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The next stop along my path was when I received a scholarship to study towards a master's degree in theoretical physics at the African University of Science and Technology (AUST), Abuja in Mid-2010. There, me and a handful of young scientists and engineers from all over Africa had our first real taste of a world-class education generously provided by the Nelson Mandela Institution supported by the World Bank Institute. My master thesis, written under the supervision of Tannie Liverpool, alongside my friend and classmate: Yahaya Ibrahim, was the main highlight of my studies there; but I made several good friends among my peers there: Nutifafa, Ivy, Juliet, Jonas, Bayo, Gabin, Emeka, Olamide, Tabot, Usman, Rachidi, Obayemi, Opeyemi (and many others) who have stayed in touch over the

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After being convinced by Nutifafa, who was at the time doing the same program, that the Nanoscience Topmaster at the University of Groningen was an extremely high-quality experimental-focused master; I applied with the intention of continuing to work in biophysics. After being invited for the interview in Groningen and an unfortunate delay due to VISA issues, I eventually visited Groningen for the first time in May of 2012 and was interviewed by Casper van der Wal, Andreas Hermann and the now retired N. J. I. Mars. Shortly after, I was offered scholarships to attend the topmaster by both the Zernike Institute and the Erik Bleumink Fund, which I happily accepted and started my adventure in Groningen. A thank you to Caspar, Andreas and Coos is therefore very necessary, for recognising my enthusiasm for the program and for giving me the chance to join the 2012-2014 topmaster cohort.

The 2012-2014 cohort of the nanoscience topmaster became my almost constant companions for the next 9 months both in- and out of class; The times we spent holed up in the nano-room studying (most of the time) and planning the “nano”-symposium will always be cherished memories. The fact that almost all of us (will soon) have completed PhD.s after the topmaster has been a great unexpected support system over the years. A big congratulations (in advance) to all of us! Nilesh-Ji, thank you for being a good friend who is always willing to help out no matter what, and for being a lively and jovial person to be around. Jamo, thank you for always lending your ears (and brains) to solve seemingly impossible problems and for lively discussions about science, and especially about my usually difficult-to-image samples. Kumar, thank you for always checking in on me (in person and by text); for all those long coffee breaks and for your kind words of support when the PhD. got tough; I wish you great success on your new adventure with Mri in Eindhoven. Koen, thank you for being the most dependable friend and tango-wingman ever, our times at *Ocho de Mayo* are some of my favourite memories of Groningen, best wishes with the last parts of your PhD. at Oxford. Ale, thank you for all those impromptu dinners, delicious food and generally awesome company, our chats over coffee at the *Nb4* canteen were always very enjoyable. Machteld, it was very nice knowing I would run into you (several times a day) on the corridors while moving between the office and the lab, thank you for your willingness to chat over tea/coffee/lunch. It was a great pleasure to be part of your special day(s) and I wish you success with your postdoc at Oxford. Gerjan, Bert, Kostya, Maria and

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M. Abdu-Aguye

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