

2022 Year in Review: Top Ten Stories at OlongoAfrica

Kólá Túbòsún

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We have published a lot of incredible stories this year spanning different tastes and genres in African literature. As we approach the year's end, we have compiled a list of our top stories for 2022 strictly for your leisure reading this holiday.

1. *Finding Bàrà: History at an Empire Town* by **Mọlárá Wood** (February 23, 2022)

At the top of our list is this piece by Mọlárá Wood which has been read almost seven thousand times. For those who care about history, especially pre-colonial history of Ọyọ Empire, Ms Wood engages the root of history in her adventure to Bàrà this year, providing astounding details about a place that was once the burial place of old Ọyọ kings. She also wrote about archeological finds and the work currently going on in that historical space under the supervision of Professor Akin Ọgúnńíran, an archaeological professor from the United States.

2. *The Spectacle and Politics of Nudity in Blood Sisters* by **Ọláolúwa Ọńí** (May 18, 2022)

As we all know Nollywood has created a great cinematic moment for us this year from the release of *King of Boys*, *Aníkúlápó*, *Ẹlẹ́şin Ọba*, etc. Our contributors provide incredible reflection on the insights that these films drive. But we do not want you to miss our best review of the year written by Ọláolúwa Ọńí. In here, she provides a well-observed critique of the film's use of nudity against the background of conversations about the male gaze, feminism, agency, and emerging liberties in modern Nollywood's directing styles.

3. *Not A Laafin Matter: Lamidi Ọláyíwọlá Àtándá Adéyẹmí (1938-2022)* by **Tádé Ìpàdẹọlá** (April 25, 2022)

When a notable king dies, we usually count on a griot to recount what their era meant for current moments. Here, our resident griot, Tádé Ìpàdèḡlá steps us to provide a compelling tribute to Aláàfin Lámídì Adéyemí, covering personal encounters with the king to his public image as an arch-monarch in Yorùbá society. Ìpàdèḡlá, a prolific Nigerian poet and writer, examines the contribution of Aláàfin to cultural politics and Nigeria's socio-political atmosphere in general. As an imperial majesty, the death of Aláàfin attracted both a celebration of life and a reflection on what this moment means for the future of Yorùbá as a modern and traditional society.

4. ***Biyi Bándélé: The Storyteller Departs*** by **Kólá Túbòsún** (August 8, 2022)

On August 7, 2022, news broke that Biyi Bándélé, Nigerian writer and film maker had passed, right before the release of his last work *Èlẹ́ṣin Ọba*, a movie adaptation of Wólé Sòyínká's *Death and the King's Horseman*. It was a rude and unexpected shock to the literary and film community. The tragic event attracted a lot of condolences, notes, and pieces, but Kola Tubosun's account of Bándélé's impact on Nigerian literature and film space, published a few hours after the news was broke, hit all the right notes in grief, memorial, obituary, and tribute.

5. ***Lagos to Lomé: Reflections on Borders*** by **Kémi Fálòdún** (January 11, 2022)

At OlongoAfrica we have always privileged travel writing as a genre. We have published different contributors and travelogues this year. But Kémi's *Lagos to Lome*, published way earlier in the year to great applause, should enter your list of articles for the holiday. With enriching details about geography, borders, and surprises of adventure, Fálòdún brings her passion and power of observation to her adventures on the road through West Africa.

6. ***Aníkúlápò - A Short Story*** by **Ayodele Olofintuade** (May 13, 2022)

We published a lot of original stories this year, embedded with original illustrations by our resident visual artist Yémisí Aríbisálà. One of such stories is *Aníkúlápò* by Ayòdélé Ọlòfintùádé (not to be confused with the subsequent movie with the same name). In nine short chapters, Ọlòfintùádé weaves a moving story of love, superstition, bravery, and rebellion. No doubt it is our sixth most-read piece for 2022. Please take a look at it again before the year is over.

7. ***Maybe Now, Maybe Never*** by **Ukamaka Olisakwe** (December 21, 2022)

Perhaps coming as no surprise to anyone who has ever read her, this brand new short story (published just a day ago) by Ukamaka Olisakwe has already entered our chart for the year and is gunning for a higher rank in coming months. It is a story of love and hurt between two sisters living in two different continents. Olisakwe displays her keen sense of empathy and observation to take us on a journey that is familiar, heartbreaking, and uplifting as well.

8. ***Decaying Memories at the Ọyọ Museum*** by **Ayodele Ibiyemi** (May 11, 2022)

In May of 2022, Ayòdélé Ibíyemí gave us a travel piece about his time visiting an old museum in Oyo. The piece is both a worthy addition to our archive of important travel writings at OlongoAfrica, and an informative guide to the predicament of historical locations around Nigeria today.

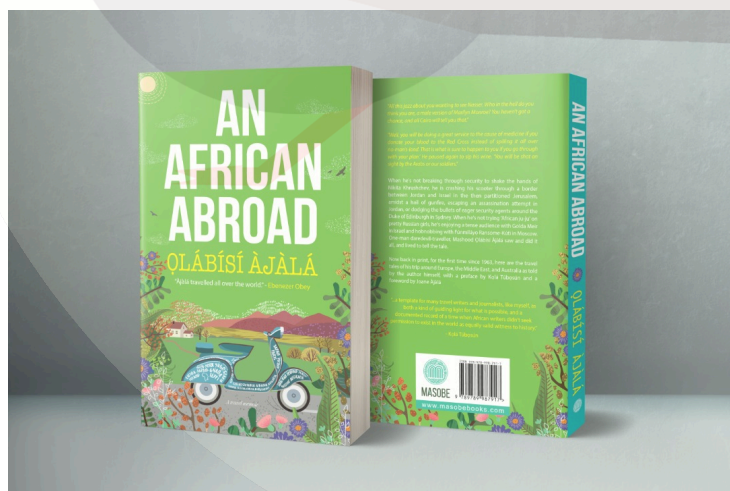
9. ***Ijéwọ̀ Ìnàkí Shìnágawà Kan*** by **Kólá Túbòsún** (June 26, 2022)

At number 9 is OlongoAfrica's first major foray into literary translation, and it's a big one. Our publisher Kólá Túbòsún translated the famous Japanese writer Haruki Murakami into Yorùbá — the first time the writer has been translated into *any* African language. The effort has kickstarted our longterm commitment to literary translation, and we continue to welcome more efforts in that direction — either into other African languages from English, or into English from any African languages. Túbòsún is the Africa co-editor of the *Best Literary Translations Anthology* to be published in 2024 by Deep Vellum in Texas, currently calling for entries.

10. ***In 'Nomad,' Romeo Oriogun Converses with Time and History*** by **Jerry Chiemeka** (September 20, 2022)

As our collaboration with the Nigeria Prize for Literature continues, the last popular piece on our site for this year is Jerry Chiemeka's review of Romeo Oriogun's collection of poetry, *Nomad*, which, shortly won the NLNG-sponsored Nigeria Prize for Literature for 2022. It should have been prescient. In the essay, Chiemeka pondered on Oriogun's "tenacity" with a voice that is authentic, "still incisive, still probing, still abundant in cadence." *All the other shortlisted work for the Prize were reviewed, and the authors interviewed. The project was supported by the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas.*

Bonus reads



- **Where Are the 287 Poets Contesting the 2022 NLNG Prize for Literature?** — Carl Terver (May 4, 2022) — *essay*
- **Vagabonds! - A Refusal to be Defined** — Ope Adédèjì (March 23, 2022) — *review*
- **OlongoAfrica to Republish "An African Abroad"** — OlongoAfrica (March, 9 2022) — *news*
- **Are God's Children Little Broken Things?** — Kemi Fálòdún (August 5, 2022) — *review*
- **Pockets!** — Ope Adédèjì (March 12, 2021) — *fiction*

This concludes our rundown of the ten most-read pieces on *OlongoAfrica* this year. They also happen to be quite representative of what we do, and how we cater to the reading public across the continent. Please read and share with your friends and contacts. Shoutout to our illustrators, editors, collaborators, sponsors, and partners. We look forward to sharing with you a few more things we have in store for you in 2023.

Enjoy reading, and Happy Holidays.

