

The Online Africa Bibliography

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With the publication of this, the 2012 volume, the online Africa Bibliography will hold just over 88,000 entries, dating from between 1990 and 2012. Nearly 55,000 additional archival entries remain in production, which together promise to enrich the online Bibliography's coverage of the period 1990–96 as well as take it back to 1984 and the origins of the print series. The transition of these records from the printed page to the online database involves a painstaking process – with each entry scanned, copyedited and individually tagged to support searching – but this work is providing a multiplicity of opportunities to enhance the intellectual value of the Bibliography and better achieve, in a contemporary context, the principles on which the Bibliography was launched thirty years ago.

Through this new online iteration the Bibliography has evolved into a tool which is both dynamic and personal, offering each user the ability to query the consolidated collection, generating a list of research material specific to their area of interest, filtered through an established taxonomy applied by a professional bibliographer. That personal bibliography can then be exported to desktop citation management software, emailed or printed, and for many records the user can quickly find the full-text or link up with their institutional library to determine whether they hold a print copy or have access to an online version. The effect has been the rejuvenation of a compendious record of research that otherwise risked falling into obscurity as developing technology rendered the print form of bibliographic indexing restrictive, inefficient and unappealing relative to new options available to the research community. In its new guise the Bibliography is able to deliver that ease of navigation and onward linking now common to a scholar's research experience, whilst preserving the principle of careful, professional, human selection fundamental to the Bibliography's purpose.

Beyond those obvious navigational advantages experienced by the user, the digital platform also offers editorial possibilities which could not have been considered without it. Long-term subscribers will have noted the length of the annual volume, averaging 4,500 entries a decade ago but 5,500 more latterly and, on this occasion, over 6,000 entries, with the addition of several new subject categories. The growth reflects the happy circumstances in which we work; research on Africa is thriving, publication outlets are proliferating, and access to increasingly obscure publications is improving each year. The digital platform has the potential to provide the *Africa Bibliography* with considerable scope to absorb this growth over a long period without the same cost implications, and therefore pricing restrictions, associated with the production and distribution of an expanding print volume. The same technology allows the possibility of more frequent updates, increasing the speed at which publications enter the database and reach the Bibliography's users. The bibliographer is able to continue the work of compiling retrospective additions, researching publications which were originally missed or inaccessible, without the inconvenience of their having to appear in the incorrect print volume. Errors which emerge or are highlighted by users can be quickly resolved without the need for errata or corrigenda. Although the IAI and Cambridge University Press remain committed to producing a print version of the *Africa Bibliography* for as long as demand persists, the database approach is already proving an altogether more flexible and effective medium for delivering the results of the bibliographer's work.

The emergence of data about the Bibliography itself is an interesting by-product of this approach. For the first time ever we are able to read a statistical overview of the Bibliography which includes much (and soon all) of its archive. This new perspective is useful in helping to expose historic gaps in coverage or elements of the taxonomy which

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are under- or over-used. It also provides some fascinating insight into shifting research patterns; geographic regions about which little is published; subjects which are declining or growing in popularity amongst researchers; and the extent to which contemporary events have an impact on research output. There is, in fact, a remarkable degree of consistency over the last fifteen years in the geographic regions which appear most regularly as a theme within the bibliographic record. Publications on Southern Africa and West Africa consistently represent just under 50% of the material recorded, with the former always slightly ahead of the latter. South Africa is always and by a margin the most researched country on the continent, but interest in Nigeria, Ghana and Uganda appears to have steadily increased over the last decade. Conversely publications on Algeria, Mali and the Côte d'Ivoire appear to have declined steadily in number during the same period. The influence of contemporary events might well be attributed to a surge in publications on both Egypt and Libya in 2011, notable interest in Somalia over recent years, and the new emergence of publications expressly focused on South Sudan. As the Bibliography grows at both ends of the chronological spectrum it will continue to provide an increasing wealth of statistical data on the fortunes and fluctuations of African Studies. A selection of the data currently available to us is included as an Appendix.

We remain very much in the midst of this project, focused on the accurate digitisation of further archival material. However, it is gratifying at this early stage to see the speed at which the online *Africa Bibliography* has gathered a following, attracting researchers in 133 different countries, including many on the African continent itself. We very much welcome feedback from users, both on the content, and on the online functionality, as we seek to develop the Bibliography to best serve the needs of the African Studies community.

Appendix

Table 1. *Africa Bibliography records published between 2000 and 2012, broken down by region*

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	%
Southern Africa	1407	1219	1231	1318	1483	1400	1422	1374	1416	1364	1525	1342	984	17485	26.5
West Africa	1155	1010	1023	928	1124	1167	1275	1263	1395	1268	1141	1041	603	14393	21.8
Africa (General)	986	935	929	973	1099	1019	1177	1113	1124	1057	914	843	646	12815	19.4
East Africa	532	498	545	595	528	601	609	613	636	631	632	525	412	7357	11.2
North Africa	399	422	366	338	311	387	303	295	292	276	218	302	193	4102	6.2
Central Africa	275	298	298	281	276	312	289	270	321	229	266	295	159	3569	5.4
Horn of Africa	291	219	394	240	260	275	253	290	263	312	298	257	164	3516	5.3
West Central Africa	145	144	78	142	145	148	161	123	145	124	125	98	44	1622	2.5
Islands	76	112	139	91	84	91	68	75	76	71	60	62	22	1027	1.6
Lusophone Africa*	5	4	5	8	10	2	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	39	0.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>5271</i>	<i>4861</i>	<i>5008</i>	<i>4914</i>	<i>5320</i>	<i>5402</i>	<i>5558</i>	<i>5419</i>	<i>5669</i>	<i>5332</i>	<i>5179</i>	<i>4765</i>	<i>3227</i>	65925	

* The ‘Lusophone Africa’ category appeared as part of the Africa Bibliography until 2009, when it was discontinued due to a diminishing number of entries. The legacy category includes publications which relate to the collected Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa, but does not include publications which take one of the individual countries as their theme. Publications specifically related to Guinea-Bissau appear in the ‘West Africa’ region, Mozambique and Angola in the ‘Central Africa’ region and Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe in the ‘Islands’ region.

Table 2. *Africa Bibliography records published between 2000 and 2012, broken down by country†*

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	%
Non-specific	1399	1279	1397	1947	1486	1393	1550	1439	1471	1443	1304	1174	880	18162	27.5
South Africa	931	842	683	324	1044	986	982	967	1016	991	1105	1011	742	11624	17.6
Nigeria	373	346	351	331	488	490	601	611	705	576	598	522	232	6224	9.4
Kenya	165	147	177	162	158	199	193	220	235	250	197	176	149	2428	3.7
Ghana	217	129	39	155	162	187	182	192	187	185	164	159	124	2082	3.2
Zimbabwe	178	136	169	159	160	152	150	167	138	131	160	139	103	1942	2.9
Ethiopia	156	98	268	112	124	120	99	128	129	135	106	127	76	1678	2.5
Tanzania	137	115	140	131	111	130	140	145	160	126	138	107	87	1667	2.5
Uganda	91	98	89	98	130	140	140	123	138	156	148	125	80	1556	2.4
Egypt	118	99	85	86	78	88	86	84	76	101	74	108	65	1148	1.7
Cameroon	91	84	41	88	111	98	122	100	95	74	83	69	30	1086	1.6
Dem. Rep. of Congo	90	89	85	86	90	87	105	93	92	59	60	84	48	1068	1.6
Sudan	59	54	72	38	63	91	91	102	77	94	102	59	38	940	1.4
Senegal	71	60	74	62	94	70	75	83	85	79	68	43	35	899	1.4
Botswana	65	52	73	77	78	73	96	56	96	62	59	45	38	870	1.3
Algeria	71	86	107	84	81	67	56	61	49	31	29	37	25	784	1.2
Malawi	46	56	67	61	57	65	65	71	64	53	58	65	34	762	1.2
Morocco	66	88	45	59	65	73	45	53	53	68	46	47	40	748	1.1
Rwanda	48	46	42	36	50	46	55	54	39	32	62	50	61	621	0.9
Zambia	58	55	38	34	31	52	50	49	68	45	47	60	22	609	0.9
Namibia	57	52	44	39	46	57	51	53	45	44	61	41	14	604	0.9
Mozambique	50	43	45	52	55	62	47	27	40	37	56	42	31	587	0.9
Mali	64	60	54	39	43	36	32	44	37	35	27	30	24	525	0.8
Madagascar	24	56	71	51	31	33	38	48	36	31	34	41	10	504	0.8
Sierra Leone	24	33	26	40	28	47	43	39	46	33	26	45	25	455	0.7
Côte d'Ivoire	57	30	58	75	38	41	33	25	32	30	24	23	20	449	0.7
Burkina Faso	39	35	39	38	32	26	43	32	28	34	35	28	21	430	0.7
Somalia	39	33	23	34	40	18	27	24	25	32	42	44	20	401	0.6
Tunisia	45	39	31	24	10	36	44	25	28	20	16	29	16	363	0.6
Libya	44	52	35	26	25	34	23	25	24	10	13	30	17	358	0.5
Angola	20	45	44	25	30	25	17	21	44	17	25	22	13	348	0.5
Francophone West Africa†	47	39	44	34	25	25	28	20	15	27	18	15	9	346	0.5

Table 2 (Cont.)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	%
Eritrea	23	24	20	32	26	34	20	21	19	20	13	10	8	270	0.4
Niger	32	28	13	18	16	22	15	12	37	28	9	17	3	250	0.4
Liberia	12	8	15	21	14	31	22	20	25	27	17	19	11	242	0.4
Gambia	12	14	127	6	5	7	12	7	11	9	11	13	3	237	0.4
Lesotho	23	22	22	19	15	18	10	18	24	15	15	13	8	222	0.3
Benin	25	33	10	23	17	15	17	17	14	23	12	9	5	220	0.3
Chad	9	37	68	15	4	17	13	11	9	6	1	2	1	193	0.3
Mauritania	22	22	13	14	12	15	14	18	18	13	4	3	4	172	0.3
Congo (Brazzaville)	20	30	17	16	16	17	13	5	11	8	9	5	3	170	0.3
Mauritius	19	13	12	8	14	22	12	11	17	13	10	8	4	163	0.2
Gabon	7	9	9	14	3	15	16	10	22	28	11	10	8	162	0.2
Maghreb†	14	12	17	17	7	19	8	7	13	7	7	7	4	139	0.2
Guinea	12	12	17	10	18	18	4	11	11	10	9	1	3	136	0.2
Swaziland	8	16	7	9	12	12	8	12	8	13	13	9	7	134	0.2
Burundi	12	13	5	8	13	13	11	14	9	6	13	6	1	124	0.2
Cape Verde	6	20	17	5	5	13	3	4	9	11	10	5	4	112	0.2
Togo	9	13	4	15	11	9	9	7	4	8	8	5	4	106	0.2
Guinea Bissau	11	10	6	13	4	4	12	3	4	12	2	1	4	86	0.1
Sahel†	5	12	4	1	4	11	6	3	5	10	5	5	3	74	0.1
Comoros	14	8	21	6	7	4	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	72	0.1
Central African Republic	9	8	5	11	4	7	5	6	6	5	1	0	1	68	0.1
Western Sahara	8	3	5	3	3	10	6	7	3	4	5	4	0	61	0.1
Réunion	8	3	6	4	8	4	5	3	3	6	3	0	0	53	0.1
Equatorial Guinea	6	6	1	3	5	6	3	2	2	2	1	5	0	42	0.1
São Tomé and Príncipe	3	4	6	4	5	2	2	1	4	1	1	2	0	35	0.1
Mayotte	0	0	0	6	6	6	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	23	0.0
Djibouti	1	2	2	3	0	2	0	2	3	3	2	1	1	22	0.0
Seychelles	1	3	3	3	2	2	1	1	3	0	1	2	0	22	0.0
South Sudan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	6	10	0.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>5271</i>	<i>4861</i>	<i>5008</i>	<i>4914</i>	<i>5320</i>	<i>5402</i>	<i>5558</i>	<i>5419</i>	<i>5669</i>	<i>5332</i>	<i>5179</i>	<i>4765</i>	<i>3227</i>	<i>65925</i>	

† The 'Country' category includes three geopolitical/geoclimatic regions which are not themselves countries but fit most appropriately at this level in the taxonomy. They are Francophone West Africa, the Sahel and the Maghreb.

Table 3. *Africa Bibliography records published between 2000 and 2012, broken down by subject*

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	%
Current Affairs	439	362	378	412	490	456	406	364	407	257	368	311	194	4844	7.3
General	213	214	235	289	334	336	357	354	267	225	220	160	143	3347	5.1
Literature	307	183	231	215	340	226	232	178	260	235	263	326	231	3227	4.9
History, C20th	261	280	287	277	256	272	260	190	174	205	227	210	145	3044	4.6
Medicine & Health	213	167	165	195	202	242	256	264	306	265	262	233	144	2914	4.4
Economics	295	284	238	279	176	210	234	198	243	183	178	191	125	2834	4.3
Politics	221	181	192	222	209	221	213	199	218	295	248	196	210	2825	4.3
Religion – Christianity	190	221	295	194	181	230	207	214	238	212	167	129	102	2580	3.9
History	221	237	187	190	205	244	211	202	207	165	175	153	120	2517	3.8
Med. & Health – HIV/AIDS	64	99	101	136	194	197	247	216	277	239	243	217	180	2410	3.7
Anthropology	218	258	256	151	191	174	254	202	165	194	148	123	62	2396	3.6
Gender	139	138	142	158	146	224	251	244	234	227	143	193	68	2307	3.5
Arts	132	131	136	82	184	122	113	177	181	166	242	171	114	1951	3.0
International Relations	136	153	119	133	184	163	146	99	197	211	166	146	89	1942	2.9
Languages & Linguistics	191	167	153	160	162	116	148	146	196	146	112	113	97	1907	2.9
Education	105	76	85	115	97	139	131	138	186	224	227	158	88	1769	2.7
Law	146	176	145	129	128	133	135	118	108	170	139	94	51	1672	2.5
Environment	140	78	85	145	106	130	147	194	150	109	110	108	64	1566	2.4
Eco. – Development ¹	86	83	74	124	100	112	160	187	173	127	94	66		1386	2.1
Agriculture	83	68	99	83	75	114	91	107	116	89	117	108	64	1214	1.8
Urban Studies	77	73	113	88	75	123	95	110	77	92	95	86	68	1172	1.8
Int. Economic Relations	103	109	90	86	79	77	83	92	105	94	76	51	35	1080	1.6
Libraries	40	69	53	60	74	73	64	98	89	47	63	77	19	825	1.3
History, C19th	82	61	68	71	59	76	59	57	68	74	55	57	24	811	1.2
Biography	39	97	51	74	67	48	71	68	62	37	55	49	36	754	1.1
Education – Higher	76	42	36	45	43	54	74	62	67	107	61	48	32	747	1.1
Religion – Islam	66	57	56	56	71	50	50	68	67	70	49	41	39	740	1.1
Sociology	76	70	54	63	88	60	66	39	34	43	67	37	41	738	1.1
Info. Comm. Technology	28	32	40	34	92	75	68	59	64	73	44	51	31	691	1.0
Media	58	56	29	31	47	48	62	52	36	69	54	94	37	673	1.0

Table 3 (Cont.)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	%
Religion	48	36	39	32	64	50	66	45	44	36	35	31	18	544	0.8
Zoology	51	38	61	52	43	47	44	39	39	23	28	44	5	514	0.8
Finance	74	33	51	43	42	38	40	43	20	32	21	28	20	485	0.7
Geography	65	36	71	24	41	25	26	24	29	53	41	20	16	471	0.7
History, C6–18th	59	48	63	36	36	37	15	25	28	40	21	37	22	467	0.7
Labour	41	26	48	28	29	27	44	64	25	29	41	29	22	453	0.7
Eco. & Soc. History	47	30	26	43	60	38	22	23	59	31	14	20	13	426	0.6
Human Rights	35	27	37	26	36	32	21	39	41	39	30	22	14	399	0.6
Sport	8	11	14	15	21	5	35	34	26	28	76	87	25	385	0.6
Archaeology	5	9	12	10	7	15	18	28	65	56	78	51	27	381	0.6
Food	35	27	31	27	17	28	28	39	36	32	38	31	12	381	0.6
Demography	28	40	37	26	33	21	29	20	23	23	15	16	15	326	0.5
Psychology & Psychiatry	0	1	0	0	3	12	26	63	48	44	61	46	14	318	0.5
Rural Economy	48	22	43	23	17	18	21	24	18	16	11	11	9	281	0.4
Archives	20	30	12	18	22	33	20	20	19	27	24	15	8	268	0.4
History, early	19	32	44	25	34	44	15	24	8	6	6	2	2	261	0.4
Bibliography	29	32	36	24	23	12	17	15	12	11	8	11	4	234	0.4
Social Welfare	16	6	11	15	11	18	17	21	26	25	25	30	9	230	0.3
History, South Afr. War	46	31	17	24	10	10	5	13	6	7	7	10	6	192	0.3
Publishing	20	4	33	13	8	8	28	17	8	6	29	8	10	192	0.3
Exploration & Travel	21	22	16	16	21	26	14	6	8	10	2	8	7	177	0.3
Botany	16	18	21	19	21	22	8	14	8	2	11	8	3	171	0.3
Forestry	21	17	4	13	10	10	15	13	12	10	14	6	7	152	0.2
Philosophy	11	9	15	10	16	15	11	12	21	10	10	5	5	150	0.2
Religion – African Trad.	11	15	16	9	2	15	10	7	16	27	6	5	4	143	0.2
Fisheries	11	8	12	8	5	9	19	8	9	10	8	9	10	126	0.2
Development‡	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	39	70	117	0.2
Sexual minorities/lgbti	1	3	2	4	7	4	13	6	11	10	8	19	24	112	0.2
Science & Technology	12	5	9	6	6	9	10	10	9	7	8	11		102	0.2
Architecture	5	9	12	5	10	9	9	8	8	9	4	6	5	99	0.2
Diaspora & Migration‡	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	2	22	58	91	0.1

Religion – Judaism	7	4	13	11	6	14	9	4	5	4	2	3	3	85	0.1
Industry	16	10	9	11	4	6	4	2	4	4	1	1	3	75	0.1
Land‡	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	44	26	75	0.1
Tourism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	13	24	42	0.1
Public Administration‡	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	5	10	20	38	0.1
Mining‡	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	27	37	0.1
Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	11	2	1	1	0	0	23	0.0
Religion – Hinduism	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	6	0	3	14	0.0
Gender – Masculinity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>5271</i>	<i>4861</i>	<i>5008</i>	<i>4914</i>	<i>5320</i>	<i>5402</i>	<i>5558</i>	<i>5419</i>	<i>5669</i>	<i>5332</i>	<i>5179</i>	<i>4765</i>	<i>3227</i>	<i>65925</i>	

¹ Category discontinued from the 2012 volume and replaced with ‘Development’ below.

‡ New categories added in 2012.