

# Peter Lockwood

Hallsworth Research Fellow in Political Economy  
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## EDUCATION

PhD Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge, 2016 – 2021. *The Greedy Eaters: A moral politics of continuity and consumption in urbanising central Kenya.*

MRes Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge, 2015 – 2016. Distinction.

MSc Social and Cultural Anthropology, University College London (UCL), 2013 – 2014. Distinction.

BA History, Clare College, University of Cambridge, 2007 – 2010. Part I: 2.i. Part II: 2.i.

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS HELD TO DATE

**University of Manchester** **Oct. 2022 – Present**  
**Department of Social Anthropology**  
Hallsworth Early Career Research Fellow in Political Economy (3-years, 4 months)

**The Graduate Institute (IHEID)** **July 2021 – Sept. 2022**  
**Department of Anthropology and Sociology (ANSO)**  
Post-doctoral researcher, Project SALMEA (Self-Accomplishment and Local Moralities in Eastern Africa), funded by Swiss National Science Foundation.

**University of Cambridge** **Oct. 2020 – June 2021**  
**Department of Social Anthropology**  
Teaching Associate (Fixed-Term) and Affiliated Lecturer ('til Sept 2022), Department of Social Anthropology

## COMMISSIONS OF TRUST

Editorial board member, *Africa: Journal of the International Africa Institute*.  
Peer reviewer, *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *Social Analysis*, *Theoria*, *Ethnos*, *Economy & Society*.

## FUNDING ACQUIRED

Hallsworth Conference Fund, University of Manchester, with Constance Smith. 'Behind the Scenes: (Mis)trust, plausibility and scepticism in contemporary life', closed workshop held December 2025, Oddfellows Hall, University of Manchester.

Discipline Hop, University of Manchester. 'The Political Economy of Everyday Life in a Real Estate Frontier'. University grant initiative to develop new inter-disciplinary research project on land transfers in real-estate frontiers with Dr. Thomas Gillespie (Global Development Institute).

Hallsworth Early Career Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship in Political Economy. University of Manchester. 2022. 3-year early career fellowship.

United Africa Company of Nigeria. PhD fieldwork funding. 2019.

Institut Français de Recherche en Afrique (IFRA) Nairobi. PhD fieldwork funding. 2018.

British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA) Thematic Grant. PhD fieldwork funding. 2017.

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) MRes and PhD 1 + 3 year Studentship. 2015 – 2020.

## PUBLICATIONS

**ORCID ID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4326-8501>

**Manchester University Profile:** <https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/persons/peter.lockwood>

### Books

2025. *Peasants to Paupers: Land, Class and Kinship in Central Kenya*. International Africa Library series at Cambridge University Press. (single-author monograph) <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009643467>

with J. Fontein, C. Smith & T. Diphorn. 2024. *Nairobi Becoming: a multi-authored ethnographic portrait of a 21st century African City. Volume 1: Security, Certainty and Contingency*. Punctum Books.

<https://punctumbooks.com/titles/nairobi-becoming-security-uncertainty-contingency/>

### Peer-reviewed journal articles

With H. Elliott. July 2026. Introduction: Timing Property: New ethnographic perspectives on property speculation, assetisation, and scarcity in ‘rentier capitalism’. *Focaal: Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*. (Co-edited Theme Section)

July 2026. Faith in paper? Title deeds as temporal fix on Nairobi’s real-estate frontier. *Focaal: Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* (Article in Theme Section)

May 2026. Alienating ‘dead capital’, eating moral principle: Patriarchal obligation, land sale, and desires for consumption on Kenya’s real-estate frontier. *Cultural Anthropology*.

2025. ‘Land Makes Me Feel So Secure’: Property, Dependence and Escape from ‘Wageless Life’ on Nairobi’s Peri-urbanizing Peripheries. *Economy & Society* 54(3): 480–501.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147.2025.2547504>

2024. ‘We are all hypocrites here’: Patronage as predation in the “dirty game” of Kenyan elections. *Current Anthropology* 65 (6): 1060-1083. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/733124>

2023. Hustlers and Dynasties: Confronting Patrimonial Capital in Kenya’s 2022 Elections’. *Anthropology Today* 39 (5): 7-10. <https://doi-org.manchester.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/1467-8322.12836>

2023. Ironies of Accomplishment: Negative Aspiration, Economic Resentment and the Myth of the Middle-class on Nairobi’s new urban outskirts. *Africa: Journal of the International Africa Institute* 93 (4): 476-495. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972023000633>

2023. Hustler Populism, Anti-Jubilee Backlash and Economic Justice in Kenya’s 2022 elections. *African Affairs* 122 (487): 205–224. <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adad011>

2023. ‘He who relies on friends and relatives dies poor’: Stratagems of civility in peri-urban Kenya. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 29 (2): 326-346. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.13914>

2020. Impatient Accumulation, Immediate Consumption: Problems with Money and Hope in Central Kenya. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Anthropology* 64 (1): 44-62. <https://doi.org/10.3167/sa.2020.640103>

2019. “Before there is power, there is the country”: Civic nationalism and political mobilisation amongst Kenya’s opposition coalitions, 2013-2018. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 57 (4): 541-561. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X19000491>

2019. The Buffalo and the Squirrel: Moral authority and the limits of patronage in Kiambu County’s

2017 gubernatorial race. *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 13 (2): 353-370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2019.1592332>

2015. The Solitude of the Stance: The Bodily Autology of Gym-work and Boxing in an Essex Town. *Suomen Antropologi: The Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society*. <https://journal.fi/suomenantropologi/article/view/59047>

## Chapters in edited volumes

with C. Smith. 2020. Economic anthropology. *Oxford Bibliographies Online in African Studies*. Ed. Paul Zeleza. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199846733/obo-9780199846733-0217.xml>

## Manuscripts under review

Under review. ‘Touching the tarmac’: Embellishing assets of allure on Kenya’s real-estate frontier. *Economic Anthropology*.

## Other publications and outputs (review essays, replies, blog posts, book reviews)

2025. Claiming ‘The People’: Youth Booms, Ailing Authoritarians and ‘Populist’ Politics in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania”, Ifri Studies, Ifri. [https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/2025-10/ifri\\_lockwood\\_populist\\_politics\\_in\\_east\\_africa\\_2025\\_1.pdf](https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/2025-10/ifri_lockwood_populist_politics_in_east_africa_2025_1.pdf) (Report for French Institute of International Relations)

& J. Robbins 2025. There Is No Such Thing as an African Value of Dependence & What Is the Matter with Values?: A Reply to Joel Robbins & A Response to Lockwood. *Social Analysis*, 69(1), 82-108. <https://doi.org/10.3167/sa.2025.690105>

2025. Book review: Roelofs, P. Good Governance in Nigeria: Rethinking Accountability and Transparency in the Twenty-first Century. *Progress in Development Studies*, 25(1), 64-66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14649934241307205>

2024. Kenya Unrest: Ruto Awakened Class Politics That Now Threatens to Engulf Him’. *The Conversation*, 3 July. <http://theconversation.com/kenya-unrest-ruto-awakened-class-politics-that-now-threatens-to-engulf-him-233796>.

2024. “Non-Existent Plots”: Land Fraud in Nairobi’s Construction Boom. *Anthropology News* website, September 3. <https://www.anthropology-news.org/articles/non-existent-plots-land-fraud-in-nairobis-construction-boom> (Accessed 26 September 2024).

with D. Kahura 2023. The rebirth of anti-elite land politics in Ruto’s Kenya. *African Arguments*. <https://africanarguments.org/2023/05/the-rebirth-of-anti-elite-land-politics-in-rutos-kenya/> (Accessed 17 July 2023).

2022. Pressure to Succeed: From Prosperity, Stress (A reflection on aspiration in the new Kenya). *Developing Economics*. <https://developingeconomics.org/2022/03/18/pressure-to-succeed-from-prosperity-stress-a-reflection-on-aspiration-in-the-new-kenya/> (Accessed 20 March 2022).

2021. Wolf in Shepherd’s Garb: Bishop Gakuyo and Stolen Middle Class Dreams. *The Elephant* <https://www.theelephant.info/features/2021/07/23/wolf-in-shepherds-garb-bishop-gakuyo-and-stolen-middle-class-dreams/> (Accessed 3 August 2021).

2021. Pitfalls and promises in the anthropology of Africa. Review essay. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.13497>

2020. Kenya: how stark inequality frustrates the dreams of Nairobi’s jobless young men. Article commissioned by *The Conversation* UK. <https://theconversation.com/kenya-how-stark-inequality-frustrates-the-dreams-of-nairobis-jobless-young-men-136818> (Accessed 15 October 2020).

2019. Review of *The Middle Class in Mozambique: The State and the Politics of Transformation in Southern*

*Africa* by Jason Sumich. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 45 (6): 1186-1188. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070.2019.1688050>

2018. Review of *Mobile Secrets: Youth, Intimacy and the Politics of Pretence in Mozambique* by Julie Archambault. *Allegra Lab: Anthropology, Law, Art, World* <http://allegralaboratory.net/review-mobile-secrets/> (Accessed 28 June 2019).

2017. A year of two elections. *Allegra Lab: Anthropology, Law, Art, World* <http://allegralaboratory.net/a-year-of-two-elections/> (Accessed 23 March 2018).

2017. Review of *The politics of distinction: African elites from colonialism to liberation in a Namibian frontier town* by Mattia Fumanti. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 23 (2): 422-451.

## Manuscripts in preparation.

‘Recursive Discontent: Kenya’s Democracy and the Politics of Surplus People’ Book manuscript in preparation.

## SCIENTIFIC TALKS

November 2025. ‘Peasants to Paupers: Land, Class and Kinship in Central Kenya’, book talk, British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA), Nairobi.

June 2025. ‘Belonging to the frontier? Capital and the future on Africa’s new urban peripheries’. Panel organised at European Conference on African Studies 2025, Prague.

December 2024. ‘Dead capital’ and ‘dead ends’: agricultural decay, land sale and exhausted virtue on Kenya’s real-estate frontier. Invited talk. Global South Studies Centre, Cologne.

December 2023. ‘Patronage as predation: Hunting for cash in Kenyan elections’. Invited talk. University of Bergen.

June 2023. “No otherwise”: Downward mobility and the pressure to become a ‘hustler’ in peri-urban central Kenya’. Conference paper, European Conference on African Studies, Cologne.

April 2023. ‘Faith in paper: Title deeds, land fraud and anxious subjectivities - the pursuit of middle-class homeownership on Nairobi’s urban frontier’. Invited talk. University of Manchester.

July 2022. ‘Timing Property: Ethnographic perspectives on speculation amidst scarcity in property accumulation and investment’. Panel co-organised with Dr. Hannah Elliott (Copenhagen Business School), European Association of Social Anthropologists conference 2022, Belfast.

June 2022. ‘Ironies of Accomplishment: Negative Aspiration and Egalitarian Punishment on Nairobi’s new Urban Periphery’. SALMEA (Self-Accomplishment and Local Moralities in Eastern Africa) Project Conference (IMAF, Aix-en-Provence).

January 2021. ‘Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief: The labour theory of virtue and the moral politics of economic life in peri-urban central Kenya.’ Workshop paper, ‘Taking the bad with the good: Negative ethics and the (im)morality of economic life’ workshop, The Max Plank-Cambridge Centre for Ethics, Economy and Social Change, Cambridge (virtual). (Co-organiser).

July 2020. ‘Requisition by the outstretched hand: Relation-making as work in an economy of cash-hunting.’ Conference paper, European Association of Social Anthropologists Biennial Conference, Lisbon (virtual).

Nov. 2019. “Greedy Eaters’ and their moralisers: A moral economy of continuity and consumption in central Kenya.’ Seminar paper, Senior Research Seminar, Department of Anthropology, University of

Cambridge, Cambridge.

July 2019. 'The Promise of Prosperity: The Moral Economy of Wealth in central Kenya.' Conference paper, 'A Well-Led Life: Honor, Authority and Wealth in East Africa', L'Institut Français de Recherche en Afrique (IFRA), Nairobi.

June 2019. 'Durkheim's shadow: The moral burden of civic virtue in peri-urban central Kenya.' Conference paper, 'Morality and masculinity in eastern African times of connection and disruption (1800 – present)', European Conference on African Studies, Edinburgh. (Co-convenor with Dr. Tom Cunningham, University of Edinburgh).

Nov. 2018. 'Let us now Praise Famous Men: Patriarchal Obligation, Wage-Hunting and the Moral Locus of the Household in an Aspirant Kenya.' Workshop paper, 'The Moral Dimensions of Economic Life in Africa' workshop, University of Cologne, Cologne.

## **TEACHING, MENTORING AND SUPERVISION EXPERIENCE**

### **Goethe University, Frankfurt**

**April – June 2025**

Temporary lectureship (Lehrauftrag)

- Convened 12 seminars in masters module 'project-related theories', hosting discussions on topics in anthropological theory tailored to masters students' individual projects

### **University of Manchester**

**Oct. 2022 – Present**

Hallsworth Early Career Research Fellow in Political Economy (3-years, 4 months), Department of Social Anthropology

- Lecturer on 'Power and Value' to first year Bachelors in Economy students on economic anthropology
- Lecturer on 'Regional Studies of Culture' (SOAN10331), 5 lectures to first-year students in the anthropology of Africa. Marker on Africa essays and moderator on Amazonia regional essays

### **University of Cambridge**

**Oct. 2020 – June 2021**

Teaching Associate (Fixed-Term) and Affiliated Lecturer, Department of Social Anthropology

- Supervisor to undergraduate and MPhil students across core courses on the anthropology of kinship, economics, politics and religion (SAN1, 2 and 6) and option modules on anthropology of development (SAN8) and kinship, care and gender (SAN13). Seminar leader for MPhil in Social Anthropology in anthropology of kinship. Lecturer on ethnographic methods (Social Sciences Research Methods Programme). Lecturer at Sutton Trust Summer School 2021. Overall second marker on SAN2: The Foundations of Social Life. Marker during first year examinations 2021, MPhil set essays and dissertations. Participated in undergraduate and taught masters education committee meetings

### **University of Cambridge**

**Oct. 2018 – June 2020**

Undergraduate supervisor, Department of Social Anthropology and Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS)

- Supervisor to undergraduates in Social Anthropology (SAN1: The Comparative Method and SAN2: The Foundations of Social Life) and African politics (POL4: Comparative Politics, Kenya and Tanzania and POL15: The Politics of Africa)

## **FIELDWORK**

- Kiambu, Kenya. January 2017 – July 2018, August 2019 (PhD fieldwork)
- Kiambu and Nairobi, Kenya. February – March 2022, July August 2022 (post-doctoral research on Project SALMEA)
- Kiambu and Nairobi, Kenya. November – December 2024, March-April 2025, November-December 2025 (Hallsworth Fellowship)

## **LANGUAGES**

Kiswahili (Advanced speaking, Intermediate reading, writing)  
Gikuyū (Intermediate speaking, writing, reading)

## REFERENCES

Prof. Harri Englund (PhD supervisor)  
Professor of Social Anthropology  
Department of Social Anthropology  
University of Cambridge  
Free School Lane  
Cambridge CB2 3RF  
[hme25@cam.ac.uk](mailto:hme25@cam.ac.uk)

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Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology  
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Arthur Lewis Building  
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Prof. Maxim Bolt (External PhD examiner)  
Associate Professor of Development Studies  
Oxford Department of International Development  
University of Oxford  
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