

## CALL FOR PAPERS

**Comparing the Copperbelt: Social history and knowledge production in Central Africa***Conference to be held at St Antony's College, University of Oxford, 11-13 February 2021*

'Comparing the Copperbelt' is an ERC-funded research project, running at the University of Oxford from 2016-2021. The project aims to examine the Copperbelt (in both Zambia and the DR Congo) as a single region divided by a (post-)colonial border, across which flowed minerals, people and ideas. It analyses how academic knowledge production (e.g. by the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute and CEPsi) shaped understanding of Copperbelt societies and it seeks ways to explore Copperbelt political culture and popular perceptions from a historical perspective.

This final project conference, held in conjunction with Oxford's African Studies Centre and Centre for Global History, represents the culmination of the project's research and builds on workshops held in Kitwe in July 2018 and in Lubumbashi in July 2019. It will discuss the region's shared histories and share ideas on social, environmental and cultural history. Research papers from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds (history, anthropology, economics, etc.), approaches and regional focuses are encouraged. Papers that compare the Zambian and Katangese regions are particularly welcome.

Topics to be explored include, but are not limited to:

- New approaches to political culture and activism on the Zambian and Congolese Copperbelt
- Popular perceptions and articulations of social and cultural change e.g. urban spirituality or artistic expression
- The role of knowledge production in understanding and shaping historical and social change
- The relationship between mining societies, political culture and social history including gender, class, generational, ethnic and racial relations
- How the contemporary Copperbelt relates to and memorialises historical change
- The history or contemporary environmental situation on the Zambian and/or Congolese copperbelts

As well as allowing project researchers to share their research insights, this conference will enable participants to learn from other approaches and research experiences in order to advance the study of the Copperbelt region. We particularly welcome submissions from Zambian and Congolese researchers: project funding has been allocated to support the participation of local researchers from the region; we will also facilitate speaker presentations by video link.

The conference will be held in English where possible. Presentations can be made in French and translation will be available.

Paper titles and abstracts of 150-250 words in either English or French should be sent to the organisers at [copperbelt@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:copperbelt@history.ox.ac.uk) by **17 July 2020**. We will then contact successful applicants to make arrangements for travel, accommodation and other logistics. Funding is available for some speakers' travel and accommodation: priority will be given to Congolese and Zambian participants and final decisions on the allocation of this funding will be made at a later date.