

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

2025/26

University of Michigan

Ph.D. in History

Graduate Certificate: Museum Studies Program (2025)

M.A. in History (2023)

2017

University of the Western Cape

M.A. in History (Museum and Heritage)

2015

PG. Dip. in Museum and Heritage Studies (2015)- Cum Laude

University of Malawi

B.A. in Humanities

TEACHING

Courses

Assistant Professor

Texas State University

2025

HIST 2312- History of World Civilization from the 17th Century

HIST 5375I- Heritage in a Global Context

Graduate Student Instructor (Teaching Assistant)

University of Michigan

2023

HIST 101- What is History?

2021

HIST 247- Modern Africa

2020

HIST 105- Introduction to Religion (Fall semester)

2020

HIST 328: South Africa Under the Apartheid (Summer Semester)

2020

HIST 244- History of the Arab-Israel Conflict (Winter semester)

2019

HIST 347- History of Colonial Latin America

Lecturer

Malawi University of Science and Technology

2018

IKSP 124- Concepts and Theories of Indigenous Knowledge II

IKSP 125- Indigenous Food

2017

IKSP 114- Concepts and Theories of Indigenous Knowledge I

IKSP 113- Ceramics I

Teaching Assistant

University of the Western Cape

2016

HIST 331- Africa: Colonial and Postcolonial

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

2025-26	Institute for the Humanities Fellowship, UM-LSA (Declined)
2024-25	Rackham Humanities Dissertation Fellowship (RHDF), University of Michigan
2024	Rackham Doctoral Intern Fellowship, University of Michigan
2024	Orla B. Taylor Scholarship (Rackham Graduate School and U-M History), University of Michigan
2023	Fellowship for Doctoral Research in Museums (FDRM), Museum Studies Program, University of Michigan
2022-23	The Social Science Research Council (SSRC): International Dissertation Research Fellowship (IDRF)
2022	African Studies Center Lester P. Monts Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Research on Africa, University of Michigan
2022	Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies (WCED) Graduate Student Research Grant, University of Michigan
2022	Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant, University of Michigan
2022	Orla B. Taylor Scholarship (Rackham and History), University of Michigan
2021	Rackham International Research Award (RIRA), University of Michigan
2020	International Institute Individual Fellowship (IIIF) Award, University of Michigan
2020	South African Initiative Office Fellowship (SAIO) Summer Research Grant, University of Michigan
2020	African Studies Center (ASC) Research Support in Africa, University of Michigan
2019	African Studies Center (ASC) Research Support in Africa, University of Michigan
2018-2019	J. Frederick Hoffman Award, U-M History, University of Michigan
2015-2016	Andrew W. Mellon Master's Fellowship, University of the Western Cape, South Africa
2015	Dean's Merit List Award, University of the Western Cape
2015	Golden Key International Honor Society Award, University of the Western Cape
2014	African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies Fellowship, Robben Island Museum and the University of the Western Cape
2014	Dean's Merit List Award, University of the Western Cape

PUBLICATIONS

2024	Comfort Tamanda Mtotha. "The 'Saint' of Livingstonia: Assembling, Memorializing, and Representation of Missionary Paraphernalia at the Stone House Museum" in <i>Museum Anthropology Museum</i>
------	---

MTOTHA, COMFORT TAMANDA

Anthropology 47 (2): 51–63.

<https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/muan.12299>

Comfort Tamanda Mtotha. “Collections, Negotiations and The Politics of Repatriation: From Souvenir to Artifact, 1941-1988” (forthcoming).

- 2017 Comfort Mtotha. “The History and Heritage of Leprosy on Robben Island, 1846 – 2014” in African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies (APMHS) Publication, 2017.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (select.)

- 2024 “From Household Objects to National Treasures” (Presenter) at the African Studies Association of the UK (ASAUK) at Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, United Kingdom. August 2024.
- 2024 “Forging a National Narrative” (Presenter) at the IAS Emerging Scholars Conference-Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. May 2024.
- 2023 “Politics of Repatriation: The Odyssey of Victor and Theodore Cox Collection” (Panelist) at the World is Ending Again: African Humanities in Times of Crisis – U-M African Studies Center and Wits Institute for Social Research), Maropeng, Johannesburg- South Africa. May 2023.
- 2012 “Living Heritage and a Legacy of Scottish Missionaries at the Blantyre Mission” (Presenter) at Who cares? The Material Heritage of British Missions in Africa and the Pacific and its Future Workshop - the National Museum of Scotland, the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, and the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich in partnership with the Museum Ethnographers Group. November 2012.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES (select.)

- 2017 First Aid to Cultural Heritage Resources Certificate, (ICCRUM, Smithsonian Institution and the Dept. of Culture), Lilongwe, Malawi
- 2016 **Co-facilitator:** African World Heritage Regional Youth Forum (Robben Island World Heritage Site), Cape Town, South Africa
- 2014 **Invited Participant:** Workshop on the Challenges of Managing Heritage Institutions: A Comparative Analysis: Robben Island Museum and other Heritage Institutions in Southern Africa (Robben Island Museum), Cape Town, South Africa

MTOTHA, COMFORT TAMANDA

- 2013 Risk Preparedness Field Project – UNESCO Certificate, Le Morne World Heritage Site, Mauritius
- 2013 Exhibition Development and Public Engagement- Professional training, Edinburgh, Scotland- National Museum of Scotland (NMS)
- 2013 Collections care or Conservation of Ethnographic collections- Professional training, Edinburgh, Scotland- National Museum of Scotland (NMS)
- 2012 Project Management- Professional training, Edinburgh, Scotland- National Museum of Scotland (NMS)
- 2012 Collections care (Museums and Heritage)- Certificate, Beijing, China
- 2012 Leadership Training Certificate, University of Malawi, Chancellor College- Zomba, Malawi
- 2012 **Co-facilitator:** Training the youths around Chongoni World Heritage Site on inventorying/ documenting the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) elements within their community.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Blog Post**
- 2025 A Mother Carved in Wood: Nearly a Century Out of Africa
(*A Yombe Phemba Figure at the Detroit Institute of Arts*)
<https://ummsp.rackham.umich.edu/museum-matters/comfort-mtotha-a-mother-carved-in-wood-nearly-a-century-out-of-africa-a-yombe-phemba-figure-at-the-detroit-institute-of-arts/>
- Curatorial Projects**
- 2024 Researcher: *Contemporary African Art* Exhibition (forthcoming project), Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA), Detroit, Michigan
- 2017 Curatorial Team: *Proverbial Inspired Art* Exhibition, Chichiri Museum, Blantyre Malawi
- 2014 Curator: *I want to go Home: Leprosy on Robben Island* Exhibition Robben Island Museum (RIM), Cape Town, South Africa
- 2013 Curatorial Team: *Dr. David Livingstone: The Man!* Exhibition, Museums of Malawi
- Project contributor**
- 2020 Consultant team: Museum Studies Program Capstone *Map project* Exhibition, Arab American National Museum, Dearborn

MTOTHA, COMFORT TAMANDA

2019 Research contributor on the *Alusi Shrine Figure: Wish You Were Here* Exhibition, University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA)
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/9935a5d108984cc39cda39752f868f97?item=4>

2014 Heritage Conservation assessor and creator: *Conservation Management Plan* Document for the “Leprosy” Cemetery at the Robben Island Museum (overlooked history)

EMPLOYMENT

2024 **Museum Studies Intern**, The Detroit Institute of Art Museum, Detroit, Michigan

2019-2023 **Graduate Student Instructor**, History Department, University of Michigan

2017- Present **Lecturer**, Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST), Bingu School of Culture and Heritage

2011-2017 **Ethnographer**, Museums of Malawi

2016 **Teaching Assistant**, History Department, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, SA

2015 **Research Assistant**, Centre for Humanities Research (CHR), University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa

2014 **Museum Intern**, Robben Island Museum, Cape Town, South Africa

2013 **Intern**, African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) under UNESCO, Johannesburg, South Africa

SERVICE

2023-24 **Co-coordinator**, African History and Anthropology Workshop (AHAW), Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop, University of Michigan

2022 **Graduate Student Representative**, Museum Studies Program (MSP) Steering Committee, University of Michigan

2014 **Malawi Project Coordinator**: “Museums as Agents of Change” (Project - Museums of Malawi and the National Museums Scotland)

MTOTHA, COMFORT TAMANDA

2013-Present

Committee Member: The Society of Malawi, Historical and Scientific, Non-for-profit organization, Blantyre, Malawi

MENTORSHIP

2022-Present

Student Advising
Malawi University of Science and Technology
Undergraduate Theses

Rachel Pondani, “An Examination of the Impact of *Umhlangano wa Maseko* in Preserving Cultural Heritage in Nkolimbo, Ntcheu” In-progress.

Taonga Simbota, “Assessing the Impact of Museums in Promoting Cultural Learning among School-going groups in Blantyre at Chichiri Museum”- Submitted 2024

Innocent Kalamizu, “The Social Protection and Livelihoods Support for the Elderly Persons in Disaster Risk Situations- Case Study of Manje Township in Blantyre- Submitted 2024

Taonga Mwale, “The Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events Shaping the Lhomwe Identity: A Study of Making and Remaking Processes in Gomani and Mnina Villages in Thyolo District,” Submitted 2024

McCloud Chioza, “Assessing the Potential Roles of Cultural Heritage Sites for Community Development and their Challenges at the Chongoni Rock Art World Heritage Site”- Submitted 2024

Taweni Thindwa, “Factors Affecting the Efficiency of the Cultural and Museum Centre Karonga” – Submitted 2023

LANGUAGES

English, Chichewa, and Nyanja