

Sophia Omokanye

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University Positions

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER | 2025 →

[Institute for World Church and Mission](#) (IWM)

Sankt Georgen Graduate School of Philosophy and Theology, Germany

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW | 2023-2025

Department for the Study of Religion

University of Toronto, Canada

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE & LECTURER | 2020-2022

Department for Theology of Religion & Religious Studies

Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany

RESEARCH ASSISTANT | 2016-2017

Religious Studies, Department for Systematic Theology

University of Salzburg, Austria

RESEARCH ASSISTANT | 2014-2018

New Testament Studies

University of Salzburg, Austria

RESEARCH ASSISTANT | 2012-2014

Department for Bible Studies and Church History

University of Salzburg, Austria

Academic Qualifications

2023

Dr. of Theology (PhD): Intercultural Theology, University of Salzburg, Austria.

Dissertation in Intercultural Theology. My dissertation is entitled “(De-)constructing mobility identities” and unpacks identity construction processes along the intersection of migration, mobility, and Nigerian Pentecostal narratives and performances.

2017

Magistra Theologiae (Mag. Theol.): Catholic Theology with distinction. University of Salzburg, Austria. Thesis in Intercultural Theology: “Religiously motivated Terrorism as a socio-political Phenomenon of Modern Societies”. The thesis explores various factors of religiously motivated terrorism and contextualizes the phenomenon within modern societies by illuminating historical backgrounds and religiously related aspects of terrorism.

2015

Bachelor of Arts (BA): Catholic Religious Education. University of Salzburg, Austria. Bachelor Thesis in Bible Didactics: “Definition, Relevance, and Method of Biblical Storytelling in Religious Education of Primary School”.

Teaching Experience

SANKT GEORGEN GRADUATE SCHOOL | BA LEVEL | S 2025

“Conflicts as Opportunities for Church Transformation”: In a continuing education module for professionals in fields of practical theology, I am responsible for the intercultural theological component. I teach the intercultural dimensions of conflicts and their narrative interpretations, with a focus on theological reflection and practical relevance for church contexts.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO | BA LEVEL | S 2024

“Religion and Popular Culture”: This course introduces ways in which religion and popular culture interact with a focus on experiential learning in student’s everyday environments.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO | BA/MA LEVEL | F 2023

“Words and Worship in Christian Cultures”: In this course, instructed by Simon Coleman, I taught a session on the “The power of words: Pentecostal performative use of language”.

GOETHE UNIVERSITY | BA/MA LEVEL | S 2021

“African Indigenous Religious Traditions: Yoruba Religion”: The course introduced African Indigenous Religious Traditions with a focus on Yoruba Religion. Next to studying the complex net of religious practices within the system of Yoruba Religion, the course aimed to discuss Yoruba Religion in relation to current art perspectives.

GOETHE UNIVERSITY | BA/MA LEVEL | W 2020/21

“Glocal Pentecostalism”: The course introduced global Pentecostal movements, their historical genesis, and characteristics with a focus on African Pentecostal Movements. Empirical investigations were conducted in local Pentecostal communities that came with the introduction of qualitative research methods.

GOETHE UNIVERSITY | BA/MA LEVEL | S 2020

“Qualitative Research Methods in the context of Digital Religion”: The course introduced qualitative research methods with a focus on Participant Observation and Narrative Interview.

An exploration in the context of digital religion gave students the opportunity to practice their method skills.

Grants & Awards

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE | 2023

Recipient of a Faculty of Arts & Science Postdoctoral Fellowship Award (96.000 CAD).

AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES | 2020-2022

Fellow of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Receipt of a DOC-Scholarship for dissertation purposes (72.000 EUR).

UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG | 2020

Scholarship for research activities abroad: Fieldtrip to Lagos, Nigeria (706 EUR).

MARIE ANDESSNER | 2019-2020

Marie Andessner Scholarship for excellent dissertation proposal (23.600 EUR).

PRO SCIENTIA | 2019-2020

Fellow of the Austrian Scholarship Fund Pro Scientia.

UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG | 2019

Scholarship for research activities abroad: Fieldtrip to Lagos, Nigeria (831EUR).

Publications

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

Omokanye, Sophia (2026). [Performing the Nigerian Pentecostal Global](#): Transcending local travel restrictions towards global mega-mobility. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*.

[Accepted, in Press] Omokanye, Sophia (2026). Pentecostal Sounds of (Sub)urbia. From triumphalist Pentecostalism and its mega-churches towards accommodationist Pentecostalism in diasporic settings. *Journal of Anthropological Research*.

[Under Review] Omokanye, Sophia (2026). Nigerian Pentecostal Cartographies: Mapping the world through mobility aspirations, kinship networks and church landscapes. *PentecoStudies*.

RESEARCH ARTICLES

[in Press] Omokanye, Sophia (2026). Mobilitätsdynamiken nigerianischer Pfingstkirchen im Kontext transnationaler Netzwerke und prosperitätstheologischer Narrative [Nigerian Pentecostal Mobility in the context of Transnational Networks and Prosperity Narratives]. In: M. Delgado. & F. Gmainer-Pranzl (eds.), *Religionen und Identitäten in Europa: Spannungsfelder und Wechselwirkungen* (SID 24), Berlin: Peter Lang.

[Forthcoming] Omokanye, Sophia (2027). Forschungstrend interdisziplinär. Vernetzungsmöglichkeiten und Herausforderungen interdisziplinären Arbeitens

zwischen interkultureller Theologie und qualitativer Sozialforschung [Interdisciplinary Research Trends. Networking opportunities and challenges of interdisciplinary approaches between Intercultural Theology and Qualitative Social Research]. In: B. Bussmann & F. Gmainer-Pranzl (eds.), *Wissenskulturen. Stile, Methoden und Vermittlung von Wissenschaft* (SID 22), Berlin: Peter Lang.

Omokanye, Sophia (2022). Identity-making in Nigerian Pentecostal networks. In: P. Jablonska & P. Szuppe, *Around the concept of Religious Freedom*. Warsaw: University Center for Religious Freedom Research, 179-192.

Kremser, Sophia (2018). Christlich-islamische Beziehungen im europäischen Kontext [Christian-Muslim relations in the European context]. Studienwoche für Studierende und junge WissenschaftlerInnen. Cibedo-Beiträge. Zum Gespräch zwischen Christen und Muslimen 2,80-81.

Kremser, Sophia (2018). Pourquoi? Des facteurs du terrorisme à caractère religieux. *Kanien* (6), 34-44.

SCHOLARLY BOOK REVIEWS

[Genese einer Religion](#). Der Kimbanguismus und sein Abschied von der Ökumene, Benjamin Simon, *Anthropos* 119 (1) (June 2024).

[Breaking the Master's S.H.I.T Holes](#). Doing Theology in the Context of Global Migration, Musa Dube & Paul Leshota. *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 147 (12), 1237-1238.

Conference Organization

FRANKFURT, GERMANY | 2025

Organization of the study day "Mission Digital?! How Faith on the Internet Is Transforming Religious and Theological Landscapes". A cooperation with the Theological Seminary Ewersbach and the Institute for World Church and Mission.

Presentations & Conferences

BOSTON, MA | 2025

Annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR). Panel: Sensory Landscapes and the Sacred. Presentation Title: Mixtapes of Sonic Pentecostalism. Studying Christianity through Sound-Walking on Bloor Street.

UPPSALA, SWEDEN | 2025

15th GloPent Conference. European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism: "Pentecostalism in Peace and Conflict". Panel: "Globalization". Presentation Title: Performing the Nigerian Pentecostal Global.

TORONTO, CANADA | 2023

Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA): “Transitions”. Panel: Transitions in the Anthropology of Global Christianity: The Next Generation? Presentation Title: Exploring Christian Heterogeneity and Place-making strategies of Nigerian Pentecostalism.

MONTREAL, CANADA | 2022

28th Annual Graduate Interdisciplinary Conference (AGIC) at the Department of Religions and Cultures at Concordia University: “Religion performed. Insights at the Intersections of Religiosity, Performance, and Performativity”. Presentation Title: Performing mobility identities. Tracing collective identity constructions in Nigerian Pentecostal rituals.

ONLINE CONFERENCE | 2021

Interdisciplinary conference University Fribourg and Salzburg: “Religionen und Identitäten in Europa: Spannungsfelder und Wechselwirkungen”. [Religions and Identities in Europe: Fields of tensions and interactions]. Presentation Title: Mobility dynamics of Nigerian Pentecostal churches in the context of transnational church networks and prosperity narratives.

ONLINE CONFERENCE | 2020

PhD student Conference: “Migration research in Austria – current trends and challenges”. Presentation title: Transnational migration, mobility, and religious practices of Nigerian Pentecostalism.

SALZBURG, AUSTRIA | 2019

Podium discussion: “Migration from Africa to Europe. Complex Drama (Africae Munus 84) – global Mobility – sign of the times?”

SALZBURG, AUSTRIA | 2019

Interdisciplinary Conference: Wissenskulturen. Stile, Methoden und Vermittlung von Wissenschaft. Presentation Title: Religion and Migration interdisciplinary.

MOROGORO, TANZANIA | 2019

International Conference: “Changes & Identity in a globalizing World”. Jordan University College. Presentation Title: Identity Constructions within African-European transnational migration processes.

ABIDJAN, CÔTE D’IVOIRE | 2017

International Conference: “Mondalisation et fondamentalisme religieux. Un défi pour les relations entre l’Afrique et l’Europe. Presentation Title: Pourquoi? Des facteurs du terrorisme à caractère religieux.

STUTTGART, GERMANY | 2017

Participation in the study week: “Christian Muslim relations in the European context”. Paper Title: The Art of Understanding. Art as a place of interreligious dialogue.

Fieldwork & Research activities

FRANKFURT, GERMANY | 2025 →

Conducting digital ethnography for the research project "*The Digital Space as a Field of Mission*," focusing on the intersection of intercultural theology and online cultures.

VIRTUAL, INTERNATIONAL | 2023 →

Leading the international research group "*Ethnographers of Religion*," focusing on ethnographic methods, knowledge exchange and collaboration.

TORONTO, CANADA | 2022-2023

[Junior Fellow](#) at the Center for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, University of Toronto. At the beginning of 2023, I hosted a [works in progress series](#) centered around the theme of Mobile Practices.

TORONTO, CANADA | 2021-2022

International Visiting Graduate Student at the Department for the Study of Religion University of Toronto

FRANKFURT, GERMANY | 2020-2021

Multiple field trips for qualitative data collection on dissertation project: "(De-) constructing mobility identities. Unpacking identity construction processes along Nigerian Pentecostal narratives and performances."

LAGOS, NIGERIA | 2020-2021

Multiple field trips for qualitative data collection on dissertation project: "Religion, Identities and Migration. The shaping of migration aspirations and decisions by religious practices, narratives and identity constructions of Global Nigerian Pentecostal networks."

KINSHASA, DR KONGO | 2019

Research visit on the topic of Religion and Migration in the social context of Kinshasa.

HAIFA, ISRAEL | 2018

Research semester at the University of Haifa, Israel.

Study of the Arabic language, courses on Arab thought and culture, Arab-Israeli Relations and Refugees Mental Health.

Professional Development & Certificates

POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE | 2024

Completed the Postdoctoral Leadership Certificate at McMaster University's *DeGroot School of Business*, in collaboration with the McCall MacBain Postdoctoral Fellows Teaching and Leadership Program. The intensive program focused on practical leadership development through deliverables such as an elevator pitch, emotional intelligence assessment, and

reflective exercises on personal leadership style and research-industry alignment. Emphasis was placed on entrepreneurial leadership, self-awareness, and strategic communication.

UNIVERSITY TEACHING CERTIFICATE | 2022

Completed the certified “University Teaching” program at the *Interdisciplinary College of University Education* while teaching at Goethe University Frankfurt. The program included workshops on academic didactics, communication skills, conflict management, activating teaching methods, and research-based teaching. Emphasis was placed on reflective teaching practice, course planning, and student-centered learning.

Public Work & Presentations

Podium discussion “[No shame!](#) Faith in your luggage. Migration experiences between shame, identity and postcolonial narratives”, Boat People Project, Göttingen Germany (October 2025).

Panel discussion “[Migrating from Africa to Europe](#)”, University of Salzburg, Faculty of Catholic Theology (Mai 2019).

Moderation of panel discussions within the event series “Christianity in the Middle East”, Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany:

- (1) [Christian Minorities in the Middle East](#). Current challenges
- (2) [Women’s Rights in the Middle East](#). Current developments

Research Interests

- Anthropology of Christianity
- Nigerian Pentecostalism and mobility
- Religion, Space and Sound
- Digital Religion
- Intercultural Theology
- Qualitative Research Methods
- (Digital) Ethnography

Referees

Simon Coleman, Chancellor Jackman Professor, Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto (cross-appointed to Anthropology)

Jackman Humanities Building, Room 333
170 St. George Street, Toronto, ON M5R 2M8
416-978-4788

simon.coleman@utoronto.ca

Reid Locklin, Associate Professor of Christianity and the Intellectual Tradition at the Department of the Study of Religion, University of Toronto

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+4169262318

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Claudia Jahnel, Professor of Mission, Ecumenism and Religious Studies, Department of Protestant Theology, University of Hamburg

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