African Politics*.

Leonardo Villalón

Leonardo Villalón earned his Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin. He is Professor of Political Science and African Studies, Director of the Center for Latin American Studies, and founder and coordinator of the Sahel Research Group at the University of Florida. His research focuses on religion and politics, democratization, education, and political stability in the African Sahel. He is the author of *Islamic Society and State Power in Senegal: Disciples and Citizens in Fatick*, editor of *The Oxford Handbook of the African Sahel*, and co-editor of *The Fate of Africa's Democratic Experiments: Elites and Institutions* and *The African State at a Critical Juncture: Between Disintegration and Reconfiguration*. He has served as Dean of the International Center and Associate Provost, director of the Center for African Studies, and chair of the board of directors of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers.



Panel 1 Presenter Biographies

Aili Mari Tripp

Aili Mari Tripp earned her Ph.D. in Political Science from Northwestern University. She is the Vilas Research Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research focuses on women and politics, women's movements, authoritarianism, and the informal economy in Africa. Her books include *Women and Politics in Uganda*, *Museveni's Uganda: Paradoxes of Power in a Hybrid Regime*, *Women and Power in Postconflict Africa*, *Seeking Legitimacy: Why Arab Autocracies Adopt Women's Rights*, and *Why African Autocracies Promote Women as Leaders*. She has served as president of the African Studies Association, vice president of the American Political Science Association, and a co-editor of the *American Political Science Review*.



Panel 2 Presenter Biographies

Pierre Englebert

Pierre Englebert earned his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. He is the H. Russell Smith Professor of International Relations and Professor of Politics at Pomona College, a Center for Global Engagement Faculty Fellow, and a member of the Global Pomona Council, and has served as Associate Dean of the College. His research focuses on African sovereignty, state legitimacy, and political and economic development, particularly in Francophone West and Central Africa. His books include *State Legitimacy and Development in Africa*, *Africa: Unity, Sovereignty, and Sorrow*, and *Inside African Politics*, co-authored with Kevin C. Dunn. He also co-edited *Secessionism in African Politics: Aspiration, Grievance, Performance, Disenchantment* with Lotje de Vries and Mareike Schomerus and is a co-convener of the *Africa After the End of History* symposium.

Utku Özgür

Utku Özgür is a sophomore at Pomona College studying Politics and History, with a minor in Economics. He serves as Managing Editor of the *Claremont Journal of International Relations* and Executive Editor of the *Claremont Journal of Law and Public Policy*, where he has published articles on African sovereignty, secessionism, and the Cyprus Dispute. Through Pomona's Summer Undergraduate Research Program, he conducted research with Professor Englebert on state legitimacy and political and economic development in Africa and co-authored *On the Lack of Liberal Convergence in Post-Cold War Africa*. He received the 2026 First-Year Library Undergraduate Research Award from The Claremont Colleges Library for his paper *Revolution or Restoration? Historiographical Perspectives on the Glorious Revolution and the Evolution of English Constitutionalism*.

Panel 2 Presenter Biographies

Catherine Boone

Catherine Boone earned her Ph.D. in Political Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is the Harold Laski Professor of Political Science and Professor of Comparative Politics at the London School of Economics and Political Science, with appointments in Government and International Development. Her research focuses on African political economy, land rights, territorial institutions, and regional inequalities. Her books include *Merchant Capital and the Roots of State Power in Senegal, 1930-1985*, *Political Topographies of the African State: Territorial Authority and Institutional Choice*, *Property and Political Order in Africa: Land Rights and the Structure of Politics*, and *Inequality and Political Cleavage in Africa: Regionalism by Design*. She has served as president of the West African Research Association and secretary of the African Politics Conference Group and is a co-convener of the *Africa After the End of History* symposium.

Peter Lewis

Peter Lewis earned his Ph.D. from Princeton University. He holds the Warren Weinstein Chair of African Studies and serves as Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, where he has directed the Africa Studies programme since 2006. His research and teaching focus on political transitions, governance, and economic development in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Nigeria. His publications include *Growing Apart: Politics and Economic Change in Indonesia and Nigeria* and *Coping with Crisis in African States*, co-edited with John W. Harbeson. He has served as chair of the African Politics Conference Group and Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs at SAIS, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the editorial board of the *Journal of Democracy*.

Panel 2 Presenter Biographies

Anne Pitcher

Anne Pitcher earned her D.Phil. in Politics from the University of Oxford. She is the Joel Samoff Collegiate Professor of Political Science and Afroamerican and African Studies at the University of Michigan and a Research Professor at its Center for Political Studies. She also serves as Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies. Her research focuses on party politics, bureaucratic institutions, urban political economy, and the provision of public goods in Africa. Her books include *Transforming Mozambique: The Politics of Privatization, 1975-2000* and *Party Politics and Economic Reform in Africa's Democracies*. She served as president of the African Studies Association from 2016 to 2017 and co-edits the University of Michigan Press series *African Perspectives* with Kelly Askew.

Ricardo Soares de Oliveira

Ricardo Soares de Oliveira earned his Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge. He is Professor of Political Science at Sciences Po's Centre for International Studies and a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford. His research focuses on African political economy, natural resources, post-colonial statehood, and global financial networks. He is the author of *Oil and Politics in the Gulf of Guinea* and *Magnificent and Beggar Land: Angola Since the Civil War*, and co-editor of *China Returns to Africa: A Rising Power and a Continent Embrace* and *The New Protectorates: International Tutelage and the Making of Liberal States*. He previously served as Professor of the International Politics of Africa at Oxford and joint editor of *African Affairs*, and co-edits the Oxford University Press series *Oxford Studies in African Politics and International Relations*.

Panel 3 Presenter Biographies

Jessica Piombo

Jessica Piombo earned her Ph.D. in Political Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is an Associate Professor in the Institute for Regional and International Security at the Naval Postgraduate School, where she teaches African politics, U.S. foreign policy, comparative politics, and ethnic conflict. Her research focuses on political transitions, peacebuilding, governance after conflict, and international assistance. She is the author of *Institutions, Ethnicity, and Political Mobilization in South Africa*, editor of *The U.S. Military in Africa: Enhancing Security and Development?*, and co-editor of *Interim Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* and *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade*. She has served as vice-chair of the African Politics Conference Group and chair of the faculty at the Naval Postgraduate School.

William Reno

William Reno earned his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin. He is Professor of Political Science and chair of the Department of Political Science at Northwestern University. He also serves as interim director of Northwestern's Program of African Studies, which he previously directed from 2012 to 2018. His research focuses on political violence, state collapse, armed groups, and foreign military assistance, drawing on extensive fieldwork in Africa and the Middle East. His books include *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone*, *Warlord Politics and African States*, and *Warfare in Independent Africa*.

Panel 3 Presenter Biographies

Mamoudou Gazibo

Mamoudou Gazibo earned his doctorate in Political Science from Montesquieu University Bordeaux IV. He is Professor of Political Science at the Université de Montréal. His research focuses on comparative political institutions and democratization in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as China's relations with Africa. His books include *Les paradoxes de la démocratisation en Afrique: Analyse institutionnelle et stratégique*, *Introduction à la politique africaine*, and *Un nouvel ordre mondial made in China?*, co-authored with Roromme Chantal. He served as president of the African Politics Conference Group, the African Politics section of the American Political Science Association, from 2014 to 2016.

Jaimie Bleck

Jaimie Bleck earned her Ph.D. in Government from Cornell University. She is the Bernard L. and Bertha F. Cohen Chair and Professor of International Relations at Lehigh University, having previously taught at the University of Notre Dame. Her research focuses on citizenship, education, civil society, and democratization in Africa, particularly Mali. Her books include *Education and Empowered Citizenship in Mali* and *Electoral Politics in Africa Since 1990: Continuity and Change*, co-authored with Nicolas van de Walle. She received the African Politics Conference Group's Lynne Rienner Award for Best Dissertation in African Politics and is a co-principal investigator of the African Governance Innovations Lab.



Panel 3 Presenter Biographies

Sebastian Elischer

Sebastian Elischer earned his Ph.D. from Jacobs University Bremen. He is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Florida. His research focuses on the relationship between identities and institutions, particularly political parties, ethnicity, political Islam, and democratization in sub-Saharan Africa. His books include *Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation* and *Salafism and Political Order in Africa*. He serves as a co-editor of the *African Studies Review* and has chaired the African Politics Conference Group's Best Book Award committee.

Panel 4 Presenter Biographies

Zachariah Mampilly

Zachariah Mampilly earned his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is the Marx Endowed Chair of International Affairs at Baruch College and a member of the doctoral faculty at the CUNY Graduate Center. His research focuses on rebel governance, popular protest, and violent and nonviolent political movements in Africa and South Asia. His publications include *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*, *Africa Uprising: Popular Protest and Political Change*, co-authored with Adam Branch, and the co-edited volumes *Rebel Governance in Civil Wars* and *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory*. He is a co-founder of the Program on African Social Research and previously served as director of the Africana Studies Program at Vassar College.

Mareike Schomerus

Mareike Schomerus earned her Ph.D. from the London School of Economics and Political Science. She is a Vice President at Busara Center for Behavioral Economics and a visiting lecturer at the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy. Her research focuses on violent conflict, peacebuilding, and behavioral approaches to development, particularly in South Sudan and Uganda. Her books include *The Lord's Resistance Army: Violence and Peacemaking in Africa* and *Lives Amid Violence: Transforming Development in the Wake of Conflict*, and she co-edited *Secessionism in African Politics: Aspiration, Grievance, Performance, Disenchantment*. A former broadcast journalist, she previously directed the Politics and Governance programme and served as research director of the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium at the Overseas Development Institute.

Panel 4 Presenter Biographies

John Clark

John Clark earned his Ph.D. in Foreign Affairs from the University of Virginia. He is Professor of Politics and International Relations at Florida International University. His research focuses on African state-society relations, democratization, and international relations, particularly in Central Africa. His publications include *The Failure of Democracy in the Republic of Congo*, *Africa's International Relations: Balancing Domestic and Global Interests*, co-authored with Beth Elise Whitaker, the edited volume *The African Stakes of the Congo War*, and *Political Reform in Francophone Africa*, co-edited with David E. Gardinier. He served as vice-chair of the African Politics Conference Group from 2007 to 2009 and has chaired Florida International University's Departments of International Relations and Politics and International Relations.

Anne Mette Kjær

Anne Mette Kjær earned her Ph.D. in Political Science from Aarhus University. She is Professor of Political Science at Aarhus University in Denmark. Her research focuses on governance and the political economy of development in East Africa, particularly Uganda. Her books include *Governance, The Politics of African Industrial Policy: A Comparative Perspective*, co-authored with Lindsay Whitfield, Ole Therkildsen, and Lars Buur, and the co-edited volumes *The Politics of Revenue Bargaining in Africa: Triggers, Processes, and Outcomes* and *Perspectives on Politics, Production and Public Administration in Africa: Essays in Honour of Ole Therkildsen*. She has served as chair of Denmark's Development Policy Council and on the boards of the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy and DanChurchAid.



Thank you for joining *Africa After the End of History*.
We are grateful to all participants for contributing to
this exchange and hope that the conversations begun
at Pomona College will continue beyond the
symposium.

With warm regards,

Co-Conveners

Catherine Boone
London School of Economics

Pierre Englebert
Pomona College

Organizers

Priscila Alcantara
Politics Department

Utku Özgür
Pomona College

Courtney Derrico
Center for Global Engagement



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for Global Engagement, the Dean of the College, the Office of the
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